

BEST OF KENYA COOPERATIVES



MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES AND MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) DEVELOPMENT
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CO-OPERATIVES



PROSPECTS







Celebrate the March of the Cooperative Movement

Welcome to Best of Kenya Cooperatives, the premier publication of its kind in both the East Africa region and the continent as a whole.

In this painstakingly written and edited book, we celebrate not only the continued success of the cooperative movement but also laud its growth from a colonial era tool of control to a modern, aggressive movement transforming lives and carving its own niche in the sphere of exuberant economic growth.

Kenya occupies pride of place as Africa's leading cooperative nation. We join the global community to celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives (2025). It is a proud moment and an apt one to savour the myriad accolades.

That is because the movement has had a profound impact on agriculture, finance, housing, insurance, and education, thereby raising living standards for millions of people, especially those underserved by banks and the unbanked. It is a monumental success story, even as the movement continues to evolve, spreading its tentacles to areas hitherto untouched by any manner of saving.

The evolution of the movement has seen it shift focus from the initial aims of regulating agricultural prices and promoting fair trade to offering investment opportunities in such uncharted territory as Financial Technology. The outlook is positive and promises great potential.

In the early years, especially after Kenya gained her independence, the movement played a vital role in rural development, poverty alleviation, and economic growth. It is this people-centric approach that has been the pillar that has held together the movement in Kenya for over a century of steady growth.

Today, Kenya stands tall as an iconic pillar of success, given the enormous growth of the cooperative movement, which now boasts over 30,000 registered cooperatives. These serve over 14 million members spread across varied sectors including agriculture, housing, education, insurance, and finance.

Despite a few glitches here and there, the performance of the movement in Kenya has been sterling so much so that in 2013, the World Council of Credit Unions recognised Kenya's Saccos as the fastest-growing cooperative sub-sector globally.

It is for these and allied reasons that we toast to the growth of the movement and the fact that, at the moment, it mobilises billions in savings and investments in all sectors of the economy.

The vibrant coop movement has become an integral part of the country's Gross Domestic Product, (GDP), the sum aggregate of goods and services produced in a given fiscal year.

Against a robust legal framework and innovative approaches, economic prosperity and financial inclusion continue to be realised, offering fertile opportunities in investment.

It is time to pop the champagne even as we look ahead and keep our collective eyes on the ball. Think unity and purpose.

Keep reading!

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Editorial Director: W Kwendo Opanga

Copy Editors: Patrick Wachira, Mwamburi Mwang'ombe, Richard Kerama

Writers: Charles Wachira, Joyful Kapulu, Shirley Wachira, Peter Wanjohi, Nelly Kosgey, Ann Saloton, Bernard Munyao, Dickson Miriti, Francis Kikago, Jackson Msanzu, James Anyanzwa, Janet Rop, Mercy Awino, Prof Isaac Nyamongo, Kevin Mogallo, Wycliffe Kipsang', Sebastian Miriti.

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Contact details:
Devan Plaza, Suite 16, Westlands, Crossway Road
P. O. Box 23399 - 00625, Nairobi
Telephone: 0722 787345/ 0724-550960/ 0765-163386
Email: smugo@globalvillagepublishers.co.ke
Website: globalvillagepublishers.co.ke
www.globalvillage.world
www.innovationsoftheworld.com





Cooperatives Truly Building a Better World



As we mark this significant year dedicated by the United Nations to the world's cooperatives, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all members, leaders, stakeholders and partners who continue to contribute to the growth and resilience of Kenya's cooperative movement.

Kenya's cooperative sector remains one of the most dynamic and transformative forces in our socio-economic development. With over 14 million members, thousands of registered cooperatives, and a contribution of more than 10 per cent to the country's GDP, the sector stands as a beacon of inclusivity, equity and sustainability.

The theme for this year, Cooperatives Build a Better World, underscores the urgent need for collective action to create a future that leaves no one behind. Cooperatives, by their very nature, embody democratic values, self-help and mutual support - principles that align perfectly with Kenya's national development priorities and the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Whether through savings and credit societies, housing cooperatives, agricultural unions, or transport and worker cooperatives, these institutions serve as powerful tools for poverty eradication, job creation and environmental stewardship.

Under the Kenya Kwanza administration and guided by the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), the Ministry has prioritised reforms to modernise, professionalise and empower cooperatives across the country.

We are investing in digital transformation, reviewing outdated legal frameworks, and facilitating access to affordable credit and training for cooperative members. Our goal is to build a robust, accountable and inclusive cooperative ecosystem that supports MSMEs, farmers, traders, artisans and entrepreneurs at the grassroots.

We also recognise the importance of youth and women in driving this transformation. Empowering young people through cooperative education, innovation hubs, and enterprise incubation, remains central to our agenda. Similarly, women-led cooperatives are receiving increased attention and support, as we aim to eliminate the barriers that have historically limited their participation in economic activities.

As a Ministry, we reaffirm our commitment to nurturing a cooperative environment that is transparent, accountable and resilient. We champion policies and programmes that harness the power of unity, innovation, and shared prosperity.

As we celebrate this year, I call for renewed commitment to build a cooperative sector that truly delivers on the promise of a better and sustainable future for all locally and globally.

Last, but not least, I would like to appreciate and congratulate Mr David Obonyo, the Commissioner for Cooperative Development, for initiating and leading the successful publication of this commemorative volume. I commend this book to the cooperative movement and all those who cherish and seek knowledge.



Hon. FCPA Dr Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, EGH
Cabinet Secretary
Ministry of Co-operatives and MSMEs Development



Our Strategy for a More Robust Sector



As Kenya joins the global community in commemorating the United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2025 (IYC2025), we do so with renewed commitment and vision for a stronger, more inclusive cooperative sector.

IYC2025 offers a strategic opportunity to reflect on the vital role cooperatives play in fostering inclusive economic growth, promoting social equity, and advancing national development.

The State Department for Co-operatives is at the forefront of efforts to create a supportive and dynamic environment in which cooperatives can flourish. We are actively spearheading comprehensive reforms to modernise the sector, including the review and strengthening of policy and legislative frameworks. These efforts are designed to enhance governance, transparency, accountability, and competitiveness across all cooperative enterprises.

In recognition of the evolving needs of the sector, we are undertaking structural and institutional reforms along critical value chains. We will start by developing a cooperatives financing policy and complete review of the Sacco Societies Act for a central liquidity facility bridging collaboration between national and county governments.

More institutions will be restructured and modernised. Promotion of linkages, information sharing and market access in the cooperative sector will be done to enhance financial deepening and investments through cooperatives by providing relevant guidelines and policies to support related activities. This includes policy regarding diaspora cooperatives; savings mobilisation and credit; start-up Saccos and diversifying sources of investment and supporting creation of a credit scheme.

We shall also entrench good governance and accountability within the co-operative sector through technical updates on audit standards to incorporate international financial reporting standards. We will also complete development of a cooperative management information system as well as strengthening institutional capacity to improve service delivery.

As a Department, we are working on mainstreaming issues related to climate change, special interest groups and human rights in the sub-sector. These reforms are intended to boost productivity, increase market access, and support value addition across cooperative-driven industries such as agriculture, housing, finance, and manufacturing. By facilitating linkages with local and

global markets, we aim to transform cooperatives into powerful engines of economic empowerment.

Furthermore, we are advancing partnerships with the private sector, development partners, and other stakeholders to promote innovation, digital transformation, women and youth engagement — key pillars for a future-ready cooperative movement. Our vision is to cultivate a cooperative ecosystem that is resilient, adaptive, and capable of delivering long-term socio-economic benefits to all Kenyans.

We will entrench health wellness support services, make targeted sensitisation forums routine, develop a corruption prevention action plan and guidelines on sustainable environmental practices in the State Department.

The key challenges that emanated from implementation of the previous strategic plan, including inadequate funding, inadequate office space, finalisation of policy and legal instruments' varying functionality of the cooperative functions across devolved units are all work-in-progress. We have learned useful lessons to improve cooperatives' operations going forward and adhere to global best practices.

These have informed strategies in the current plan to improve functional communication, data, information and knowledge management systems for effective service delivery. There is need for a structured public participation framework and political goodwill and a functional intergovernmental coordination mechanism as well as strengthening professionalism of cooperative officers who remain our first line of contact with members. Without them the cooperative movement would not be the unique ecosystem it is.

There is need for deeper engagement with strategic development partners. As we celebrate IYC2025, we call upon all stakeholders — government agencies, private sector actors, civil society, and cooperative members — to actively engage in this transformative journey. Together, let us shape a robust, transparent, and inclusive cooperative sector that meets the aspirations of our people and contributes meaningfully to the national and global development agenda.



Mr Patrick Kilemi, CBS
Principal Secretary
State Department for Co-operatives

How Cooperatives are Transforming Lives



I take this opportunity to reaffirm the transformative role that the cooperative movement continues to play in Kenya's socio-economic development. As we reflect on our progress and look ahead to future possibilities, we celebrate the sector's evolution into a vital engine of inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Over the decades, cooperatives in Kenya have grown from small, community-based initiatives into formidable institutions that drive social transformation,

economic empowerment, and community development. Today, the cooperative model remains one of the most effective mechanisms for mobilising collective resources, addressing local needs, and promoting equity in wealth creation. The impact of cooperatives is evident across all regions of our country.

In rural areas, they have enhanced livelihoods by enabling smallholder farmers to access credit, markets, and essential inputs. In urban centres, cooperatives have supported innovation and entrepreneurship, empowering youth and women to create jobs and build sustainable enterprises. The cooperative movement continues to make significant contributions in key sectors such as agriculture, housing, finance, transport, and manufacturing — thereby promoting inclusive growth, job creation, and national cohesion.

This year, as we join the global community in commemorating the UN International Year of Cooperatives, we are reminded of cooperative core values that have sustained the movement through generations: Self-help, Self-responsibility, Democracy, Equality, Equity, and Solidarity. These values are not mere aspirations — they are the very foundation upon which the success and resilience of cooperative enterprises are built especially in the face of global and domestic challenges such as economic shocks, climate change, and urbanisation.

In the spirit of this celebration, I wish to underscore the importance of documenting and sharing cooperative success stories. These stories go beyond recognising milestones: they provide blueprints for replication, platforms for peer learning, and sources of inspiration for emerging cooperators. Storytelling and knowledge-sharing allow us to highlight the diversity, innovation, and collective impact of our cooperative ecosystem.

This practice not only fuels continuous improvement but also enhances transparency, accountability, and public confidence in the movement. Furthermore, establishing a centralised and accessible repository of these experiences — both the

successes and the lessons learned — empowers stakeholders, policymakers, and future cooperative leaders to draw insights from the past and to develop forward-looking strategies. Let us, therefore, use this moment not only to celebrate our collective achievements, but also to renew our commitment to a future where cooperatives remain at the heart of Kenya's development agenda. We must continue to pursue a cooperative model that delivers dignified livelihoods, fosters sustainable communities, and drives equitable economic growth for all.

Lastly, we honour those who have stood with the Kenyan cooperative movement since the registration of the first cooperative society at Lumbwa, Kericho County in 1908. These valued friends and benefactors have walked with us on a journey marked by trials, triumphs, and transformation. They include development partners who have supported and complemented the efforts of cooperators, as well as those of national and county governments.

Notably, the Nordic countries made critical contributions by supporting cooperative management through the development of manuals, information systems, and capacity building in governance. The World Bank also played a key role by supporting smallholder coffee farmers through the construction of processing facilities and the provision of credit for farm inputs. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and other United Nations agencies have also been steadfast partners.

We further acknowledge the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through NCBA CLUSA and Global Communities, whose technical and policy support has been instrumental—especially in the review and reform of cooperative legislation and governance frameworks. Equally, we appreciate our local benefactors especially our elder brother in the movement. These include the Cooperative University of Kenya, for its continued role in capacity building; the Cooperative Bank of Kenya, as a principal financier; and the Cooperative Insurance Company of Kenya, which provides essential insurance solutions to the sector.

We also recognise all other local and international stakeholders who have supported the growth and development of the cooperative movement in Kenya. As we chart the way forward, let us remain steadfast in our collective resolve to strengthen the cooperative movement as a pillar of national development. The road ahead calls for innovation, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to cooperative principles and values. I urge all stakeholders, government, development partners, cooperative leaders, and members to work together in building a vibrant, transparent, and inclusive sector.

Together, we can shape a cooperative movement that responds to today's needs and anticipates the demands of tomorrow. May the spirit of cooperation continue to guide us towards a more just, inclusive, and prosperous Kenya.

Mr David Obonyo, MBS
Commissioner for Cooperative Development



They Eventually Agreed

Herewith the committee that brought you this volume



Seated from left: Nelly Kosgey (State Department for Co-operatives (SDC), Morris Mworira (SDC), Mbaruku Vyakweli (Global Village Publishers (GVP), Tessa Calleb (GVP). Standing from left: Anthony Muriithi (SDC), Henry Mwangi (SDC), Paul Wanjala (Kenya Union of Savings & Credit Cooperatives), Irene Kombo (GVP), James Githaka (SDC), Kwendo Opanga (GVP), Simon Mugo (GVP).

They met every Monday for two hours from January, 2025. They deliberated on the best way to render Best of Kenya Cooperatives, capturing the winning spirit of Kenya's vibrant cooperative movement, unrelenting innovation, embrace of technology and spread that leaves no region or religion, gender or demographic, behind.

They argued robustly before agreeing or disagreeing over names and titles, facts and figures, bottom lines and top lines, pictures and captions, colours and infographics, relevance and prevalence, money and markets.... The list goes on. Ultimately, they unanimously agreed on three issues.

One, they owe it to Kenya's cooperative movement to publish a volume that celebrates the UN International Year of Cooperatives 2025 (IYC25). Two, the UN was right to choose this as the IYC25 theme: Cooperatives Build a Better World.

And, three, which many said should be

one, there are convincing reasons why Kenya's movement is Number 1 – and by some distance – in Africa.

The team was chaired by the Commissioner of Cooperatives David Obonyo. His calm manner and gentlemanly mien, knowledge of cooperatives in Kenya, on the continent and beyond, and expertise in leading teams, helped steer this group into coherence and relevance on many occasions.

In his absence, Morris Mworira or Morris Githui stepped in admirably as captains. They borrowed from his skills and ably kept the ship on course.

Drawn from the State Department of Cooperatives of the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development, the cooperative movement and Global Village Publishers EA Limited, the team was put together by Obonyo, whose brainchild this volume is.



Committee Chair
Commissioner
David Obonyo



Symon Mburia (SDC)



Prof Isaac Nyamongo
(The Co-operative
University of Kenya)



Morris Githui (SDC)



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AT A GLANCE

Dynamic Landscape

Kenya's cooperative sector is diverse and vital to economic growth, offering investment opportunities across agriculture, finance, technology, and healthcare. Whether you are building a business, eyeing impact investment, or just curious how millions of Kenyans work together to create billions in value, this is your map to the future of shared success.

Saccos: Powering financial inclusion

Saccos are vital to Kenya's financial inclusion, boasting over **14 million** members. Established in the early **20th century**, they provide affordable credit, savings options, and financial services to under-served communities. Saccos generate billions annually, boosting the economy.



Dairy cooperatives: Supporting dairy industry

Dating back to the **1950s**, they support over **600,000** farmers, offering a platform to pool resources, share knowledge and access better markets for milk and related products. These cooperatives generate billions annually, contributing to Kenya's status as one of Africa's largest milk producers.



Coffee Cooperatives: Rooted in Heritage Brewing Prosperity

They play vital role in the country's coffee value chain, particularly among small holder farmers who account for over **70%** of coffee production.



Consumer cooperatives: Providing affordable goods

Consumer cooperatives, with over **2 million** members, offer affordable goods, including groceries, clothing, and household items.



Fishing Cooperatives: Boosting Kenya's blue economy

Formed in the **1980s**, these support over **100,000** members engaged in fishing activities. They facilitate fish production, processing, and export, contributing millions annually to Kenya's economy.



Housing Cooperatives: Providing affordable housing

Housing cooperatives emerged in the **1960s** to help members access affordable housing. They manage land, construction, and property management, benefiting thousands of Kenyans.



Transport Cooperatives: Supporting Efficient Transportation

Organise its members to provide affordable transport services.



Electricity Cooperatives: Expanding Energy Access

Electricity cooperatives focus on expanding power access, particularly in rural areas. They support thousands of members and contribute to national energy goals.



Savings and Investment Cooperatives: Empowering Dreams, Securing Futures – The Cooperative Way

These Cooperatives mobilise funds from members strictly for making common investments of the funds on behalf of the members.



Insurance Cooperatives: Providing Affordable Coverage

Insurance cooperatives, established in the **1960s**, offer affordable insurance products to over a million members. They generate billions annually in premiums.



Artisanal and craft Cooperatives: Tapping into Kenya's Heritage for Socio-Economic Empowerment

These cooperatives support over **500,000** artisans producing bead products and pottery for both local and export markets.



Youth Cooperatives: Empowering the next generation

Emerging in the **2000s**, youth cooperatives provide training, mentorship, and capital to young entrepreneurs, addressing Kenya's unemployment challenges.



Worker Cooperatives: United in Work, Stronger in Ownership

These Cooperatives organise workers or professionals to offer a specialised service or group of services



Textile and garment Cooperatives: Weaving the future

These cooperatives, formed in the **1980s**, produce clothing and textiles, contributing millions in export revenue.



Health Cooperatives: Promoting access to affordable healthcare

Health cooperatives, established in the **1990s**, provide affordable healthcare to millions of members, reducing the financial burden of medical expenses.



Forestry Cooperatives: Sustainable forest management

Forestry cooperatives focus on sustainable forest management, benefiting over **100,000** members and contributing to environmental conservation.



Sports and cultural Cooperatives: Fostering Wellness

These cooperatives organise sporting events and cultural programmes, benefiting local communities and contributing to social well-being.



Livestock Cooperatives: Together for better breeds, markets, and livelihoods

These Cooperatives promote economic and social welfare of its members by engaging in the collective production, processing, marketing and facilitating access to credit and other support services.



Technology Cooperatives: Promoting digital inclusion

Technology cooperatives offer digital services and training to underserved areas, enabling millions to engage in the digital economy.



Other producer Cooperatives

Key players in the production, aggregation, processing and marketing of commodities, such as Cotton, Sugarcane, Rice, Macadamia, Cashewnuts, Pyrethrum, Cereals.



CHAPTER 1

The Beginning





Origins of the Cooperative Movement

The Rochdale pioneers from the north of England gave the movement its principles in 1844

The global cooperative movement began with application of cooperative principles to business organisations. However, arrangements such as mutual insurance and principles of cooperation have existed throughout history.

Greece apparently pioneered the cooperative spirit among other European countries. The cooperatives were associated with specific products destined for international markets.

The Common Company of Ambelakia (1780-1812), established in Thessaly, comprised 22 villages possessing 24 factories and 6000 individual members. It had a capital of 20 million gold francs in the Bank of Vienna by 1810.

In the rest of Europe, the mechanisation of the economy by the Industrial Revolution threatened livelihoods. This forced workers to cooperate.

The earliest record of a consumer cooperative was in 1761, in Fenwick Scotland. Robert Owen, a Welshman who made his fortune from cotton farming, is considered the father of cooperatives.

Owen believed in creating a good environment for his workers, including access to good education for them and their children. William King took Owen's ideas and made them practical.

Many cooperatives started out as small grassroots organisations in Western

KEY POINTS

- Greece pioneered cooperatives movement in Europe.
- Welshman Robert Owen considered the father of cooperatives.
- Mutual Fire Insurance Company is the first known cooperative, established in 1752 in USA.

Europe, North America, and Japan. However, the Rochdale Pioneers from the north of England drew up with the Rochdale Principles in 1844 hence giving the movement an official start.

In England, the English Cooperative Society was launched in 1863. Twenty years after Rochdale.

It comprised 300 individual cooperatives between Yorkshire and Lancashire and changed to the Cooperative Welfare Society whose headquarters are now in Manchester where it enjoys a permanent electoral pact with the Labour Party.

An independently formed cooperative model of cooperative banks or credit unions emerged in Germany in 1862. In 1752 in the USA, the Mutual Fire Insurance Company was the first known established cooperative.

Asian societies adapted the cooperative model too. However, generational inequality and the shareholder model undermine the principles. That is not to mean there are no success stories.

The Seikatsu Club Consumers' Cooperative in Japan and the Self Employed Women's Association in India are proof. Thailand also boasts of strong agricultural cooperatives while sugar worker cooperatives are the majority in the Philippines. Social movements and land reform struggles inspired the movement in Latin America. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) established in 1919 has a cooperative division.

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) formed in England in 1885 is one of the only international organisations that survived both world wars due to its commitment to peace, democracy, and being politically neutral.

Today, the ICA has a membership of 318 organisations from 112 countries. It is expanding and gaining momentum, with at least 12 per cent of humanity or around 1 billion people being members. On the global landscape, the weight of each country and region varies. In Europe, for instance, the movement has been very successful and has handled the 2008 mortgage crisis better than most banks.

In many countries, cooperative institutions have a predominant market share in the retail, banking, and insurance businesses.

Mandate of Africa's cooperatives

How does Africa, our motherland, perform on this score sheet? It is relatively young but a fast learner.

Africa started at a disadvantage because colonialists introduced the formal cooperative movement for resource extraction and agricultural production.

Compared to the grassroots origins of cooperatives in Europe and North America, those in Africa were state-controlled. The liberalisation wave of the 1990s provided a clean slate and the movement has picked pace since.

The focus of the movement in Africa is also vastly different from the rest of the world. Most cooperatives in Africa emphasise on poverty reduction, agricultural and rural development, and financial services.

Governance affects productivity as a weak regulatory environment and political interference undermine the movement in Africa. That differs with Europe that has strong governance structures. This is changing quickly. Many African countries are creating legislation to regulate the industry.

Consequently, the movement has a positive outlook continentally and globally due to its strong focus on socio-economic impact and its role in sustainable development.

On December 16th, 1992, the ICA and the Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) at the UN General Assembly proclaimed every first Saturday of July the International Cooperatives Day.

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) formed in England in 1885 survived both world wars due to its commitment to peace, democracy, and being politically neutral.

THE SEVEN COOPERATIVE PRINCIPLES

Open and Voluntary Membership

To join a cooperative, you just need to be able to reasonably use its services and be willing to accept the responsibilities that come along with being a member.

Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are completely controlled by their members. Those who actively participate can weigh in on the policies and decisions. Members in cooperatives have a voice and equal voting rights when electing representatives in primary cooperatives.

Members' Economic Participation

Portions of a cooperative's capital remains "common property" meaning that members decide how to use the excess funds contributed for any, if not all, of the following purposes: developing the cooperative, setting up reserves, benefiting members in proportion to their transactions with the cooperative, and supporting other activities approved by the membership.

Autonomy and Independence

Being an autonomous organization means that cooperatives rely solely on themselves. Since the members are in control, there's no need for outside assistance. When they enter agreements with external organisations, they do so in a way that safeguards their character and ensures democratic control.

Education, Training, and Information

To continue developing their cooperatives, education and training is offered to members at all levels and communication is shared outside the organisation to help gain a deeper understanding of their benefits and mission.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives work together locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally to effectively improve services and strengthen economies.

Concern for Community

Through membership supported policies, cooperatives make strides toward sustainable community development.

Source: NRECA, *Understanding the Seven Cooperative Principles*.



Savings and Credit Cooperatives Association (SACCA) Congress in Naivasha in Kenya in 2024.



Africa has Always had Cooperatives

Families turned to each other to pool labour to till the land

What does *egesangio* or *risaga*, *saga*, *g'itafi* or *ngwataniro*, *mwethya*, *obulala* and *kibakenge* have in common? They are forerunners of modern day service cooperatives and were common in almost all African communities.

According to Mildred Ayuma—who researched and defended a thesis on this—*egesangio* (the community groups) were forms of cooperative labour parties formed usually by women to organise households into forms of group labour for mutual support in tasks like weeding or harvesting, on a rotational basis.

They allow members to address their needs, attain bargaining power, and share benefits. The forerunner cooperatives may not have exhibited features of modern day cooperatives but they possessed the basic characteristics.

A cooperative is an independent association of persons united voluntarily to address common socio-economic and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.

Cooperatives are based on six values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity, and are governed by seven principles, namely: voluntary and open membership without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination; democratic member control through which policies are set and decisions made; member economic participation through equitable contribution and control of capital; autonomy and independence with control exercised by the members; education, training, and information to empower members, elected representatives, managers, and employees to contribute effectively to the development of their co-operative; cooperation among cooperatives through which the cooperative movement is strengthened for the benefit of members; and concern for community.

The *egesangio* type of cooperatives exhibit at least five of the seven principles. First, they are based on voluntary and



Cabinet Secretary (CS) Wycliffe Oparanya, third from left, and Principal Secretary (PS) Patrick Kilemi, right, lead ministry staff on a tour of a dairy farm in Uasin Gishu County.

open association of those who meet the 'common bond' criteria. The service provided was segmented such as in among the Abagusii, where while the men cleared the land, the women tilled, planted, weeded, and harvested. The men helped in the 'heavier' tasks.

Second, the groups facilitated economic participation. The groups existed for the purpose of marshaling collective labour force to aid farming activities. The farm produce enabled exchange of commodities through barter trade within and between (ethnic) communities.

For instance, the Luo bartered mineral salt for grains from Abagusii. There was

a name for this type of barter trade—*ogusuma*, *sumo*, *khosuma*—depending on your ethnic affiliation. On their part, the Maasai barter traded with the Agikuyu. Barter trade contributed to economic egalitarianism by discouraging wealth accumulation.

Third, the groups were autonomous and independent. They freely organised themselves in terms of when, where and how they worked. In all their activities, consensus was a guiding principle.

Fourth, cooperation among cooperatives is a key aspect of these forerunner cooperatives, which is best exemplified among pastoral communities. For

instance, among the Turkana and the Maasai communities, warrior age sets were responsible for taking care of stock in far-flung grazing fields.

In order to increase their 'fire power' several warrior groups would come together to form a formidable force to collectively protect stock, ensure access to pasture and water for the animals. Among the Akamba several *mwethya* groups would collaborate in support of bereaved family through supply of, for instance, firewood. These demonstrate principle number six.

Lastly, in terms of concern for the community, these groups supported community members who were faced with a problem or who were celebrating important *rite de passage* occasions. Among the Abaluhya groups would support house construction in case a community member lost a house to fire or such other calamity. These tasks were completed over a very short period.

These forerunner cooperatives, although fluid in their style and character, guaranteed support to members and

the community. They allowed farming activities to be done expeditiously on one farm before the group moved on to the next, which ensured that the crop on any particular farm was planted, weeded and harvested at the same time.

Further, they provided an opportunity for members to build and cement social capital, which could be marshaled during time of need. Also, the cooperatives contributed to increased food production and reduced post harvest losses which, in turn, improved food security for the household and community. Overall, the 'cooperatives' brought about social cohesion in the community.

Thus, the cooperative concept is not foreign to Africa. It existed before modern cooperatives were introduced. The forerunner groups would have developed in variety and complexity through assimilation of value adding practices overtime.

Modern day service cooperatives can borrow lessons from these forerunner service 'cooperatives.'



Makueni County farmers learn best coffee farming practices on a tour of Meru County.



Colonial State-run Cooperatives

Societies were formed largely to serve the interests of farming communities



Flag-waving Kenya's delegation to the 2018 World Credit Union Conference (WCUC) in Singapore.

The cooperative movement in Africa was born under colonial rule in the 1930s. Early cooperatives established primarily for agricultural production with post-independence governments taking over the running of cooperatives when colonialists left.

Cooperatives were under state control between 1960s and 1990s. Consequently, the role of promotion, control, and guidance of the movement was left to the corresponding ministry.

The state employed stringent laws to put the movement on leash. As big brother watched everything, it became necessary for farmers who wanted to sell their produce to join cooperatives.

The governments of the day also offered state-sponsored agricultural credit schemes to incentivise more farmers to join. It worked.

Eventually, cooperatives came under state control. They were not only tools for economic development but also sneaky ways to get political supporters jobs and further other political chicanery.

Donors as well had quite a significant role in enhancing state control because they preferred dealing with governments directly. Cooperatives had no option but to be firmly under the government's thumb because you do not bite the hand that feeds you.

However, one could feel a cold wind sweeping across the continent by the end of the 1980s. The movement lost momentum and it was up to members to join because cooperatives did not reach out to them.

Members' fire to join fizzled out even more because they saw cooperatives as extensions of government. As they became state agents by days, governments issued price controls on agricultural produce hence eroding the financial base of cooperatives severely.

Profits trickled in reluctantly. Much like a seasonal stream in the dry Savannah heat of January. With corruption and embezzlement, state politics was the final

KEY POINTS

- Movement is member-oriented, rather than serve needs of state.
- Price controls, state politics strangled initial movement, prompting autonomy.
- Absence of state control, audit, supervision, audit training ushered in financial mischief, near collapse.
- Uganda farmers who previously earned a pittance now beneficiaries of restructuring.
- Regulatory framework in Kenya has reversed fortunes, movement thriving.
- Most countries now allow movement to respond to market trends, cherish value addition to stem competition.

straw that broke the camel's back. Government cooperative development departments downsized assuming cooperatives would seek these services from the market.

Withdrawal of state control of cooperatives led to a massive collapse. The mice played while the cat was

away. Gross mismanagement, failure to hold elections, embezzlement, and all manner of misdeeds ran down many cooperatives.

This mass death triggered a corrective reaction from both state and movement. The road ahead forked into two paths: either reintroduce strict state supervision, or introduce regulatory framework to the cooperative movement.

Return of cooperatives

Kenya provides the best example of the movement's streamlined legal framework. The government amended the Cooperative Societies Act of 1997 in 2004.

Kenya's apex organisation—the Kenya National Federation of Cooperatives (KNFC)—was in too much debt. Reviving it was impossible.

Therefore, it was liquidated and the new Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) formed in 2010 as the new apex organisation.

The most radical overhaul of the cooperative movement is very evident in Uganda. Farmers who were the very bottom of a vertical hierarchy earning a pittance are now the chief beneficiaries in a restructured movement.

Freedom to innovate and diversity

Liberalisation of the movement has brought diversification of ventures to enable cooperatives survive market forces and offer competitive services.

For example, dairy cooperatives and Saccos are fast replacing non-profitable ventures such as pyrethrum and cotton.

This diversification explains the growth of the movement in the continent, with many countries such as Kenya, Ghana, and Cape Verde having Saccos as the biggest players.

Dwindling profits from agricultural produce have forced cooperatives to be innovative

at value-addition. The enterprising nature of Africans has also seen cooperatives venture into non-traditional sectors such as distilleries, housing cooperatives, consumer cooperatives, and cottage industry cooperatives.

African cooperatives are now looking for market beyond the continent. The cooperative movement in Africa is fast gaining momentum.

Seven in every one hundred people are part of a cooperative. Serving members' interests, providing relevant services and a democratic essence in cooperatives nourish their success.

Of course, the success of cooperatives in Africa is mainly because the movement resonates with African values: self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equity, equality and solidarity.

Honesty, social responsibility, and openness are not new in Africa. As seen in informal rotating savings and credit associations like *chamas* in Kenya and *tontines* or *esusu* in West Africa, social responsibility is Africa's DNA.

The future of the cooperative movement in Africa is bright. A true testament to the hardworking, enterprising, and resilient nature of her people.

Liberal wave of the 1990s

The aim of the new liberal wave washing across Africa was to free cooperatives from state control and enable them respond to market demands and get better prices for their produce.

Although this ushered in relief, the celebration was short-lived. The state withdrew, with its services of audit, supervision, and audit training.

With no contingency measures in place, the first crack appeared in the new self-governing model.



They've Come a Long Way





CHAPTER 2

Enter the United Nations





Biggest Supporter of Cooperatives

The UN has adopted resolutions concerning the role of cooperatives in social development



Globally, the UN ranks as the largest single entity that supports the cooperative movement with good reason. In 1995, the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen recognised the importance of cooperatives in a people-centred approach to development.

The Summit agreed to “utilise and fully develop the potential of cooperatives in attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”.

Eradication of poverty, generation of full and productive employment, and enhancement of social integration were the particular goals. How?

Promotion of the cooperative model was first. Since realising cooperatives’ key role in realising SDGs, the UN has adopted resolutions concerning cooperatives in social development.

Additionally, the UN shows its support to the movement through establishing the International Year of Cooperatives whose main purpose is to raise awareness. Member states are encouraged to set up national mechanisms to coordinate

activities that ensure global messages reach all levels of stakeholders.

Enter the ILO

Within the UN system, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is responsible for the largest and most diversified programme on promoting cooperatives.

ILO technical assistance programme for cooperative development focuses on policy and legal advice, capacity building, poverty alleviation, alternative delivery mechanisms for social services, and even a special regional programme for indigenous and tribal people.

Collaborations and partnerships with key UN agencies such as the International Labour Organisation and the International Trade Centre to promote the cooperative agenda globally are another way the UN supports the movement.

The very basic cooperative operating at grassroots level is part of the global movement. Do they know this? The UN seeks to involve them because it also serves as a platform for finding solutions

to global problems while furthering international cooperation.

The UN provides platforms for member states to engage on cooperatives at international and intercontinental levels. This also means that cooperatives have a direct say in international policy making through the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) organises events and meetings to promote cooperation.

COPAC is a successful and ongoing partnership between representatives of the cooperative movement, farmers’ organisations, cooperative development agencies, and the UN and its agencies.

UN agencies back societies

The fourth pillar that the UN places under the cooperative movement is monitoring and support of cooperative development.

The Division for Inclusive Social Development (DISD) monitors promotion

KEY POINTS

- World Summit for Social Development moots SDGs to eradicate poverty, generate productive employment, and enhance social integration.
- Promoting co-operative model identified as key pillar in achieving SDGs.
- ILO chips in through legal advice, capacity building, poverty alleviation, and alternative delivery mechanisms for social services.
- UN’s Division of Inclusive Social Development (DISD) monitors promotion and development of co-operatives at national and international levels.
- Department of Economic and Social Affairs’ guidelines stipulate that governments’ roles in co-operative movements limited to oversight.
- Collaborations and partnerships with ILO and International Trade Centre to promote co-operative agenda globally.



Prime Cabinet Secretary and Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs Musalia Mudavadi addressing SACCA Congress in 2024.

and development of cooperatives at national and international levels. The DISD is within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA).

It creates guidelines that assist governments provide a supportive environment for cooperatives. The guidelines recognise the full autonomy of cooperatives and the self-regulation capacity of the cooperative movement.

They also acknowledge that intervention by governments to the internal affairs of the movement should be strictly limited to provision of a public register and other such oversight roles.

DESA also works with other bodies like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank to recognise the importance of cooperatives.

The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) is the lead agency that ensures

recognition of agricultural cooperatives to remain on the international agenda.

FAO encourages member governments to establish enabling environments conducive to improving small producers’ livelihoods.

Since its formation in 1977, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has focused exclusively on poverty reduction by working with rural populations in developing countries.

IFAD aims at eliminating poverty, hunger and malnutrition by raising rural productivity and incomes to improve quality of lives.

IFAD, a big supporter of the cooperative movement, recognises that vulnerable groups can and do contribute to economic growth.



Delegates to the 2024 Savings and Credit Cooperatives Association (SACCA) Congress in Naivasha pose during a photo session.



ILO Helps Build Cooperatives

It lays premium on good governance and alternative dispute resolution



Kingdom of the Netherlands



International Labour Organization



The 112th Session of the International Labour Conference in 2024.

Kenya's cooperative movement has long stood as a powerful pillar of national development. With more than 22,000 registered cooperatives and over 10 million members, cooperatives have played a transformative role in enabling self-reliance, economic inclusion, and social protection across both rural and urban communities. Today, they remain a vital mechanism for mobilising resources, expanding employment, and delivering shared prosperity.

However, the full potential of Kenya's cooperative sector continues to be constrained by systemic governance challenges and persistent internal disputes. Conflicts between cooperative members, boards, and other stakeholders—when unresolved—undermine trust, stall operations, and threaten the sustainability of these member-based institutions.

Formal litigation, while necessary in some cases, is often costly, confrontational, and time-consuming, leaving cooperatives vulnerable to prolonged disruption. In response, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), through its

PROSPECTS partnership—an initiative that supports the socio-economic inclusion of forcibly displaced persons and host communities with funding from the Kingdom of the Netherlands—is working closely with the Government of Kenya to promote effective, inclusive, and sustainable cooperative governance.

A key focus of this support has been the advancement of Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) as a practical, people-centred mechanism to address internal conflict and strengthen cohesion in the cooperative sector.

ADR—encompassing approaches such as mediation, negotiation, and arbitration—provides a quicker and less adversarial pathway to resolving disputes. It aligns directly with the constitutional principles enshrined in Article 159(2) of the Constitution of Kenya and the values upon which cooperatives are built: self-help, democracy, fairness, equity, and mutual respect.

The integration of ADR into Kenya's cooperative governance reform is a central feature of the Kenya Cooperative

Transformation Strategy (KCTS), which was developed through an inclusive, consultative process with technical support from the ILO. The KCTS identifies 11 priority pillars aimed at revitalising the cooperative sector, including legal reform, improved compliance, market access, knowledge management, and conflict resolution.

The strategy reflects the vision of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which recognises cooperatives as a vehicle for economic empowerment, particularly for marginalised populations at the base of the pyramid.

To operationalise this vision, the ILO, in collaboration with the State Department of Cooperatives, the Cooperatives Tribunal, and the Council of Governors, designed and delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on ADR for county-level cooperative directors and officers.

Delivered in two cohorts, the training reached 74 participants from across 25 counties. Participants enhanced their practical skills in dispute resolution through hands-on role play, case study analysis, and inclusive training methodologies.

A core component of the training was its emphasis on gender responsiveness, addressing the long-standing underrepresentation of women in dispute resolution and cooperative leadership. The ToT model ensures the sustainability and scale of the initiative, with trained officers expected to cascade their knowledge to cooperatives at the grassroots level.

Incorporating displaced populations into ADR frameworks has also been a priority. The PROSPECTS programme actively promotes the inclusion of refugees and host communities within cooperative structures, recognising their role in advancing socio-economic integration and peaceful coexistence. By enabling refugees to participate meaningfully in cooperative governance and dispute resolution mechanisms, the programme contributes to both economic empowerment and stronger social cohesion in displacement-affected areas.

The positive reception to ADR by stakeholders in Kenya is a strong signal of the sector's readiness for transformation. Participants reported a marked improvement in their ability to handle cooperative disputes—on average by 57.3%—with many describing ADR as a “game changer” for cooperative growth and sustainability. “With ADR, we can prevent small disputes from escalating into prolonged conflicts,” said one participant. “It's a powerful tool for restoring trust and focusing on development.”

The success of the ADR training culminated in commitments by stakeholders to explore the establishment of county-level mediation centres, promote gender-inclusive ADR policies, and integrate ADR training into cooperative education curricula. These steps will institutionalise alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and embed a culture of collaborative problem-solving across Kenya's cooperative landscape.

Complementing this work, the ILO is also supporting broader reforms through the finalisation of the Cooperatives Bill 2024, which will provide a strengthened

legal and regulatory framework for the implementation of the KCTS. The proposed bill reinforces ADR as a preferred mechanism for dispute resolution and formalises its integration into cooperative governance structures.

Beyond dispute resolution, ILO PROSPECTS is working to strengthen the overall resilience, accountability, and productivity of cooperatives. This includes training cooperative members using ILO's globally tested tools—Think Coop, Start Coop, and My Coop—and delivering entrepreneurship and business development training through the Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) programme.

Cooperatives in counties such as Turkana, Garissa, Narok, and Nakuru have already benefited from targeted capacity-building interventions aimed at improving financial management, promoting democratic participation, and increasing access to decent work opportunities. Efforts to digitise cooperative systems are also underway. Working with partners such as the Cooperative University of Kenya and the Presidential Economic Transformation Secretariat (PETS), the ILO has contributed to the design of a digital platform that will enhance transparency, data management, and service delivery within the cooperative sector.

The ILO commends the leadership of the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs for its commitment to cooperative sector reform and calls upon all stakeholders to support the rollout of the Kenya Cooperative Transformation Strategy. The future of the sector depends on the full realisation of its governance potential—rooted in integrity, guided by fairness, and driven by people. With continued collaboration, technical assistance, and political will, Kenya's cooperative movement can once again serve as a model of inclusive development—not just in Africa, but globally.

The tools are in place, the momentum is building, and the path forward is clear. From conflict to cooperation, transformation is not only possible—it is already underway.

About ILO

Advancing social justice, promoting decent work

The International Labour Organisation is the United Nations agency for the world of work. We bring together governments, employers and workers to drive a human-centred approach to the future of work through employment creation, rights at work, social protection and social dialogue.

About ILO PROSPECTS

The PROSPECTS partnership is a global initiative led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the World Bank, with support from the Government of the Netherlands. In Kenya, PROSPECTS works to create an enabling environment for the socio-economic inclusion of forcibly displaced persons and host communities.

The programme focuses on expanding access to skills development, promoting inclusive enterprise, extending social protection, and strengthening employment services. By addressing both supply and demand for decent work, PROSPECTS contributes to sustainable development and improved livelihoods in displacement-affected areas.



Social-economic Inclusion of Refugees

The case of Kalobeyi Handcraft Cooperative Society



Kingdom of the Netherlands



International Labour Organization

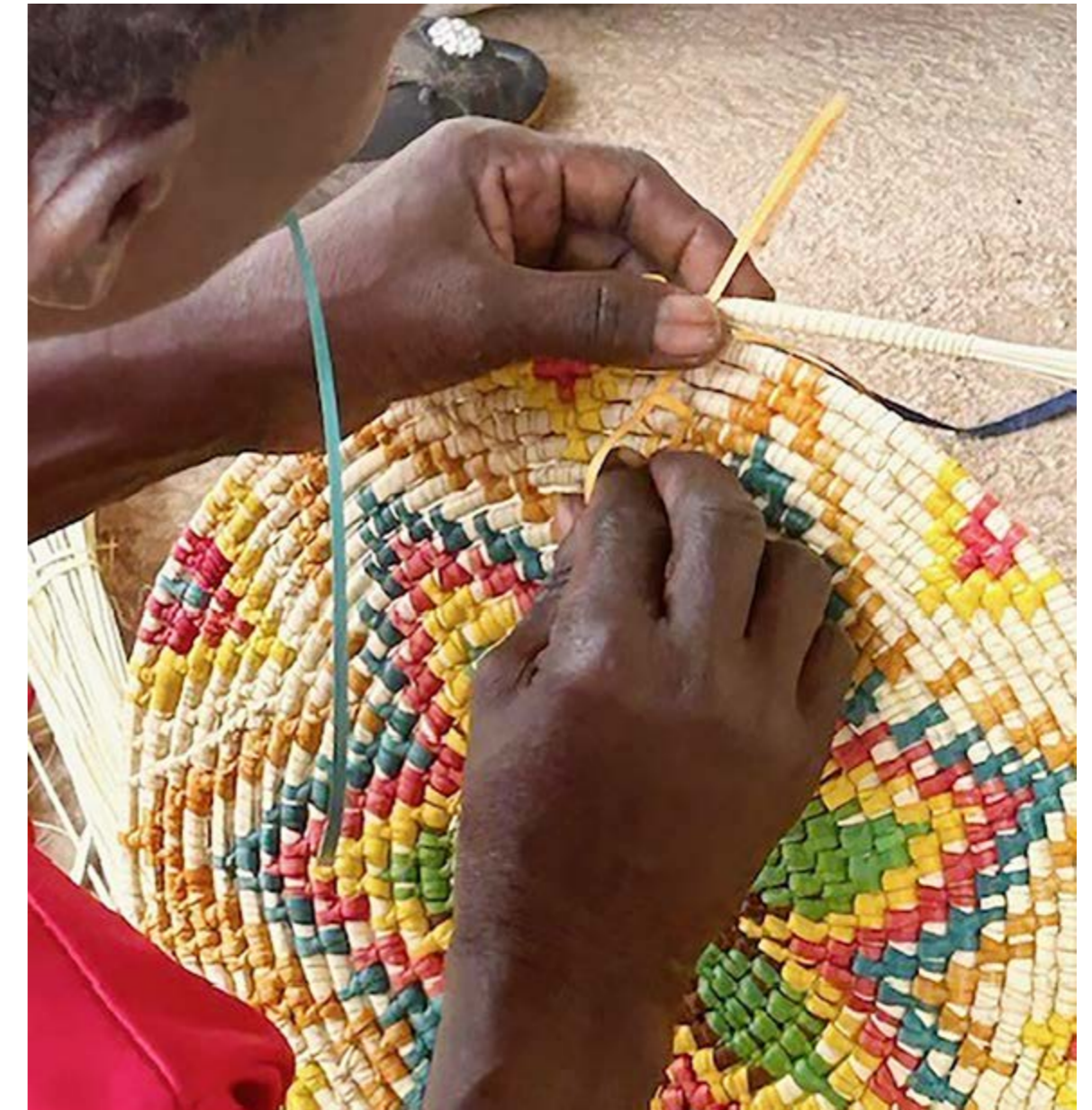
Kalobeyi Handcraft Cooperative Society is allocated in Kalobeyi Settlement, Turkana West sub- county. It receives technical support and training from the Turkana County Directorate of Cooperatives and Marketing in Turkana County.

The cooperative was formed as a result of initiatives aimed at promoting social economic inclusion of refugees and host communities to promote integration, and social cohesion as envisaged in Kenya Government's Shirika Plan and the Kakuma Integrated Social Economic Development Plan (KISEDIP). The society has 50 members (35 refugees and 15 host communities). Their economic activities include production of handcrafts, including basketry, jewelry production and beadwork, and cultural fashion.

Sales from the items produced support the livelihoods of group members and their families. Besides selling their produce, members also make monthly savings from their contributions, which has led to the creation of a revolving fund. Members are free to borrow from the fund.

ILO has supported capacity building of the Turkana County Cooperatives officers on Alternative Dispute Resolution, and tools for strengthening cooperatives strengthening, including *Think Coop*, which targets groups considering forming cooperatives; *Start Coop*, targeting newly-formed cooperatives to build their capacity for governance and business; and *My Coop* which targets strengthening agricultural cooperatives.

Products of the women of Kalobeyi Handcraft Cooperative Society in Turkana County.





Helping Realise the SDGs

Mechanisms in place ensure issues of cooperatives are heard and determined

KEY POINTS

- Over 1 billion people were involved in or were registered members of cooperatives as members, employees or clients of this \$1.6 trillion global enterprise by 2015.
- Large sections of humanity have embraced cooperatives because of their resilience and adherence to their founding principles.
- Voluntary membership, democratic member control, autonomy and independence, active participation by members, collaboration between cooperatives, and continuous training, are key principles.
- Cooperatives are widely recognised as the vehicle to reach SDGs because they offer an alternative and structured model for enterprise.

Starting with poverty reduction, the UN, the ILO and the ICA agree that cooperatives are the most suitable platform to address this. In many instances, majority Saccos facilitate financial credit while agricultural cooperatives help members access inputs, insurance, processing, transportation, and access to and information on markets.



A session at the 2024 Annual General Meeting of Kenya's Stima DT Sacco.

On the other hand, consumer-focused cooperatives enable their members to buy or acquire consumer goods and thereby pull them out of want. On gender equity and equalisation, cooperatives have seamlessly expanded women's access to a galaxy of opportunities quite efficiently.

Women participation and membership in cooperatives is momentous in many countries. There is even a proliferation of products and services tailored just for this critical gender demographic. In Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Spain, Japan, Mali and Sri Lanka, examples of the successful inclusion of women into the cooperative movement abound.

Third, SDGs entail enhancing the quality of education and expanding access to learning facilities and opportunities. Many a Sacco finance education of members, and support teachers and schools to meet spiralling education costs.

In this way, they improve household incomes by underwriting education costs as well as improving learner qualifications to be better placed to compete and grow into jobs and enterprise markets.

Fourth, SDGs encompass the health of communities. Healthcare-focused cooperatives and worker cooperatives in many countries have a hybrid ownership that allows them to build hospitals and

homecare for their ageing members. The best examples are in Canada, Colombia, Japan, Turkey, the USA, Ethiopia, Lesotho and Kenya.

Here, the most successful has been the HIV and AIDS home-based care services. Cooperatives became a critical partner during the Covid-19 pandemic. Agricultural cooperatives have proved to be lifesavers given that their beneficiaries often live in remote rural areas yet they must get access to skills, inputs, markets and market information.

On the other hand, consumer cooperatives have been most active in facilitating access to safe food by

ensuring members adhere to safe agricultural practices and safeguard the environment for posterity.

Sixth is access to clean water and sanitation. There has been a proliferation of housing cooperatives to ensure affordable housing in Kenya, India, the Philippines, and several countries in Latin America, Sri Lanka, and Turkey.

The cooperatives have gone a step further to upgrade slums to ensure people live in dignified and affordable homes well served with water and ancillary services.

All other SDGs—including regarding adoption of sustainable energy sources,

creation of employment opportunities, good governance, and sustainable natural resource management—bear the unmistakable thumbprint of cooperatives. Examples abound in Kenya, the USA, India, Mexico, Colombia, and the United Kingdom.

Cooperatives amplify everyone's voice and by their very community-based nature and structure create a democratic platform that supports formation and growth of local institutions.

They foster social interaction and create job opportunities. Simply put, cooperatives are critical to the realisation of SDGs.



CHAPTER 3

Government Takes Charge





Ministry of Cooperatives in Action

Regulates cooperatives and fomulates policy

The Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development comprises two State Departments, namely the State Department for Co-operatives and the State Department for MSMEs.

The Department for Co-operatives is mandated to promote the growth of cooperatives through policy and regulatory frameworks.

While the day-to-day supervision of cooperatives is devolved to county governments, the national mandate is defined in Executive Order No. 1 of 2025 and includes policy formulation, promotion, regulation, and support of cooperative activities across the country.

Directorates of the State Department for Cooperatives

Policy, Standards and Capacity Building Directorate

This directorate is responsible for developing cooperative policies, legal frameworks and operational standards. It also handles education

and training manuals, capacity building of counties, cooperative research and intergovernmental and international partnerships.

Cooperative Registration and Receivership Directorate

This directorate registers cooperative societies, their by-laws and charges. It maintains a national register, supports counties in forming viable cooperatives, and manages dormant societies through statutory interventions, deregistration or liquidation.

Cooperative Finance, Production and Marketing Directorate

The directorate oversees financial policies affecting cooperatives, including savings, investment, and credit. It manages risk and borrowing guidelines, coordinates cooperative funds and market access, supports value chains and restructures key farmer-based institutions such as New KCC and New KPCU.

Cooperative Governance, Ethics and Compliance Directorate

This unit enforces compliance with cooperative laws and promotes ethical governance. It handles inspections, investigations, and collaboration with governance agencies. It also develops instruments to guide cooperative staff and leadership.

Cooperative Audit Directorate

The Audit Directorate sets audit standards, approves audit firms, registers audited accounts, and conducts compliance and special audits. It also provides tax consultancy services and builds capacity in cooperative accounting at the county level.

Semi-Autonomous Government Agencies (SAGAs)

New Kenya Cooperative Creameries (New KCC)

New KCC aims to stabilise milk prices and ensure market access for dairy farmers. It processes and stores milk during surplus



CS Oparanya, second left, PS Kilemi, right, with Board Chairman of New KPCU, Daniel Chemno, second right, and Managing Director of New KPCU Timothy Mirugi, left, during the launch of the agency's Strategic Plan 2023-2027.



CS Oparanya and PS Kilemi when they met the new KCC management team in October, 2024.

seasons and reintroduces it in the market during dry spells. The Ministry supports modernisation of its facilities and provides budgetary backing for price stabilisation.

New Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (New KPCU)

New KPCU supports coffee farmers through milling, marketing, affordable loans, and subsidized inputs. It currently administers the Coffee Cherry Advance Fund of KSh6.7 billion at a concessional rate of 3 per cent annually.

Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA)

SASRA regulates deposit-taking and designated non-deposit-taking Saccos under the Sacco Societies Act. Currently, about 380 Saccos fall under its supervision. Amendments to the Act are underway to allow inter-Sacco borrowing and shared services.



CS Oparanya, centre seated row, and the Ministry's management team, pose for a photo during a performance review workshop in Nanyuki in Laikipia County.

QUOTE:

The Ministry's mandate is defined in the Executive Order No. 1 of 2025 and includes policy formulation, promotion, regulation, and support of cooperative activities across the country.





Cooperatives Boost Government Plan

They are key players in the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)

Cooperatives constitute an integral part of Kenya's economy, contributing significantly to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), social welfare and financial inclusion.

The Kenya Kwanza government has identified the cooperative movement as a key ingredient of its Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), aligning it with the Fourth Medium Term Plan (IV) of the Vision 2030.

The latter seeks to lift the economy to a higher growth trajectory of 10 per cent and improve the social and economic livelihoods of Kenyans. The government attaches great importance to the contribution of cooperatives to social economic development.

The government's long term economic development plan, dubbed 'Vision 2030', has identified cooperatives as

major enablers in realisation of the social and economic pillar. Towards that end, cooperatives are projected to scale up national savings to spur investments and contribute to housing, processing, health and education.

The main role of cooperatives is to mobilise and aggregate people and resources in various sectors upon which the government will facilitate them to grow along the value chain from production to the market.

The State Department for Cooperatives has formulated a five-year Strategic Plan (2023-2027) that sets a foundation for achieving the mandate of promoting growth and development of co-operatives to ensure realisation of the BETA.

During this period the government will focus on policy, reforms, improvement and governance to ensure the millions

who depend on this sector are mainstreamed in economic development.

Cooperatives are a cornerstone of the country's economy and social structure, creating enormous benefits to individuals, the community, and the country through job creation, access to capital, market and access to inputs.

For instance, Saccos provide financial services to members with no access to traditional banking services, thereby promoting financial inclusion and stability.

The sector has achieved many milestones and is rated one of the leading in Africa, with more than 30,000 cooperatives in agriculture, banking and finance, transport, housing, workers mining and consumers.

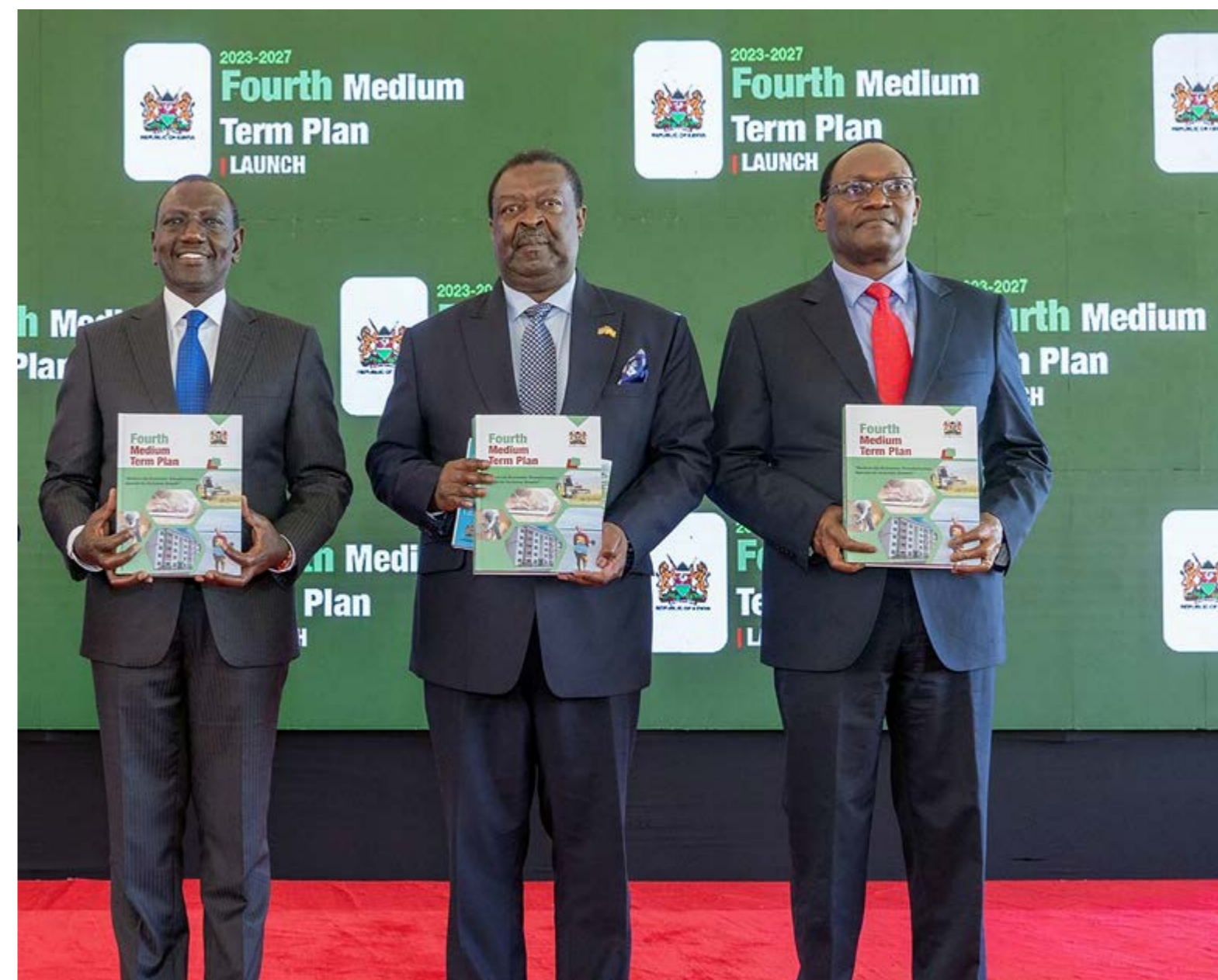
More than 14 million adult citizens are members of the cooperative movement,

KEY POINTS

- cooperatives identified as key pillars of BETA under blueprint Vision 2030.
- Movement billed to spur investment, contribute to housing, processing, health, education.
- Five-year Strategic Plan sets foundation for growth of co-ops to realise BETA.
- BETA aims to drive limited capital to create the most jobs at the bottom of the pyramid.



Residents of Marsabit County follow proceedings on the Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV) at a public dissemination forum in 2024.



President Ruto, Prime Cabinet Secretary Mudavadi and Principal Secretary, The National Treasury, Chris Kiptoo display the Fourth Medium Term Plan (MTP IV) during the launch at State House in 2023.

which is a major employer, absorbing into formal employment over 1 million Kenyans directly and another 1.5 million indirectly. All accumulated savings held by Saccos and other cooperative savings schemes amounted to KSh1,126,712,953,716 (\$11.2 billion) as at December 31, 2023.

Out of the savings aggregated by cooperatives and from other sources, KSh1,087,552,439,044 (\$10.8 billion) was outstanding as loans and advances to members as at December 31, 2024.

The government is driving its development plan under BETA strategy, a value chain based approach based on five pillars: Agriculture, Affordable Housing, Universal Health, Small and Micro Enterprises and Digital & Creative Economy. As a result of the implementation of the Medium Term Plans (MTPs) Kenya transitioned from

a low-income country status to a lower middle-income country upon attaining a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US\$1,430 in 2014. It improved to US\$2,240 in 2022.

The fourth MTP under the transformation agenda targets to realise an economic growth rate of 7.2 per cent by 2027 and sustain the upward growth trajectory towards 10 per cent by 2030.

The implementation of MTP III ended on June 30, 2023, paving way for the implementation of MTP IV.

The BETA is about investing the limited capital available where it will create the most jobs at the bottom of the pyramid. It is a commitment to invest in smallholder agriculture and the informal sector and end socio-economic exclusion by

leveling the playing field for all investors. The Fourth Medium Term Plan (2023-2027) themed Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda for Inclusive Growth translates BETA aspirations into concrete priority interventions.

Implementation of Vision 2030 has been through successive five-year Medium Term Plans (MTPs): First MTP 2008-2012; Second MTP 2013-2017; and Third MTP 2018-2022.

The MTP IV is the last five-year Medium Term Plan of the Kenya Vision 2030 whose end comes two years to the conclusion of Kenya Vision 2030; a twenty two year long-term blueprint.

Effectively, this ushers in fresh conversation regarding the next long-term development plan.



The Magnificent Sextet

These are key organisations that contribute significantly to the development and growth of cooperatives in Kenya

New Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (KPCU)

The Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (KPCU) was established in 1937 as a wholly owned coffee farmers' institution. It was tasked with milling and marketing coffee on behalf of its members—over 700,000 small-holders and about 3,000 large estate farmers.

Beyond milling, KPCU provided farmers with affordable input loans and school fees advances, recoverable from coffee proceeds. These services made coffee farming lucrative, leading to high production levels and positioning coffee as Kenya's leading export commodity.

However, mismanagement, corruption and resistance to reforms led to KPCU's decline. The problem was compounded by its dual registration under the Companies Act and the Cooperative Societies Act.

In 2019, the Commissioner for Cooperative Development deregistered KPCU under Sections 62, 63, and 65 of the Cooperative Societies Act, which led to its liquidation.

The New Kenya Planters Cooperative Union Ltd (New KPCU) was subsequently established as a state corporation to carry out its functions, including administering the Cherry Advance Revolving Fund to support coffee farmers.

Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC)

Kenya Cooperative Creameries (KCC) was registered in 1931 and is the country's oldest dairy processor. It was efficiently run until 2000, when it was privatised and renamed KCC 2000.

Following government intervention in 2003, it was reverted to public ownership and reconstituted as New Kenya Cooperative Creameries (New KCC).

Today, New KCC is a leading dairy processor in East Africa. It plays a critical role during peak production seasons by absorbing excess milk that private

processors cannot handle, thereby stabilising prices and preventing farmer losses.

The government continues to invest in modernising New KCC facilities to enhance its efficiency and competitiveness.

SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA)

Established under the Sacco Societies Act (Cap 490B), SASRA regulates deposit-taking and designated non-deposit-taking savings and credit cooperative societies (Saccos). While there are about 5,000 active Saccos in Kenya, SASRA currently regulates only around 368.

Since its inception, SASRA has significantly improved governance, management, and professionalism among the Saccos it oversees.

The Cooperative Tribunal

The Cooperative Tribunal, established under Section 77 of the Cooperative Societies Act, resolves disputes within the cooperative sector. These may involve current members, past members, deceased members, and cooperative entities. The tribunal's circuit court model allows for regional hearings, making dispute resolution more accessible and less costly for litigants.

Cooperatives Professional Body

The National Cooperative Policy identifies lack of professionalism as a major

challenge. To address this, the Kenya Society of Professional Co-operators (KSPC) was registered under the Societies Act. KSPC promotes cooperative management as a profession, registers qualified professionals, and develops ethical and competence standards.

However, the society's effectiveness is limited by its registration status. There is a need to establish it under an Act of Parliament to give it legal authority to enforce professional standards.

Cooperative University of Kenya (CUK)

The Cooperative University of Kenya traces its roots to 1952, when East African governments jointly set up a training centre at Kabete. In 1961, Kenya established its own School of Cooperatives, which evolved into the Cooperative College of Kenya in 1967.

The College became a constituent college of the Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) in 2011 and was granted full university status in 2016.

Today, CUK is the only university in Kenya mandated to offer cooperative training, research, and innovation.

It houses the Institute of Cooperative Development (ICD), which supports research, innovation, policy development, training, and extension services in the cooperative sector

QUOTE:

With digitisation, we aim to end ghost cooperatives and strengthen real ones.

~ **David Obonyo**
Commissioner for Cooperative Development



HOW TO REGISTER A COOPERATIVE

- The process of registering a cooperative is completed with the submission of an application to the Commissioner for Cooperative Development.
- The application must include the minutes of the pre-cooperative meeting and requisite application documents in triplicate. These documents are submitted through the relevant County Cooperative Office, which verifies them before forwarding to the Commissioner.
- Once received, the Commissioner's office conducts a vetting and evaluation of the documents. This involves checking compliance with the Cooperative Societies Act and Rules, verifying the adequacy of membership, and assessing the proposed cooperative's potential for sustainability.
- Based on this review, the Commissioner may approve the registration, request further information or corrections, or reject the application with reasons.
- If the application meets all requirements, the Commissioner will approve the society and enter it into the Register of Cooperative Societies. The society is then issued with a Certificate of Registration, which serves as legal proof of its existence and enables it to begin formal operations.
- The cost of registration is KSh3,500, and the entire process typically takes about 30 days, assuming all documentation is in order.

Performance of cooperatives as at the end of 2023

Type of Co-operative	Assets (KSh)	Savings/Deposits	Loans to Members	Turnover (KSh)
		(KSh)	(KSh)	
<i>DTS SACCOS</i>	832,890,000,000	575,189,171,442	652,270,000,000	120,290,000,000
<i>SNWDTS</i>	139,060,000,000	106,997,093,391	106,300,000,000	16,010,000,000
<i>NON DTS</i>	110,064,608,926	72,978,560,975	70,634,176,443	10,391,206,601
TOTAL (SACCOS)	1,082,014,608,926	755,164,825,808	829,204,176,443	146,691,206,601
2. Coffee	15,147,955,588	118,925,556	1,861,299,877	20,793,162,610
Coffee Unions	1,666,938,997	2,402,267	88,546,469	41,953,625
3. Dairy	16,740,620,579	70,969,403	1,018,454,535	40,875,804,661
Dairy Unions	45,330,503			146,916,007
4. Other Marketing	1,837,417,423	201,789,250	77,266,040	579,266,774
5. Holding	719,058,796,000	459,740,583,000	373,731,329,000	123,424,898,000
6. Housing	36,757,122,554	8,236,330,273	1,530,867,645	1,700,085,551
7. Investment	6,611,864,703	1,409,909,889	528,722,024	1,497,716,241
GRAND TOTAL	1,879,880,655,273	1,224,945,735,446	1,208,040,662,032	335,751,010,069

Source: Audited Financial Statements.



Cornerstone of Economy

Founding President Kenyatta thought Kenyans would use cooperatives to control their destiny



Cabinet Secretary Wycliffe Oparanya with members of the Baricho Farmers Cooperative Society in Nyeri County.

Kenya's cooperative movement has a rich history dating back to 1908 when white settler farmers formed the Lumbwa Cooperative Society in Kipkelion of the Great Rift Valley courtesy of a colonial law called the Business Practices Ordinance.

Initially, it aimed to market their dairy products. However, its existence planted the seeds of the cooperative model. This would later serve as a powerful vehicle for the economic empowerment of local farmers and communities.

The movement evolved as Kenya moved towards independence in 1963. The Cooperative Societies Act enacted in 1966 marked a formal control of cooperatives by Kenya.

This pivotal piece of legislation allowed the growth of cooperatives that supported indigenous farmers, entrepreneurs, and workers hence empowering local

communities and promoting self-sufficiency.

Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta, recognised the power of cooperatives in building the nation. He stated: "Through Harambee and cooperatives, Kenyans can control their destiny."

Building financial ecosystem

The cooperatives' role in Kenya's economic development grew steadily after independence.

Today, with over 14 million active members, they remain a cornerstone of the nation's economy. They represent nearly 30 per cent of the country's population.

One of the most striking features of Kenya's cooperative movement is its employment impact. The sector

KEY POINTS

- The over a century old Kenya's cooperative movement is now a model to other African countries.
- "Through Harambee and cooperatives, Kenyans can control their destiny," Founding President, Jomo Kenyatta.
- Over 70 per cent of Kenya's population depends on agriculture for their livelihoods, and cooperatives play a crucial role here.

underscores its integral role in national economic activity by employing 63 per cent of Kenyans directly and indirectly.

David Obonyo, Kenya's Commissioner for Cooperative Development since 2021, states:

"Kenya's cooperatives are not just a financial tool. They are the bedrock of economic and social equity that allows millions to access the resources they need for a better life."

The cooperative sector has become a key driver of Kenya's GDP, contributing significantly to the nation's economic output. The savings and credit cooperatives in particular have made a profound impact by providing affordable loans, fostering a culture of saving, and serving millions of people who might otherwise lack access to banking services.

Daniel Marube who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK)—the national apex organisation of Kenya's cooperative movement—believes that "Saccos are the pulse of Kenya's cooperative movement.

From teachers and farmers to bodaboda riders, Saccos provide an opportunity for every Kenyan to access financial services and have a stake in the economy."

Pillar of food security

Cooperatives play an indispensable role in agriculture that over 70 per cent of Kenya's population depends on for livelihood. Agricultural cooperatives help farmers to access quality inputs, provide technical training, and ensure farmers have direct market access for their produce.

In 2021, Kenya's agricultural cooperatives helped farmers secure KSh80 billion (USD 600 million) in financing. It significantly contributed to the country's food security and agricultural productivity.

Obonyo further explains, "Agricultural cooperatives play a crucial role in ensuring



Proceedings at the annual Sacco leaders summit in 2024.

food security, providing input supplies, and facilitating the marketing of farmers' produce. The fact that a significant portion of Kenya's agricultural output is channelled through cooperative societies underscores the sector's importance."

Social impact and inclusivity

Cooperatives have remained relevant because of not only their financial impact but also their role in social welfare. The cooperative movement extends beyond banking by touching areas such as housing, education, and healthcare.

Housing cooperatives have provided affordable home-ownership opportunities to thousands while agricultural cooperatives have improved food security and market access for farmers.

Cooperatives also run health insurance programmes and education in bursaries for members. Lucy Njoki is a member of Biashara Women Sacco in Nakuru, approximately 160 kilometres to the west of Nairobi. She shares:

"Our cooperative is more than a financial institution. It has allowed us to drill a borehole, support our children's education, and even start a small milling business. It is our community's safety net and ladder to success."

The inclusion of youth and women in cooperatives has also been a game-changer.

With tailored financial products and leadership positions, cooperatives

have become important vehicles of empowering marginalised groups.

Policy of growth

The Cooperatives Bill of 2024 aims to modernise the sector by improving transparency and ensuring that cooperatives adhere to the highest standards of governance.

Patrick Kilemi, the Principal Secretary of the State Department of Cooperatives remarks that "cooperatives in Kenya are a central part of our economic transformation. The government is committed to fostering a conducive environment for cooperatives to thrive by aligning with Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda."

Kenya's cooperative movement has become a model for other African countries. It demonstrates how grassroots structures can catalyse economic growth and promote inclusive prosperity.

Kenya's success in leveraging cooperatives for financial inclusion, food security, and social development is the example to international organisations focused on poverty reduction, economic resilience, and social equity.

Today, Kenya's cooperative movement stands as a beacon of economic democracy that is rooted in the principles of mutual support, shared ownership, and community empowerment. They have not only stood the test of time but have thrived to offer an inspiring model of economic transformation.



Why Kenya's Movement is Continental Leader

Legal and regulatory framework in existence since 1966 remains dynamic

Good governance ensures transparent and accountable management of the resources of cooperative societies and efficient delivery of service to members.

This also entails compliance with the law and development and implementation of relevant policies to guide the governance and management of the societies.

Additionally, good governance includes timely and well-informed decision making that is not in contravention of the law and the by-laws.

Kenya is ranked Number one, in terms of size of the cooperative movement, in Africa. It hosts the African Confederation of Cooperative Savings and Credit Associations (ACCOSCA) and the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Regional Headquarters.

Currently, Kenya has a total of over 31,000 registered cooperatives comprising Savings and credit cooperative societies (Saccos), agriculture production/marketing, housing, transport, investment and mining.

Legal and regulatory framework

Cooperative societies are registered and managed under a legal and regulatory framework enacted by Parliament. In addition, other laws that deal with specific aspects of the operations of cooperative societies such as taxation, employment, procurement and anti-money laundering which are key to good governance.

Among the reasons for the success of cooperative societies in Kenya is the legal and regulatory framework which has been

in existence since the enactment of the Cooperative Societies Act of 1966 and the Cooperative Societies Rules of 1969.

Subsequently, the Cooperative Societies Act was amended in 1997 together with the attendant rules. The Act is undergoing amendments once again in order to address emerging issues in the cooperative movement in line with the growth of the sector.

Further, the Sacco Societies Act was enacted in 2008 while the Deposit Taking Sacco Regulations were formulated in 2010. In order to regulate other sizes of Saccos, the government formulated the Non-Deposit Taking Saccos which accommodates Diaspora Saccos, Internet-based Saccos and those with deposits of KSh100 million and above in order to enhance governance and reduce risk of members funds.

Compliance

Compliance refers to the process of ensuring that a cooperative organisation operates in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, standards, and internal policies governing its activities. This includes both external legal requirements and internal bylaws or rules agreed upon by members.

Compliance by cooperatives is important for the following key reasons:

- Protects members' interests and funds;
- Builds trust among stakeholders;
- Ensures sustainability and long-term success; and,

- Prevents legal penalties and reputational damage.

Non-compliance attracts penalties and sanctions against those responsible for management of cooperative societies. Through regular or impromptu inspection and inquiries into the affairs of cooperatives, the Commissioner of Cooperatives, Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority and the County Directors of Cooperatives are able to establish the level of compliance and therefore take necessary action to remedy situations that would otherwise compromise good governance.

Policies

In order to enhance governance and management of cooperatives, the Commissioner for Cooperative Development and the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority require that societies develop policies and procedures to guide their governance and operations.

Policies are general guidelines that outline how a cooperative society addresses specific issues and functions, while procedures provide instructions on how to implement the policies. The key policies issues include governance, financial management, procurement, human resource, credit and ICT.

Implementation of these policies has been critical in enhancing good governance hence the sterling performance of Kenya's cooperative movement.

Capacity building

Cooperative leaders are elected from different backgrounds and in most cases lack skills and knowledge in cooperative management. In order to enhance their capacity to provide efficient services to members and ensure good governance, there is need to undertake training.

The training ensures that management committee and board members as well as supervisory committees acquire necessary skills through induction after elections and attend continuous and relevant training during their tenure.

Outlook of sector

Concerns over financial mismanagement and governance have prompted the Government to introduce reforms. The Cooperatives Bill 2024, currently before Parliament, proposes measures to protect member deposits, enhance transparency, and limit Sacco directors' terms to three years, renewable once.

Additionally, the establishment of a Central Liquidity Facility and a Deposit Guarantee Fund aims to bolster stability in the sector. The government's commitment to strengthening governance and expanding economic opportunities is crucial to the success of the sector.

Conclusion

The government is responsible for enforcement of the law and supervision. Therefore, ensuring that leaders of cooperatives comply with the law and provide services in accordance with the objectives of their societies.

Further, leaders have the mandate to give strategic direction in the management of cooperatives while members are required to patronise their cooperatives and take part in electing those to lead their cooperatives.

Each stakeholder has a role in ensuring good governance and execution of the respective society's mandate.



A session in the National Assembly.

QUOTE:

The cooperatives movement is the sleeping giant of our economy. Our task is to wake it up and get it moving.

~ Peter K. Gachuba

Credited with transforming the credit and audit systems of Saccos.





Citizen Empowerment Tops State Blueprint

The plan was prepared after considering national priorities

The role of government in the cooperative movement (1963–2025) has been consistent and focused. The sector regularly updates its mandate to align with the government’s overall vision that ranges from policy support to legislative action, fostering cooperatives in empowering citizens, promoting economic stability, and ensuring sustainable development.

Cooperatives’ core values are integrity, professionalism, inclusivity, teamwork, customer focus, innovation and transparency. The ministry recognises the central role of the cooperative model in enabling participation of individuals in economic activities and the ultimate delivery of economic benefits along value chains. Challenges in value chain form some of the strategic issues identified in this Strategic Plan.

The strategic plan sets the foundation for accomplishing our mandate of promoting growth and development of cooperatives. This plan lays the strategies and activities that will deliver the goals of the ministry through identified key result areas.

We undertook a review of the previous plan and assessed BETA to shape and refine strategy of the State Department.

The entire plan is estimated to cost KSh5.786 billion against a projected allocation of KSh5.766 billion. This is the first strategic plan in 10 years, where the function of cooperatives has been elevated to the level of a ministry.

The plan is based on development frameworks covering Kenya Vision 2030, the BETA, and the Fourth Medium Term Plan of 2023 to 2027, the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, the Africa Agenda 2063, and the East African Vision 2050. The plan is also aligned to the Kenya Cooperatives Transformation Strategy.

Legal and policy innovation

The State Department has also formulated the Cooperatives Bill, reviewed the Cooperatives Financing Policy, and

the Sacco Societies Act. All these are expected to be finalised and executed in this plan.

Several strategic issues drive the objectives of this strategic plan. Some are outdated and weak cooperative policy, need for legal and institutional framework, unaggregated economic units leading to limited production, and value addition and market access by cooperatives.

The plan aims to have an enabling cooperative policy, a legal and institutional framework, promoting good governance in cooperatives, aggregation of individual economic units into cooperatives, improving access to affordable financial services, improving service delivery, and ensuring adequate and sustainable financial resources at the State Department.

The plan will be monitored annually using established frameworks with mid-term and end-term evaluation. With future growth in registered cooperatives currently estimated at 28,771, there is urgent need to address emerging policy and regulation issues to sustain growth of the cooperatives sub-sector.

The plan was prepared in consideration of national development priorities and regional and international development frameworks that Kenya has ratified. The

following were identified as key challenges emanating from implementation of the previous strategic plan:

1. Inadequate funding.
2. Inadequate office space, staff and vehicles.
3. Delayed finalisation of policy and legal instruments.
4. Constant shift in placement of the cooperative function in the Executive structure.
5. Covid-19 related disruptions.
6. Varying functionality of the cooperative functions across devolved units.
7. Restriction in one planning or budgeting sector despite the function cutting across all sectors.

Building on Past Successes and Failures Lessons learnt while implementing the precious strategic plan:

- Need for a functional communication, data, information and knowledge management system for effective service delivery.
- Need for a structured public participation framework and political good will in fast-tracking legal reforms.



A member rises and raises his hand to get a chance to speak at the Kenversity Annual General Meeting.

KEY POINTS

Past and Future Vision for Cooperatives. The strategic goals for the next five years are:

- Enabling cooperative policy, legal and institutional framework.
- Aggregated value chain actors and improved funding.
- Improved governance in cooperatives.
- Increased access to affordable financial services.
- Improved service delivery.

KEY POINTS

Performance in the strategic plan for the 2018 to 2022 period was delivered in seven key result areas:

- Policy, legal and institutional reforms.
- Cooperative production, value addition and marketing.
- Cooperative finance and investment.
- Cooperative governance and enforcement.
- Cooperative capacity building.
- Strengthening institutional capacity.
- Crosscutting initiatives.

- Need to set up intergovernmental coordination mechanism.
- There are topical issues in cooperatives sector that need technical guidance to ensure the sector is compliant to

national and international standards.

- Need to strengthen professionalism of cooperative officers.
- Need for deeper engagement with strategic development partners.
- Adapt to government guidelines on business continuity plan.

To overcome existing weaknesses, the State Department has formulated the strategic goals as follows:

- Enabling cooperative policy, legal and institutional framework.
- Aggregated value chain actors.
- Improved funding.
- Improved governance in cooperatives.
- Increased access to affordable financial services.
- Improved service delivery.

The strategic objectives that will be the focus of the State Department of Cooperatives in the five years of the plan are as follows:

SO 1: To update policy, legal, institutional framework.

SO 2: Aggregate individuals into cooperatives’ aggregated value chain actors.

SO 3: Increase cooperatives’ access to markets.

SO4: Develop aggregation infrastructure for upcoming cooperatives.

SO5: Secure resources for strategy.

SO 6: Improve governance in cooperatives.

SO 7: Increase access to affordable financial services by cooperatives.

SO 8: Improve quality of human resource at SDC.

SO 9: Improve staff working environment.

SO 10: Increase digitisation of services at SDC.

SO 11: Develop a knowledge management system.

Lastly, the State Department will digitalise services to reduce expenses associated with manual processing of registration.

It will also explore potential areas of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) to implement some of the activities proposed in the plan.



Commissioner David Obonyo rode a motorbike taxi in Mombasa when he attended the Bandari Deposit Taking Sacco in 2024.



New law Heralds Future of Cooperatives

Bill aligns sector's objectives with the Constitution

The development of the Cooperatives Bill of 2024 has been necessitated by changing socio-economic and political environment, national development priorities and other emerging business trends.

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 brought about fundamental changes in the management of public affairs by creating two levels of government, namely the national and county governments, and assigning them respective functions.

The Bill seeks to recognise the fundamental changes set out in the constitution, translate and cascade the broad social and economic pillars enshrined in Kenya Vision 2030 as well as the policy interventions prescribed by the Sessional Paper No. 4 of 2020

The main object of the Bill is to provide for a legal framework that promotes a sustainable and competitive cooperatives sector for socio-economic development in

a devolved system of governance. The Bill introduces several amendments and new provisions designed to restructure and enhance the cooperatives sector.

Below is an overview of the key issues introduced and addressed in the Bill, which do not feature in the current Cooperatives Societies Act.

Office of the Commissioner for Cooperatives

The Bill re-establishes the Commissioner for Cooperatives as an office within the public service. While this office existed in the previous Act, it has been restructured to align with Kenya's devolved governance system.

Functions of the Commissioner

The functions of the Commissioner are clarified in this section, particularly concerning the implementation of national policies, standards, and norms.

The Commissioner is responsible for registration of cooperatives, auditing, conducting inquiries upon county governments' requests, maintaining a national cooperatives registry, and enforcing recovery of defaulted remittances.

County Director of Cooperatives

A new provision establishes the County Director of Cooperatives as a public office within the county public service.

This role is crucial for creating oversight mechanisms at the county level, and ensuring cooperatives' governance and operations align with both national and county policies.

Functions of County Director of Cooperatives

The County Director's duties include implementing national and county-based cooperatives policies, promoting value addition, providing oversight and inspection of cooperatives, and offering capacity building.

This office also takes on a vital role in external auditing and promoting registration of primary and secondary cooperatives at the county level.

A new provision introduces the Inter-Governmental Cooperatives Relations Technical Forum (IGCRTF), a body designed to coordinate the cooperatives function nationally and at the county levels.

This framework facilitates collaboration and alignment in managing cooperatives, acknowledging the interconnectedness of cooperatives from grassroots to international levels.

Cooperatives movement structure

The Bill upgrades the current three-tier cooperatives structure (primary, secondary and apex) to a four-tier system, adding a federation level as a



From left: PS Patrick Kilemi, CS Wycliffe Oparanya and Commissioner David Obonyo, unveil the 2023 -2027 Strategic Plan for the State Department for Cooperatives.

QUOTE:
The Constitution of Kenya 2010 brought fundamental changes in the management of public affairs by creating two levels of government, namely the national and county governments, and assigning them respective functions.



new tier. This shift aims to reduce unhealthy competition between cooperatives and improve sector self-regulation as outlined in Sessional Paper No. 4 of 2020.

Protection of cooperatives identity

This section strengthens measures to safeguard cooperatives identity by preventing entities that resemble pyramid schemes from presenting themselves as cooperatives.

This is a response to past fraudulent activities that have negatively impacted public trust in cooperatives.

Democratic member control

A new provision prohibits classifying cooperatives members in a way that limits their voting rights, thereby reinforcing the democratic principle of equal member control. This ensures that vulnerable members are protected and have a say in decision-making.

Member participation in budgeting

To enhance transparency, the Bill requires cooperatives to provide estimates of income and expenditure to members at least 15 days before a general meeting. These documents must be shared through physical or electronic means, encouraging greater member participation in the budgeting process.

Election of supervisory board

The Bill formally anchors the election of the supervisory board in law, which was previously governed by cooperatives rules. This change strengthens oversight of cooperatives, improving accountability and governance.

Special general meetings

County Directors of Cooperatives are now empowered to convene special general meetings for primary and secondary cooperatives when necessary, ensuring continued governance and compliance with policy.



CS Wycliffe Oparanya, at the head of the table, and PS Patrick Kilemi, second from left, in a meeting with a delegation from the African Confederation of Cooperative Savings and Credit Association (ACCOSCA) in Nairobi.



Virtual meetings

A new provision allows cooperatives to hold virtual or hybrid general meetings under special circumstances. This ensures continuity in cooperatives operations, particularly when physical meetings are impractical, except for decisions on critical issues such as dissolution or mergers.

Delegate system of representation

The Bill introduces the delegate system of representation, which is not currently anchored in law. It limits the scope of delegate powers, ensuring that decision-making authority is balanced and aligned with the interests of the broader membership.

Board of directors and gender inclusivity

This section replaces the traditional management committees with a board of directors, establishing a clear distinction

between the roles of the board and the management staff. The board of directors is tasked with providing strategic oversight and governance, while management staff handle day-to-day operations.

Additionally, the section introduces provisions for gender inclusivity, mandating that no more than two-thirds of the board may be comprised of members of the same gender, provided that the cooperatives's membership diversity allows. This ensures broader representation and promotes gender balance within the leadership structure of cooperatives.

Director qualifications

The Bill introduces minimum qualifications for individuals aspiring to be elected as cooperatives directors, requiring candidates to meet the criteria outlined in Chapter Six of the Constitution of Kenya and possess at least a Form Four certificate. This is intended to improve the

quality of leadership and governance. **Nomination committee**

A new provision establishes a nomination committee consisting of between three and five individuals, responsible for vetting candidates for cooperatives elections. This committee is expected to improve leadership standards by ensuring only qualified individuals are elected.

Failure to refund

This section introduces a new provision imposing a penalty of 5 per cent per month for delays in refunding members' deposits. It empowers the Commissioner to appoint agencies to facilitate the recovery of these funds.

The purpose of this amendment is to protect the rights of members to withdraw from a cooperative and to ensure timely refunds, thus enhancing confidence in the cooperatives system.



Saccos are classified by their assets.

Cooperative companies

This new provision requires cooperatives forming companies to consolidate financial statements and appoint directors with member approval. The goal is to protect members' funds and ensure transparency in cooperatives investments.

Cooperatives tribunal

The Bill enhances the Cooperatives Tribunal by expanding its scope to include disputes involving employers, the Director of Cooperatives, and the Commissioner. This provides a centralised forum for resolving cooperatives disputes, with recommendations for expanding tribunal capacity to reduce case backlogs.

Ethics and integrity

New provisions in the Bill introduce mechanisms for enforcing ethics and

integrity within cooperatives. This includes wealth declaration, adherence to a code of conduct, provisions for regulations on procurement and guidelines for stepping aside when cooperatives officials join politics.

Dispute resolution

This section introduces provisions for cooperatives self-regulation, marking a significant step toward improved governance and service delivery. It establishes a code of conduct to guide cooperatives operations, ensures the implementation of an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) framework to handle internal conflicts, and promotes the development of virtual platform services for cooperatives.

These measures aim to streamline processes, enhance transparency, and modernise the way cooperatives

operate, ultimately improving overall governance and service delivery

Credit information sharing

This new provision establishes credit information sharing among cooperatives, allowing them to exchange data on members' credit histories. By enhancing transparency and access to credit information, this measure aims to mitigate the risk of loan defaults, ensuring that cooperatives can make informed lending decisions and maintain financial stability within the sector.

Inter cooperatives borrowing

This new provision introduces inter-cooperatives borrowing, aimed at promoting financial collaboration between cooperatives. It allows cooperatives with surplus capital to lend those with capital deficits, thereby facilitating better capital distribution within the sector.

This mechanism is expected to lower the cost of capital for cooperatives in need, fostering growth and stability across the cooperatives network.

Capital raising instruments

New avenues for capital raising are provided to enable cooperatives to expand and access additional funds, contributing to the growth and sustainability of the sector.

Cooperatives Development Fund

The Bill also provides for the establishment of a Cooperatives Development Fund, which will be financed by cooperatives. This initiative aims to support various activities such as research, training, community support, and the celebration of Ushirika Day, which recognises the contributions of cooperatives to the economy and society.

Although the concept of a Cooperatives Development Fund has not been previously implemented, its introduction in the Bill represents a proactive step toward enhancing the capacity and sustainability of cooperatives organisations through dedicated financial resources.



Steps That Have Shaped Great Movement

The Government has guided the development of cooperative sector diligently

- Kenya's cooperative movement was born in 1908 by European settler farmers but today touches every facet of Kenyan economic life. From a settler's club in 1908, it is a trillion-shilling sector in 2025.
- Africanisation intensified from 1945 and further entrenched at Independence in 1963.
- The 2000s witnessed exponential growth of Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies (Saccos).
- As of 2024, Kenya had over 29,000 registered cooperatives societies.
- In 2024, there was a wave of digitisation across the movement, ensuring compliance tracking of over 7,500 active cooperatives, improving transparency and reducing fraud. It also introduced e-filing systems and geo-tagging audits to strengthen oversight in rural areas.



President William Ruto with CS Wycliffe Oparanya.

When the seeds of Kenya's cooperatives movement were first sown in 1908 by European settler farmers in Lumbwa (modern-day Kipkelion), no one imagined that over a century later, cooperativeness would touch nearly every facet of Kenyan economic life, from housing to agriculture, banking, and transport.

Behind this transformation stands a pivotal figure: the Commissioner for Cooperatives Development, often referred to simply as the Commissioner of Cooperatives.

Tasked with registering, regulating, and safeguarding the interests of cooperatives and their members, the office of the Commissioner has been the silent but steady architect of Kenya's cooperatives infrastructure.

From settler clubs to regulator

The earliest cooperatives were settler-dominated agricultural societies aimed at marketing coffee and maize.

However, there was no formal oversight

body until the British colonial government enacted the Cooperatives Societies Ordinance in 1931, which formally created the office of the Registrar of Cooperatives Societies — the precursor to today's Commissioner.

Initially, the Registrar's duties were limited to registration and recordkeeping. African participation was minimal, and the cooperatives movement was skewed toward settler interests.

Time for change

The Cooperatives Societies Ordinance of 1945 marked the beginning of organised efforts to bring Africans into the cooperatives fold. The Registrar (later called the Commissioner) began overseeing new societies formed by African farmers in Central and Western Kenya.

STATS & FIGURES

As of 2023, Kenya had:

■ **Over 30,000** registered cooperatives societies.

■ A combined asset base of **KSh 1.8 trillion** (USD 13.8 billion)

■ **14 million** individual members, directly or indirectly dependent on cooperatives.

■ Saccos controlled over **KSh 900 billion** (USD 6.9 billion) in savings.

By 1960, over 400 African cooperatives had been registered, laying the groundwork for indigenous economic self-reliance. The office's role expanded to include capacity building, dispute resolution, and field inspections — functions that would later become statutory under Kenyan law.

Legal empowerment and national integration

Following independence in 1963, the Jomo Kenyatta-led government aggressively promoted cooperativeness as tools of rural development.

The Cooperatives Societies Act of 1966 formally established the office of the Commissioner for Cooperatives Development and gave it sweeping powers:

- Registering and auditing cooperatives societies.
- Approving by-laws and management boards.
- Intervening in cases of mismanagement.

By the 1970s, Kenya had over 2,500 registered cooperatives, representing hundreds of thousands of members. The Commissioner, often appointed by the President or Minister of Cooperatives, became the key regulator and technical adviser, supported by a growing network of district-level officers.

In 1997, Kenya had about 6,000 registered societies with an asset base of over KSh 20 billion (≈ USD 400 million at the time). The government enacted the Cooperatives Societies Act (1997) to modernise the sector and make it more member-driven, reducing over-centralisation in the Commissioner's office. However, the Commissioner retained key oversight roles.

Saccos boom and regulatory evolution

The 2000s marked a major turning point with the exponential growth of Savings



SASRA Chief Executive Officer Peter Njuguna at the second Annual Regulatory Authorities and Agencies (RAAs) conference at the University of Eldoret.

and Credit Cooperatives Societies (Saccos). By 2010, there were over 13,000 registered cooperatives in Kenya, with at least 4,000 active Saccos controlling assets worth KSh 180 billion (USD 2.1 billion). To manage this boom, the government established the Saccos Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) in 2008, partially relieving the Commissioner of the burden of regulating deposit-taking Saccos.

However, the Commissioner retained oversight over non-deposit-taking Saccos; housing, dairy, transport, and multipurpose cooperatives tribunals and dispute resolution as well as capacity-building programmes in counties.

The Commissioner's role is now more strategic than ever, especially under the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA) launched by President William Ruto. The government has emphasised the role of cooperatives in delivering affordable housing, universal health coverage, and agricultural finance.

In 2024, the Commissioner's office oversaw the digital registration and compliance tracking of over 7,500 active cooperatives, improving transparency and reducing fraud. It also introduced e-filing systems and geo-tagging audits to strengthen oversight in rural areas.

Key challenges and reforms

While the Commissioner's office has made notable gains, it still grapples with:

- Corruption and mismanagement in some societies.
- Political interference in Saccos elections.
- Inadequate staffing at the county level.

To address these, the Cooperatives Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2024, introduced provisions for automatic member audits, mandatory term limits for officials, and digitised dispute arbitration — initiatives championed by the current Commissioner, Mr. David Obonyo.

Bureaucrat turns catalyst

For over a century, the Commissioner of Cooperatives has evolved from a colonial registrar to a national economic steward. Today, the office not only enforces compliance but also drives innovation, safeguards member funds, and advises national policy.

As Kenya positions cooperatives at the center of inclusive economic growth, the Commissioner remains a vital cog — quietly but forcefully ensuring that the dreams of millions of ordinary Kenyans are not lost through the cracks of mismanagement or neglect.

From a settler's club in 1908 to a trillion-shilling sector in 2025, this office has helped shape the engine of Kenya's cooperatives economy.



Rise, Role and Growth of Cooperatives

The objective was to bring together bulk produce and process for export



Machinery enables counties increase their productivity.

Cooperatives have played a key role in socio-economic development across the world for many years. They show that it is possible to combine economic success with social responsibility.

The modern cooperatives movement began in 1844 in Lancashire, England, where the Rochdale Pioneers came together to offer an affordable alternative to the poor-quality and adulterated food and goods that were common at the time.

The cooperatives model was introduced in Kenya early in the 20th century by white settlers. The main aim was to bring

together, bulk, and process agricultural produce for export to Europe. At the time, as was the case in many other African countries, Kenya was regarded mainly as a source of cheap raw materials for the West's industries.

Formed in 1908, the Lumbwa Cooperatives Society was Kenya's pioneer cooperatives. Lumbwa, now Kipkelion, is in what is now Kericho County. Lumbwa Cooperatives Society was established by white settlers to help market their dairy products. Other key cooperatives that were formed during this early period include the Kenya Planters

Cooperatives Union (KPCU) in 1923, and both the Kenya Cooperatives Creameries (KCC) and the Kenya Farmers Association (KFA) in 1925.

Until 1931, there was no law specifically for cooperatives in Kenya. As a result, early cooperatives were registered under the Companies Act. This changed with the passing of the Cooperatives Societies Ordinance in 1931, which introduced a legal structure for managing cooperatives. All cooperatives that had been registered under other laws had to re-register under the new ordinance.

Africans were only allowed to form cooperatives from 1946, after the law was amended. Even then, their involvement remained limited due to colonial restrictions that barred them from growing cash crops or keeping improved livestock. These policies seriously affected the growth of African-led cooperatives.

Things began to change in 1954 with the introduction of the Swynnerton Plan by Roger Swynnerton who as an Assistant Director of Agriculture in the colonial government. The plan aimed to transform small-scale farming by encouraging land consolidation, individual land ownership, and the growing of cash crops.

It allowed Africans to get title deeds, access credit, and run family farms that could feed their families and generate income. Most importantly, it gave African farmers the right to grow cash crops such as coffee, tea, and pyrethrum, that had hitherto been reserved for European settlers.

The Swynnerton Plan came into effect during the Mau Mau uprising, which posed serious resistance against colonial rule. While the Swynnerton Plan aimed to boost African farming, it also had political goals-mainly to win African support by being seen as addressing land issues and economic exclusion, while still benefiting the colonial government.

By opening the door for Africans to grow cash crops and own land, the plan helped



Mangoes packed for export (above) and juices from the same fruit (below) made in Makueni County.





to lay the foundation for a strong network of African-led producer cooperatives. These cooperatives became important in collecting, processing, and marketing crops, especially coffee, tea, and pyrethrum.

When Kenya gained independence in 1963, a section of Africans, especially the loyalists, were already actively involved in the cooperatives movement.

Cooperatives in independence era

Kenya's development path after independence was first set out in the Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965, titled African Socialism and Its Application to Planning in Kenya. This important policy document laid the foundation for the Africanisation of the economy and focused on fighting poverty.

It promoted collective effort, fair distribution of resources and community-based development principles that aligned well with the cooperatives model.

One major outcome of this policy was the passing of the Cooperatives Societies Act of 1966. This was the first cooperatives law after independence and provided a full legal framework for registering, supervising, and managing cooperatives societies. It supported the growth of cooperatives that helped transfer land from settlers to indigenous Kenyans and played a big role in marketing agricultural produce.

The Government also set up institutions to support the cooperatives sector. One of these was the Cooperatives College of Kenya, which was officially opened in 1967. Its history goes back to 1952, when the School of Cooperation was established at the then Jeans School (now Kenya School of Government), to train cooperators from Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika.

In 1967, the college opened with 40 students at Allen Road in Nairobi—now the site of Daystar University. On June 18, 1970, founding President Jomo Kenyatta laid the foundation stone for its current campus in Karen. The college has since grown into a university and remains a leading institution for cooperatives education, research and development in

Kenya and beyond.

The Cooperative Bank of Kenya was also established in 1965 under the Cooperatives Societies Act to serve the financial needs of the cooperatives movement. It officially began operations on January 10, 1968, with a starting capital of KSh255,000 and a government loan of KSh214,000.

The bank has since become a fully-fledged commercial bank, providing a wide range of financial services to individuals, businesses and cooperatives. It is now incorporated under the Companies Act, but continues to be the main banker and financier of cooperatives in Kenya.

These legal and institutional reforms led to a rapid expansion of the cooperatives movement. By the 1970s, cooperatives, especially those involved in agriculture, were contributing significantly to Kenya's economy, with agricultural exports becoming the leading source of foreign exchange.

Post-1970 cooperatives development

As the cooperatives movement grew, it became clear there was a need for a formal policy to guide its development. This led to the formulation of Kenya's first post-independence cooperatives policy, the Sessional Paper No. 8 of 1970 on Cooperatives Development.

The policy aimed to consolidate the gains made since independence by improving cooperatives management, strengthening education and training, and deploying technical officers to support cooperatives societies.

In 1975, the policy was reviewed, and the Government officially recognised cooperatives as essential vehicles for mobilising resources to drive national development. To support this, a fully-fledged Ministry of Cooperatives was established to spearhead the growth of cooperatives across all sectors of the economy.

During the 1980s, the Government began implementing Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) introduced by the World Bank and the IMF. In line with



Cabinet Secretary Wycliffe Oparanya and Principal Secretary Patrick Kilemi brief media during a tree planting exercise in Gilgil, Nakuru County.

this shift, the Government adopted the Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986 on Economic Management for Renewed Growth, which emphasised a private-sector-led economy. This marked the beginning of the Government's gradual withdrawal from direct involvement in cooperatives activities.

However, in the Sessional Paper No. 4 of 1987 on Renewed Growth through the Cooperatives Movement, the Government reaffirmed its commitment to supporting cooperatives as important players in national economic development.

The 1990s saw increased momentum in economic liberalisation. This led to the development of Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1997 on Cooperatives in a Liberalised Economic Environment. As a result, the Cooperatives Societies Act of 1997 was enacted, which significantly reduced government control over cooperatives. From that point on, the responsibility of running cooperatives was placed fully in the hands of members and their elected

committees, with the Government taking on an advisory role.

Unfortunately, the abrupt withdrawal of Government oversight led to widespread mismanagement in the sector, and many cooperatives collapsed or became dormant. When the National Rainbow Coalition came to power in 2002, it moved quickly to restore order in the sector.

The Cooperatives Societies Act was amended in 2004 to re-introduce stronger government oversight and improve governance. In 2006, Cooperatives Rules were published to operationalise the amended law.

With the rapid growth of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (Saccos), the Government enacted the Saccos Societies Act in 2008, establishing the Saccos Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) to regulate deposit-taking and other specified Saccos. To support this framework, the Saccos Societies (Deposit-

Taking Business) Regulations, 2010 and the Saccos Societies (Non-Deposit-Taking Business) Regulations, 2020 were developed.

Cooperatives under the Constitution of Kenya 2010

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 brought major changes to governance by introducing devolution and creating 47 county governments. Under this new system, cooperatives development was devolved. Counties are now responsible for promoting and supporting cooperatives, while the national government is tasked with developing policy, setting standards and building capacity.

To align with the new constitution and modern business realities, the Government developed the National Cooperatives Policy, which was adopted by Parliament as Sessional Paper No. 4 of 2020 titled Promoting Cooperatives for Socio-Economic Transformation. This policy sets out a comprehensive

framework for strengthening the cooperatives sector by addressing several critical areas.

These include the establishment of a robust legal and regulatory framework, support for production, value addition, and marketing, as well as the enhancement of cooperatives finance and investment. It also focuses on improving education and training in the sector, promoting adoption of ICT, and building resilience to climate change.

Furthermore, the policy underscores the importance of gender inclusivity, the inclusion of Persons Living with Disabilities and marginalised groups, the mainstreaming of youth, and the promotion of human rights across the cooperatives movement.

To facilitate the effective implementation of this policy, the Government has developed the Cooperatives Bill (National Assembly Bill of 2024), which is pending in Parliament.



Fall and Rise Again

With vision, vigilance and voice they can still change lives

Despite its success, the co-operative system began to buckle by the late 1980s. Political interference entrenched itself deeply with boards becoming vehicles of patronage rather than professional management.

According to the 2007 World Bank report on Kenya's cooperatives, many co-operative boards were "political fiefdoms" that undermined accountability.

Kenya Farmers Association (KFA) was not spared. Once a proud voice advocating for smallholder farmers, it became embroiled in leadership wrangles and internal disputes in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Politicisation diluted KFA's core mission and caused fragmentation within farmer representation.

Reports of mismanagement surfaced, weakening its influence at the critical time farmers needed unified support to counter market volatility and the collapse of key cooperatives.

Kenya Co-operative Creameries (KCC)

KCC was once a dairy giant that processed over 1.2 million litres of milk daily. It imploded in 1999 under mountains of debt, corruption, and managerial failure.

Politicians were accused of "milking" KCC dry—its assets sold off in shadowy deals to well-connected elites. Farmers waited unpaid for months. Their milk left without a buyer.

Kenya Planters Co-operative Union (KPCU)

As the backbone of Kenya's coffee sector, KPCU faced ruin by 2009. Audits exposed millions lost to phantom farmers, inflated costs, and export losses. The cooperative was placed under receivership, forcing farmers to sell to middlemen and cede market power.

Kenya Farmers Association (KFA)

Amidst the turmoil of collapsing cooperatives, KFA's influence waned



significantly. Internal leadership crises and external political interference hampered its ability to advocate for farmers effectively.

Its fragmented voice at the national level left millions of smallholders vulnerable to exploitative middlemen and policy neglect.

The collapse was systemic, driven by:

- Political Capture: Boards stacked with unqualified appointees, prioritising loyalty over competence.
- Regulatory Gaps: Weak enforcement before 2004 created fertile ground for fraud.
- Member Illiteracy: Low financial literacy left members unable to challenge leaders.
- Resistance to Innovation: While

commercial banks embraced digitisation, co-operatives clung to outdated systems.

Blueprint for resilience

The Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Act of 2004 and establishment of the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) in 2009 introduced the much-needed accountability and operational standards. Accelerated digital transformation. Mobile banking, biometric IDs, and real-time audits restored efficiency and transparency.

Revived entities demonstrate the potential of comeback:

- New KCC that operates modern plants in Eldoret and Sotik now processes 800,000 litres of milk daily.

- New KPCU, relaunched in 2020 with government support, rebuilds the coffee chain with innovative financing like the Coffee Cherry Advance Revolving Fund.
- Co-operative Bank of Kenya, with assets exceeding KSh500 billion, serves millions and remains a lifeline to Saccos and farmers.
- KFA has re-emerged stronger, rebuilding internal governance and sharpening its advocacy role. CEO Dr Jane Ngige reflects:

"After years of challenges, KFA is committed to uniting Kenya's farmers and ensuring their voices shape policy and market access. We are championing transparency, innovation, and empowerment, so that farmers regain their rightful share of value."

Kenya's co-operative saga offers clear takeaways for investors and young entrepreneurs worldwide:

- Governance is paramount. Legacy size will not save institutions without transparency and checks.
- Digital is the future. Mobile-first solutions are essential to serve next-generation members.
- Community capital matters. Co-operatives remain the most potent vehicle of mobilising rural savings and driving inclusive growth.
- Guard against elite capture. When institutions serve narrow interests, collapse follows.

From collapse to catalyst

The journey of Kenya's co-operative movement—from its golden era through collapse to revival—is a testament of resilience amid adversity.

As Dr Ngige puts it, "Co-operatives are people's institutions—rooted in transparency and innovation. The next generation can restore the promise of shared prosperity."

To global investors seeking authentic impact, Kenya's co-operative resurgence offers a compelling narrative of renewal and opportunity.

"Co-operatives are what you make them. With vision, vigilance, and voice, they can still change lives."



Sowing Seeds of Green Future

Cooperatives take the lead in climate action, greening Kenya and its economy

As the world grapples with the overwhelming challenges of climate change, Kenya is sowing the seeds of a green future—literally, through cooperatives. In this daring attempt to plant 15 billion trees, the country is not only fighting climate change but also strengthening one of the country's oldest grassroots movements: co-operatives. Taking the lead in this green revolution is the State Department of Cooperatives under the leadership of Cabinet Secretary Hon. FCPA Wycliffe Oparanya, EGH, and Principal Secretary Mr. Patrick Kilemi, CBS. Since the year 2025 was resolved by the world as the International Year of Cooperatives, the co-operative movement in Kenya is accelerating its climate action plan, leveraging its robust grassroots relationship to bring environmental change to each region of the nation.

Catalysts for climate action

Cooperatives have been the cornerstone of Kenya's social and economic life for generations, representing millions of farmers, traders, and small businesspeople. Now, they are becoming essential forces behind climate resilience and reforestation. From farm co-ops to SACCOS, cooperative societies are mobilizing their members to participate actively in tree-planting campaigns, carbon farming ventures, and environmental education. "The co-operative model is best positioned to drive climate solutions since it is community-driven, inclusive and founded on mutual benefit," says CS Oparanya. "We are using this network to empower each of its members not just to plant trees but to realize their crucial contribution to restoring Kenya's environment."

Promoting Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA)

Cooperatives enable farmers to adopt CSA practices. For example, the Kimatwa Women SACCO in Makueni County, in partnership with the Alliance Bioversity International and CIAT, conducted training sessions that benefited 360 farmers with knowledge of sustainable farming methods.



CS Wycliffe Oparanya leads a tree planting exercise at a school in Uasin Gishu County in 2024.

Increasing access to climate information and inputs

By organized platforms, cooperatives provide farmers with quality seeds, weather information, and better markets. Njoro Cereal Promoters Farmers' Cooperative Society is a case in point in that it aggregates farmers, maximizes input availability, and boosts market linkages.

Deployment of renewable energy solutions

The Maziwa project, which was rolled out in Meru County, introduced biogas technologies and photovoltaic systems into dairy cooperatives, promoting the use of renewable energy and reduced reliance on traditional, polluting sources of energy.

Facilitating water harvesting and waste disposal

Solar panels, rainwater harvesting water tanks, and soak pits are being provided to milk cooperatives to facilitate

KEY POINTS

"The co-operative model is best positioned to drive climate solutions since it is community-driven, inclusive and **founded on mutual benefit,**" says CS Oparanya.

good wastewater disposal, enhancing efficiency of operations and environmental sustainability.

A 15 Billion Trees Vision

President William Samoei Ruto's 15 billion tree planting programme is not merely an environmental activity—but a legacy project aimed at reversing decades of deforestation and degradation. In this national aspiration, the Department of Cooperatives is integrating tree planting in all co-operative activity. This varies from issuing tree planting quotas to co-operative societies, distributing seedlings during meetings and AGMs, to compensating sustainable practices with economic incentives.



PS Patrick Kilemi during SACCA 2024 tree planting in Gilgil.



Commissioner for Cooperative Development David Obonyo participates in tree planting activities in Murang'a County.

State Department for Cooperatives Principal Secretary, Patrick Kilemi underscores that the program is being implemented with speed and scale. "We are making tree planting a lifestyle for all co-op members. With dedicated training, provision of seedlings, and support from the Ministry of Environment, we are making co-ops set the pace."

Sustainability, and the SDGs

This project also strongly aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), these being:

SDG 13: Climate Action – Mitigating climate change by increasing forest cover and carbon capture.

SDG 15: Life on Land – Restoring degraded lands and ecosystem biodiversity via afforestation.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production – Promoting green farming and sustainable livelihoods.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger – Enhancing agricultural resilience via agroforestry.

Farmers' co-operatives, especially in the coffee and tea sectors, are at the forefront of this movement. By integrating planting trees with farming—e.g., planting coffee bushes intercropped with trees to shade them—farmers are building up soil fertility, preventing erosion, and increasing yields.

In the highlands where coffee is king, climate change has been stimulant and threat to innovation. The temperature has risen, rain has been unpredictable, and new pests have introduced uncertainty into ancient growth patterns. But the cooperatives have met these challenges. Ninety percent of them are now adopting

climate-smart agriculture: planting coffee crop varieties that have drought tolerance, using organic compost, practicing water harvesting, and planting shade trees that not only sequester carbon but also protect coffee bushes from sun exposure. The coffee sector is adopting the belief that without trees, there is no future.

A Legacy in the Making

As 2025 unfolds—the International Year of Cooperatives—Kenya's co-ops are demonstrating that action on climate is not just for governments or corporations. It is a common cause. From seed to sapling to giant forest, every tree planted is the tale of community commitment, of shared responsibility, and of a country choosing to stand in common cause with the earth.

Ahead of the International Day of Cooperatives, Co-operative societies gathered at Jamhuri Park ASK Grounds to commemorate Co-operative Environmental Day under the theme "Co-operatives Build a Better World."

The event brought together members from various co-operative organizations who participated in tree planting activities and awareness campaigns aimed at promoting environmental sustainability.

The initiative emphasized the role of co-operatives in addressing climate change and underscored the impact of collective action in creating long-term positive environmental outcomes. Organizers and participants expressed their commitment to continue working together toward building a greener, cleaner, and more sustainable future.

The Cabinet Secretary Cooperatives and MSMEs Development Hon. Wycliffe Oparanya and PS Cooperatives Mr. Patrick Kilemi dream of a world where every cooperative society is a green champion.

Through policy, finance, and partnership, they are empowering co-operatives to not only thrive economically but also to be at the forefront of climate change efforts.



Greening of Kenya

Cooperatives are at the forefront of the government-led drive to plant 15 billion trees throughout Kenya by 2032





Cooperatives in Devolved Set-ups

Devolution drives production, savings and growth at the grassroots

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 ushered in political devolution and economic decentralisation. Among the key functions devolved to the county governments was the cooperative movement, a crucial sector responsible for grassroots financial inclusion, agricultural marketing, and small enterprise development.

With 47 counties exercising autonomy over cooperatives, Kenya's cooperative movement is being reshaped at the local level.

Devolution, as captured in the Fourth Schedule of Kenya's Constitution, refers to the transfer of political, administrative, and fiscal authority from the national government to county governments.

Cooperatives fall under the domain of County Governments (Part 2, Section 7), meaning counties are now directly responsible for their promotion, registration, regulation, and oversight.

This transition was intended to take cooperative services closer to the people,

give them local meaning, and regionally accountable—a significant departure from the centralised system that existed previously.

How devolved cooperatives work

Under the devolved system, each county has set up its own Department of Cooperatives Development or embedded cooperative affairs under the broader Department of Trade, Agriculture, or Economic Planning.

These departments are mandated to:

- Register and audit cooperatives.
- Train cooperative members and leaders.
- Resolve disputes.
- Promote cooperative enterprise growth.
- Monitor compliance with cooperative laws.

The central legal framework remains the Cooperative Societies Act (Cap 490), but counties governments have the power to enact their own cooperative development bills or policies aligned with their economic priorities.

Murang'a and Kakamega counties, for example, have passed county-specific cooperative laws to address local needs such as coffee marketing, savings mobilisation, or dairy value chain integration.

Each registered cooperative is governed internally by a board of directors, elected by the members. These directors are responsible for making key decisions on finance, investment, staffing, and strategic direction.

Directors are typically drawn from among cooperative members and must meet fit-and-proper criteria, including basic education, financial integrity, and no criminal record.



Kimalel Annual Goat Auction- Baringo County in 2024.

At the county level, oversight is provided by:

- **County Directors of Cooperatives:** These are public officers appointed by the County Public Service Board and report to the County Chief Officer or County Executive Committee (CEC) Member in charge of cooperatives. They act as the regulatory and development arm of the county government.
- **Cooperative Officers:** Deployed across sub-counties, they serve as the boots on the ground—monitoring performance, offering training, guiding new registration, and enforcing compliance.

The County Executive Committee (CEC) Member for Cooperatives (or Trade/ Agriculture) is the political head and sits in the County Executive Committee. This role is crucial in policy formulation, budgeting, and presenting cooperative sector plans to the County Assembly.

County support and funding

Cooperatives under the devolved system benefit from county-specific budgeting. Every financial year, counties allocate funds through their County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and Annual Development Plans (ADPs). These funds go into:

- Cooperative training programmes.
- Auditing and governance strengthening.
- Market linkage platforms (such as county trade fairs).
- Digital transformation (such as Sacco management software).
- Revitalisation of dormant or mismanaged cooperatives.

For example, in 2024, Nyandarua County allocated KSh45 million toward dairy cooperative enhancement through cold chain investment. In contrast, Kisii County focused on reviving banana marketing cooperatives with a KSh28 million boost.

Impact and challenges

The results of devolved cooperative management have been mixed but promising. Counties such as Meru, Embu and Murang'a have seen robust growth in value-added cooperatives—particularly in tea dairy, and coffee—because of proactive county support.

However, challenges persist. These include:

- **Politicisation:** Some counties have witnessed undue political interference in cooperative elections and director appointments.

- **Capacity gaps:** Inadequate technical staff in some counties hampers auditing and regulation.
- **Mismanagement:** Despite oversight, rogue directors have misused cooperative funds in counties like Bungoma and Migori, revealing weak internal controls.

Local roots, national goals

Kenya's cooperative sector is arguably more vibrant and responsive under devolution.

Counties are tailoring cooperative development to fit local economic priorities—be it rearing of dairy cattle in Nyandarua, avocado farming in Murang'a or artisanal mining in Taita Taveta.

With county directors and cooperative officers embedded in the community, and elected boards leading individual co-ops, the model ensures both grassroots control and professional oversight.

Ultimately, the devolved cooperative system is more than just local administration—it is a grassroots economic engine, giving Kenyans the tools to collectively own, produce, save and thrive.



Government officials inspecting Kibiru feedlot in Tigania West in Meru Country.



Kenya's Policy in Sync With Global Strategies

The objective is to promote competitive and sustainable cooperatives

The national cooperative policy provides the framework for accelerating growth in a dynamic and competitive global environment. It replaces Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1997 on "Cooperatives in a Liberalised Economic Environment" and highlights the historical background in Kenya and globally.

The objective is to promote competitive and sustainable cooperatives for social and economic development. The policy further analyses the cooperative movement's status and flags out its achievements.

The role of national and county governments remains facilitative. While retaining the four-tier system to support movement growth, the policy replaces National Cooperatives Organisation (NACO) with the federation to enhance sector specific regulation within the movement. The new structure empowers the CAK to play its role of advocacy.

There are proposals on measures to raise effectiveness of operations with clear separation of roles between the management and the board. The intervention also recognises the role of delegates vis a vis rights of individual members.

It responds to a need to stratify cooperative societies for ease of regulation and supervision. Further interventions aim to strengthen regulation and dispute resolution in cooperatives. The movement has mobilised over 48 per cent of national savings.

The World Bank estimates that cooperatives financed 90 per cent of housing stock in 2016. Thus, this policy proposes to strengthen cooperatives in savings mobilisation and housing.

Further, it addresses general credit management in producer cooperatives, emphasising on borrowers' education to reduce delinquency. In addition, there are proposals in areas of emerging financial operations for cooperatives. Participation in the national payment system, agency banking and share trading are some.

The role of cooperatives in agricultural value chains cannot be ignored because they channel farm input to improve production, provide market links for produce, and provide post-harvest storage as well as transportation. The policy further lays ground and emphasis on cooperatives to add value to raw produce.

In education and training, the Cooperative University of Kenya offers training on cooperative management. The policy recognises other centres of excellence as well.

Finally, the policy provides direction for transition from paper-based systems to use of ICT in cooperatives. Special interest groups such as youth, women, and people living with disabilities are also integrated.

Cooperatives and devolution

The Constitution of Kenya 2010 brought about two levels of government, county and national. The functions assigned to county governments under the Fourth Schedule include cooperative development and regulation, advanced by transition of authority through Legal Notice No. 137 of August 9, 2013.

Article 174 of the Constitution of Kenya sets promotion of social and economic development and provision of easily accessible services across Kenya as one of the objectives of devolution. With the principles espoused in Article 10 guiding all actors.

Defining a cooperative

The ICA defines a cooperative as "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".

Cooperative identity includes cooperative principles and values that guide cooperative policy and legal framework. Most significantly, they include protecting and fostering the autonomy of



President William Ruto chairs the first Cabinet meeting of 2025 at State Lodge, Kakamega.



cooperatives. As part of the international cooperative movement, all cooperatives in Kenya conduct their business in accordance with internationally shared cooperative values and principles.

Cooperative principles

The movement is founded on seven key principles: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, member economic participation, autonomy and independence, education training and information, cooperation among cooperatives, and concern for the community.

Policy review

Kenya has made significant strides in reviewing and modernising its cooperative framework since the launch of the National Cooperative Policy in 2019. The policy was formalised as Sessional Paper No. 4 of 2020.

In 2023, the Cabinet approved the Cooperatives Bill designed to enhance sector governance and align with the policy's vision. By 2024, with support from the International Labour Organization (ILO), Kenya developed the Kenya

Cooperative Transformation Strategy (KCTS).

That roadmap focused on digitisation, youth inclusion, climate resilience, and market access. The ongoing Cooperatives Bill of 2024 further cements this reform momentum hence reinforcing the cooperative sector's alignment with both national and devolved development agenda.

Justification for policy review

Changing governance structures and the social economic environment necessitated policy review. The Fourth Schedule of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 assigned county governments the management and capacity building of cooperatives. Policy and standards formulation went to the national government.

Important development strategies guiding the development of the cooperative movement include the Vision 2030 blueprint, SDGs, African Union Agenda 2063, ICA Blueprint vision 2020, ICA Africa cooperative development strategy 2017 to 2020, and World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) credential

guidelines and strategies.

The policy provides a framework for favouring environments to realise improved efficiency and profitability of cooperatives.

Theme of the policy

The theme "Promoting Cooperatives for Socio-economic Transformation" presents an opportunity for cooperatives to contribute toward attainment of Vision 2030. Cooperatives' contribution to the development of Kenya informed the theme.

Socio-economic development

Cooperatives help finance education, agriculture, housing, transport, health and commercial activities. They are critical in developing rural economies where smallholder agriculture is the mainstay of communities.

Largely, small-scale farmers carry out cash crop farming in coffee, sugarcane, rice, macadamia, cashew nuts, cotton, and pyrethrum.

Legal and regulatory framework

The framework of the policy is anchored in:

- Cooperative Societies Act, Cap 490.
- Cooperative Societies Rules of 2005.
- Sacco Societies Act 2008, Cap 490B
- Sacco Societies Regulations of 2010.
- Sessional Paper No. 6 of 1997.

The Cooperative Societies Act provides registration, incorporation, governance and supervision of all cooperative societies. The Act provides a three-tier structure: primary, secondary and apex cooperatives.

The Sacco Societies Act of 2008 was enacted to deal with licensing, supervision and regulation of Saccos while the Cooperative Societies Regulation of 2010 operationalised the above laws.

Institutional framework

The State Department of Cooperatives regulates the movement. The Office of the Commissioner of Cooperatives Development and SASRA perform this function. The Commissioner is both the regulator and promoter.

Objective of the policy

- Accelerate the growth and development of the cooperative sector through legal and institutional reforms.
- Promote cooperative production, access to shared resources, and value addition and marketing.
- Enhance financial deepening and investments through cooperatives.
- Establish an institutional framework for enhancement of cooperation, consultation and coordination of cooperative management.
- Promote governance in cooperatives.
- Develop the capacity of cooperatives through training, education and research.
- Promote adoption of ICT in cooperatives.
- Mainstream issues related to climate change, special interest groups, and human rights in cooperatives.



The Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) hosted the 2024 International Credit Union Regulators' Network (ICURN) Annual Conference in Naivasha.

Diaspora cooperatives

Kenyans in the diaspora are also increasingly cooperating and spreading the movement across the borders. The Diaspora Policy launched in 2015 recognises the need to mainstream the diaspora into our national development process where remittances turn into sustainable investments and social capital.

The state department registered the first diaspora based Sacco in 2012: the Kenya USA Diaspora Sacco, to offer a formal channel of pooling savings, accessing loans and investing back home.

There were seventeen such registered Saccos by 2017. They pool resources to offer loans, find real estate projects, support relocation costs, and invest back home in agribusiness, education or renewable energy. Through these Saccos, the members gain not just financial power but also a sense of community in foreign lands.

Diaspora cooperatives have a dual focus in anchoring members in host countries while linking them to Kenya's development. Digital tools enabling remote savings, mobile lending, and real time governance strengthen the movement further.

"We started with a WhatsApp group and a dream. Now we own land in Nairobi and our members back in Boston are building homes together," says Michael Ouma, founding member of the Kenya USA Diaspora Sacco.

Cooperative Insurance Company CIC started in 1968 to serve as an insurance provider of the cooperative movement's members. Established by the Cooperative Bank of Kenya, it offers a wide array of insurance services such as life, general, medical cover and asset management. It has a unique role because many Saccos partner with it for members' insurance products such as credit cover and school fees policies. It is insurance built by cooperatives for cooperatives.

CIC stands at the intersection of cooperatives, community, and commerce and has expanded regionally into South Sudan, Malawi and Rwanda to offer tailor-made products to suit members' needs in livestock insurance, last expense cover, and others.

"Before CIC, insurance was for the wealthy. Now our members know their children's school fees is safe even if the unexpected happens," says Sarah Wanjiru, a Sacco manager in Nakuru.



Sacco sector leadership forum in 2024.



CHAPTER 4

Info and Tech World





ICT and Digitisation way Forward

Technology is helping cooperatives take services closer to members

The dawn of the digital superhighway has revolutionised Kenya's vast and diverse cooperative movement. With over 14 million members and more than 30,000 registered cooperative societies as of 2023, according to the State Department for Cooperatives, this movement has long served as a backbone for inclusive economic growth.

The integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) into cooperative systems has greatly improved transparency, efficiency, financial inclusion, and service delivery. Yet gaps remain. Particularly in rural digitisation, skills training, and digital integration.

Kenya's cooperative movement began adopting ICT as early as 2005 when major savings and credit cooperative societies (Saccos) started digitising basic operations such as record keeping and loan processing.

Among the pioneers was Harambee Sacco, a civil servants' savings union founded in 1970. The real transformation gathered pace after 2009 following the formation of the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) that mandated digitised data reporting.

One of the earliest milestones came in 2013 when Mwalimu National Sacco—East Africa's largest teachers' cooperative—rolled out a core banking system to support mobile banking and real-time regulatory reporting.

"We realised that a Sacco of our size, with over 100,000 members, could not continue with manual systems. Digitisation became a necessity," said Alfred Wachira, the Chief Executive Officer of Mwalimu National Sacco, in a 2014 interview with *The Standard*.

Innovations of the digital superhighway

President William Ruto's Digital Superhighway Agenda launched in 2022 as a key pillar of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA)

has created enabling infrastructure for cooperatives to digitise further. The plan includes laying 100,000 kilometres of fibre optic cable. This is set to help digitise over 5,000 public services and aims to train 1 million youth in digital skills by 2027.

Cooperatives have begun integrating mobile apps, USSD codes, cloud accounting, and AI chatbots. The Kenya Police Sacco's M-Tawi platform, for example, enables members to check balances, apply for loans, and deposit funds via mobile phones.

Similarly, Unaitas Sacco, formerly called Muramati Sacco, has deployed mobile banking apps and integrated its systems with M-Pesa, Kenya's pioneering mobile phone money transfer service, to ensure faster loan disbursements and savings transactions.

"With technology, we have brought our services closer to our members. Over 80 per cent of our transactions are now done digitally," said Martin Muhoho, Chief Executive Officer of Unaitas Sacco, in a 2023 interview with *Business Daily*.

Co-op Bank's digital footprint

The Co-operative Bank of Kenya, founded by a cooperative movement in 1965, has played a leading role in enabling Sacco

digitisation. Through partnerships and direct support, the bank has helped Saccos deploy core banking systems, agency banking, and mobile integrations.

It is reported in its 2023 annual report, that mobile and agent banking channels occurring outside traditional banking halls, drove over 90 per cent of the bank's customer transactions.

The bank's Co-op Kwa Jirani (Co-op in the neighbourhood) model has enabled Saccos and small businesses to transact digitally in rural Kenya.

"Our mission is to digitise every part of the cooperative value chain. The economy grows inclusively when cooperatives thrive," proffers Dr Gideon Muriuki, Group Chief Executive Officer of the Co-operative Bank of Kenya.

Benefits for all

ICT has significantly boosted efficiency and inclusivity in the cooperative sector. According to a 2021 World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) report, digitised Saccos in Kenya experienced up to 30 per cent loan book growth annually and reduced loan defaults by 15 per cent due to automated credit scoring and repayment reminders.



The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (Kuscco) and KWARA, a developer of banking applications, entered a partnership in 2022.

Women, youth, and rural farmers, who previously lacked physical access to Sacco offices, now receive services through mobile apps and agency banking. This has improved rural financial inclusion and resilience during shocks such as droughts or pandemics.

"Digital banking has empowered us to serve more members with fewer delays. This transformation saved us during Covid-19," said Naomi Kenya, Chairperson of Meru Dairy Farmers Cooperative Union in 2022.

Opportunities

However, despite this progress, several gaps need to be filled to exploit the full potential of ICT in cooperatives: Rural connectivity A 2022 Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) study revealed that only 45 per cent of rural cooperatives had stable internet access. Without connectivity, deploying digital platforms remains restricted.

1. Digital literacy deficit

Older ones and those in agricultural cooperatives still lack the digital literacy

required to navigate mobile platforms or access digital statements, which limits adoption rates.

2. Cybersecurity risks

As Saccos digitise, they face increased exposure to cyber threats. A 2023 report by the Kenya National Cybersecurity Centre, found that only 23 per cent of Saccos had cybersecurity policies in place.

3. Disjointed systems

Most Saccos use standalone core banking platforms. Lack of interoperability means regulators, umbrella bodies and cooperative lenders face hurdles in data consolidation and risk profiling.

"We need a shared digital infrastructure for Saccos. One that supports real-time reporting, risk sharing, and member profiling," argues George Ototo, Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives (KUSCCO).

Looking ahead

Kenya's cooperative sector has already shown how digitisation can empower millions of citizens economically. To realise the benefits of the digital superhighway fully, the government and cooperative need to prioritise:

- Last-mile connectivity through public-private partnerships.
- National digital training programmes tailored for cooperatives.
- Shared Sacco platforms to foster data integration and innovation.
- Cybersecurity funding to protect sensitive member data.

As President Ruto emphasised during the Kenya Innovation Week 2023:

"Our digital superhighway is not just about infrastructure. It is about transforming lives. Cooperatives are key to delivering that transformation at the grassroots."



Digitised Murang'a Society Shines

A once struggling outfit has become increasingly beneficial to members

Creativity and innovation have turned the fortunes of a Murang'a coffee farmers' cooperative from the stables to the stars. At a time some coffee farmers are toying with the idea of abandoning the crop over poor returns, members of Gatagua Agro-marketing Farmers' Cooperative society are a happy lot smiling all the way to the bank.

The cooperative has now turned into a veritable study of how a struggling outfit can turn the tables and ensure remarkable profits for its members. The coffee sector, once the country's most lucrative agriculture landscape is not just on the recovery path but also putting good money in the hands of farmers.

Nahashon Chege who is Gatagua society's chair says farmers earned KSh60 per kilo of cherry up from KSh38 in recent payments. The hike largely attributes to the improvement of quality of coffee beans.

The cooperative is in Kahuro sub-county of Murang'a, established in 2019 after it split from Mugoiri Cooperative Society. With 972 active members, the outfit has grown from strength to strength.

Chege says coffee production increased from 78,000 kilos in 2019 to 243,000 kilos in 2020. Production shot to 520,000 kilos in 2021, earning farmers KSh80 per kilo of cherry.

"Our production in the year 2022 was 489,000 kilogrammes. We sold our coffee directly to a buyer and farmers earned KSh110 per kilo. Selling coffee directly to buyers fetches impressive prices," Chege notes.

In 2024, farmers produced 440,785 kilos, earning KSh120 per kilo of cherry. The upward trajectory had started and things were looking up.

"For the 2024/2025 coffee season which was paid in February this year, we paid KSh120 per kilo. This was the best price farmers earned since the inception of the society," says Chege.

Partnerships and high quality beans

What trick turned members' fortunes around? Enabling farmers to enhance quality helped attract international buyers.

"We have stressed on high quality since we took over management. We engaged officers from Coffee Research Institute and extension officers from Kenyacof Limited. They have trained our farmers on better ways of propagating coffee bushes," says Chege.

The training has borne fruit enormously. Now, a large amount of coffee produced by farmers is of the AA premium grade.

Further, the society has established a supervisory committee that visits farms regularly to check on the quality of the coffee. For instance, farmers have learned that inter-cropping coffee bushes with maize or Napier grass, among other crops, lowers quality and production.

In addition, there is increased emphasis on pruning and extension officers training farmers on proper ways of pruning coffee bushes and applying fertiliser.

The cooperative has forged partnerships with manufacturers of fertiliser and does not rely on subsidised fertiliser. As a result, the cooperative is now producing high quality coffee that local and international buyers seek.

To facilitate renovation and facelift of their factory, each farmer contributes between 15 and 20 per cent of earnings annually. This caters for upgrade of equipment and facilities at the factory.

Digitisation and modern methods

What precisely does this entail? Management has installed digital weighing machines that notify member farmers of the weight of their coffee once delivered at the factory.

"We have also installed 38 metallic coffee drying beds and we are in process to install other metallic drying beds. The

factory has also installed a solar coffee drying chamber to assist during chilly or rain seasons," says Chege.

Timely payment to farmers has motivated them to increase coffee production because their coffee sells either directly or through the Nairobi Coffee Exchange.

Gatagua has been recognised and rewarded several times for producing quality coffee beans.

Bright future for county

Murang'a County Governor, Dr Irungu Kang'ata, said his administration has set aside funds to support coffee farmers and increase production. The Governor says that a team from the county government will tour USA and China to seek markets for Murang'a coffee before the year ends.

He describes the average payment of KSh115 per kilo as a landmark payment and observes some factories such as Wanjengi paid KSh141. Kahuhia main paid KSh122 per kilo while Ngwethe paid KSh120. Kaganda KSh119 and Muthuru KSh116 per kilo, respectively.

"Just recently, a kilo of coffee was fetching KSh20. We laud the government for revamping the coffee sector to ensure farmers have more income," says the Governor. He says training cooperative leaders is yet another measure aimed at boosting the production and quality of coffee.

"For the 2024/2025 coffee season which was paid in February this year, we paid KSh120 per kilo. This was the best price farmers earned since the inception of the society," says Chege.



New KPCU Exhibition at the 2025 Meru National Agricultural Society of Kenya Show.





Discipline of the Digital era

Facing the challenge of digitising without dehumanising

In Kenya's vibrant financial ecosystem, where mobile money giants and commercial banks dominate headlines, an unlikely yet formidable force has quietly taken root: faith-based Saccos.

Rooted in religious communities and powered by shared values of trust, discipline, and collective progress, these Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies (Sacco) are increasingly reshaping the financial narrative. Especially among the underserved.

Over the decades, Saccos formed around religious institutions have become critical financial intermediaries. They offer not just loans and savings but also a community-first approach to capital formation that encourages ethical lending and responsible spending in line with religious teachings.

"We started with offertory boxes and prayers," reflects Joseph Karani, a retired reverend and board advisor at AIM Sacco, "Today, we disburse millions through mobile apps."

Below are the histories, evolution, and regulatory adaptations of Kenya's leading faith-based Saccos. And why their story matters in today's era of digitised finance.

Waumini Sacco

Formed in 1980 under the auspices of the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops (KCCB), Waumini Sacco was born from a desire to empower Catholic lay faithful—especially catechists, priests, and church workers—with accessible credit and savings instruments. It was also a deliberate move to instil financial prudence among the devout.

With over 40,000 members today, Waumini Sacco has spread its tentacles across dioceses. That enables parishioners to borrow at rates far lower than commercial banks.

The Sacco launched its Waumini Mkononi mobile app in 2021 to allow remote deposits, withdrawals, and instant loan applications. To comply with SASRA's regulatory framework, it now

operates under the non-withdrawable-deposit-taking (Non-WDT) licence with audited financials and a risk-based audit department.

"Faith is no excuse for regulatory laxity," SASRA Chairman John Munuve noted in 2023, "These Saccos must meet the same prudential standards as their secular peers."

Mwalimu National Sacco

While not exclusively faith-based, Mwalimu Sacco—Kenya's largest, with over 100,000 members—has deep roots in the church, especially through Catholic and Protestant-sponsored schools. Founded in 1974, the Sacco grew through church-run teachers' colleges and diocesan networks.

Its product suite includes FOSA accounts, salary advances, school fees loans, and a mobile app called MwalimuGo. Many

of its early members were lay Christians in mission schools. Mwalimu Sacco has undergone complete digitisation with biometric systems and real-time mobile lending. Fully licensed by SASRA, it underscores its financial muscle by being the majority shareholder of Spire Bank.

Elimu Sacco

Elimu Sacco established in 1972 primarily to cater for educators, many of whom are employed by religious institutions. It maintains strong relationships with Catholic, SDA, and Anglican schools.

With over 30,000 members, Elimu Sacco modernised its operations by adopting Finacle Core Banking in 2022 to enable digital loans and CRB integrations. It is fully SASRA-compliant and holds a non-withdrawable-deposit-taking licence.

In addition to offering Shariah-compliant products, Elimu conducts faith-based

financial literacy campaigns, particularly in Catholic dioceses.

AIM Sacco

Founded in 1998 in Eldoret by a group of pastors and Christian professionals, AIM Sacco (short for Amani, Imani, Maendeleo) has grown into a model for interfaith financial cooperation. Although rooted in evangelical churches, it is open to all denominations.

With more than 25,000 members and branches in Nakuru, Kitale, and Nairobi, AIM Sacco offers ERP-powered mobile banking, payroll loans, and business asset financing. AIM Sacco underwent SASRA compliance transformation in 2021 and maintains a robust digital fraud awareness programme.

"We must digitise without dehumanising," said Rev. Joseph Karani, "Technology should serve mission, not replace it."



PCEA Murera Sacco

Registered in 2002 by the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) Murera Parish, this Sacco serves small-scale business owners, bodaboda riders, and farmers within the Juja constituency. Although relatively small, with under 5,000 members, its impact is deeply felt.

The Sacco recently launched a USSD service (645#) and a mobile wallet via Unaitas Tech. It provides soft loans, merry-go-round support, and FOSA services, under a Non-WDT SASRA licence.

Murera Sacco has pioneered the "Faith and Finance Sunday" model where sermons integrate budgeting, saving, and entrepreneurship teachings.

Mwea Tabere Cooperatives

Although registered in 2005 as a secular entity, Islamic finance principles influence Mwea Tabere Cooperatives heavily, especially among its rice farmers in Kirinyaga County. Members are predominantly Muslim and the Sacco avoids interest-bearing instruments.

It offers murabaha-style trade finance, Shariah-compliant savings plans, and community-based credit guarantees. Despite not having a mobile app, the Sacco uses SMS banking and manual reconciliation. It has petitioned SASRA for special consideration under Islamic compliance models.

SASRA compliance

The digital push has become critical for outreach, especially after Covid-19. Key

developments include:

a) Mobile and USSD Banking
Waumini Sacco: Waumini Mkononi app for mobile loans and transactions.

Mwalimu Sacco: MwalimuGo app with real-time loan access.
PCEA Murera: USSD (645#) platform.

b) Core System Overhauls
Elimu Sacco: Adopted Finacle in 2022.

AIM Sacco: Deployed ERP systems for automation and reporting.

c) Cybersecurity and Data Protection
Faith-based Sacco like Waumini and Mombasa's Maendeleo ya Waislamu Sacco now incorporate two-factor authentication, data encryption, and regular fraud awareness drives in church and mosque forums.

d) Blending Theology with Literacy

Parishes and mosques are offering sessions on financial literacy, interest vs. usury, and prudent investing. "Digital finance is not unholy," quips Sheikh Hassan Omar, advisor to Mwea Tabere, "It is how you use it that matters."

Faith-Based Finance in the 21st Century
Kenya's faith-based Saccos are neither relics nor rural curiosities. They are evolving, embracing digitisation, and submitting to regulation without abandoning their spiritual DNA.

By combining prayer with prudent lending and sermons with savings, these Saccos have redefined financial inclusion—one tithe at a time.





CHAPTER 5

Women and Youth in Charge





Fronting Cooperative Economy

Women and Youth are the new faces of a countrywide transformation force

AT A GLANCE

KENYA'S Cooperatives SECTOR

27,141+ registered cooperatives

More than 14 million members

KSh 1.5 trillion in total assets (2023)

Among Africa's most vibrant cooperatives economies

GROWTH DRIVERS

50%+ of Saccos members are now women



Kenya Women Microfinance Bank (KWFT): 800,000+ members

Nationwide reach

Legal Boosts: 2010 Constitution (Gender Equality) Saccos Societies Act (2008)



YOUTH (18-35)

32% of new Saccos are youth-led (2023)

Innovation hubs: Agritech | Fashion | Green Energy

Digital-first tools: ChamaPesa | Unaitas | University Saccos drives

Quote: "Our Saccos funded our first fashion line." - Kennedy Otieno, Kisumu



WHY IT MATTERS TO INVESTORS

Rising focus on climate-smart cooperatives

Trend toward formalisation and tech integration

Ideal channel for impact investment and inclusive finance

Growing interest from:

IFAD, UN Women, USAID, Equity Group Foundation,

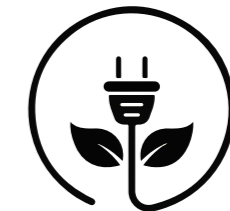
European climate funds targeting youth



CASE STUDIES

1. Youth-Led Solar Saccos - Meru
2,500 members | Green energy focus | EU-linked microloans

2. Women-Led Agricoop - Nyandarua
Dairy + Processing | Leadership pipeline | Retail expansion



THE OPPORTUNITY

Segment	Value Proposition	Investment Angle
Women	Expanding market influence	Gender lens investing
Youth	Tech-first, high-potential ventures	Venture/ Capital Social finance
Digital Saccos	Low-cost financial access	Fintech partnerships
Green Coops	Climate + community model	Climate finance & ESG



CLOSING QUOTE:

"If you want to go far, go together. In Kenya, women and youth are going far through cooperatives."





Transparency Blazes Trail in Auto Sphere

School mates and friends formed the first of 10 such societies

Tucked away in between the busy Donholm Interchange and the Donholm subway, lies the Eastlands College of Technology, the serene home of Transparency Auto Workers Cooperative. It specialises in various automotive services including oil change, diagnostics, wheel alignment, engine maintenance, bodywork and electrical repairs, striving to provide services needed by the community at affordable rates.

Among the first registered worker cooperatives in Kenya, Transparency was started by former students of automotive engineering at the Eastlands College of Technology in 2021. The college is a subsidiary of Strathmore University, and offers engineering courses. The student population started at a humble 12 but has since grown to 22 certified automotive engineers.

Transparency was officially certified on May 10 2022, after a year-long process, making it the first of 10 worker cooperatives to be registered in Kenya. Worker Cooperatives differ from other types in that they are exclusive to professionals who share the same skills set. Rather than buy shares, members offer skills in exchange for profits. They are employees. In a manner of speaking, worker cooperatives are the new kid on the block.

Ashphenaz Kamau, co-founder and chairman, says the objectives of starting the coop were to:

- Create employment
- Offer professional services
- Offer fair pay for work done
- Grow together as a cooperative

Membership is open to automotive engineers of all ages and genders, and from all over the country. Enquiries for membership come from as far as Mombasa, Eldoret and Nakuru. So many are they that they have had to pause registration for new members! With a median age of 21 to 26, one could safely say this is a cooperative for young people by young people. However, they recognise the role played by older and more experienced individuals within



Ashphenaz Kamau, Co-founder of Transparency Auto Workers Cooperative, with Spanish friends at the second Cooperative Movement Stakeholders' Annual Conference in Mombasa in 2024.

the movement and partner with them frequently. Unbelievably affordable, registration is KSh 1,000 non-refundable. Shares go for KSh 500 each, with a maximum cap of 10 shares. Due to the rapid growth and success witnessed, this fee will go up to KSh 2,500 for registration and KSh 2,000 per share from 2026.

This rapid growth is a testament to the timeliness of the worker cooperative model, especially in an economy that churns out graduates by the million, with limited opportunities to hone their skills. It has resulted in increased returns for members and diversified cooperative investment. For example the coop has acquired state of the art machinery and started a car wash and a spares shop on Ngong Road, in addition to the original workshop in Donholm.

Transparency is not confined to the automotive industry though. With the Mondragon Corporation in Spain being their role Model, Transparency hopes to expand into hybrid businesses such as manufacturing and real estate while still maintaining a firm footing in the automotive industry.

The ultimate dream is to purchase land and buy homes for their owners in the next five years. Dividends will be issued at the end of the year 2025.

Management structure

Transparency is headed by a board that comprises a chairman, vice chairman, treasurer and secretary. There is the Disciplinary Committee and the Supervisory Committee that acts as the bridge between the board and the members, and the Education Committee led by the vice chair.

This committee conducts training and education. With worker cooperatives being relatively new in Kenya regulation and classification are still being worked out with a worker cooperative Interim Federation in place to play this role.

This is as the workers await the Cooperative Bill of 2024 in Parliament to be passed into law. Transparency gained official registration status from Nairobi County with support from Global Communities' Cooperative Leadership, Engagement, Advocacy and Research (CLEAR) Program.

CLEAR is funded through the United States Agency for International Development's (USAID) Cooperative

Development Program. This support makes it possible to conduct forums and training at county and national levels.

Despite worker cooperatives being referred to as the baby of the cooperative movement, Transparency is already making moves internationally. Njenga, the chair, was a panelist at Digital Uprising, a

pan-African digital cooperativism conference held in Mombasa in Nov 2024. It was organised by the Platform Cooperativism Consortium (PCC) and Cooperative University of Kenya, with support from Kenya's Ministry of Cooperatives, ILO and ICA-Africa. A convergence of over 500 leaders from 33 countries across coops, tech, policy-making, gender equality, youth, and human rights sectors met for 4 days to discuss how to digitise the movement.

Another feather in Transparency's cap is the global competition WorldSkills, a prestigious biennial international competition, often dubbed the "Skills Olympics".

It is designed to showcase and elevate vocational and technical excellence. One of its core skill areas is Automobile Technology, centred on modern automotive engineering and maintenance.

Transparency won first place in 2023 and proceeded to represent Kenya in France in 2024. "The cooperative allows us to be our own bosses. It allows youth to have clear job opportunities and jobs that we can do with passion," says John Karika, the Secretary.

KEY POINTS

- Transparency officially certified on May 10 2022.
- Median age is 21 to 26, making it a cooperative for young people by young people.
- Strategic growth has seen acquisition of state of the art machinery, car wash and spares shop on Ngong Road.

For more information and enquiries send an email to coopconference@cuk.ac.ke or Call +254 724 311 606



Weaving way to Financial Freedom

Working diligently, the women have their fortune at their fingertips



Kajiado women diligently and carefully thread their beadwork.

Under the expansive skies of Kajiado County, Elizabeth Lekanet sits outside her home in Olorien village, her fingers carefully weaving colourful beads into intricate patterns. Each bead carries the wisdom of generations, a story deeply woven into the rich tapestry of Maasai tradition, passed down from mother to

daughter. Just a few years ago, beadwork was merely a pastime activity for Lekanet, something done in between household chores, offering little promise of financial security. But today, thanks to the Ushanga Kenya Initiative, it is her livelihood, her empowerment, and her gateway to a better future.

A mother of four, Lekanet recalls how she once struggled to provide for her family. Farming, her primary source of income, was unreliable, and occasional bead sales barely covered her children's school fees or daily meals. Every day was a battle against uncertainty, with hope feeling more distant as time passed.

"Before Ushanga was launched in Kajiado, many women here struggled with no reliable source of income or market for our beadwork. For me, putting food on the table for my children was an uphill task," she says.

She credits the Ushanga Kenya Initiative with transforming the livelihoods of women in the region. The programme offers training in modern beadwork techniques, business management, and digital marketing, equipping artisans with the skills needed to commercialise their craft.

"We have benefited a lot from Ushanga. We've learned how to use machines to string beads faster and more efficiently to ensure that our beadwork meets international market standards," she says.

Beyond refining their craft, women in the programme also learn how to market their products digitally, create social media pages, and take high-quality photographs to attract global customers.

Lekanet now sells her handcrafted accessories locally and internationally, reaching buyers directly without relying on the middlemen who had once profited from her labour.

Her earnings now support her children's education, provide consistent meals, and give her the dignity of financial independence. What was once a quiet craft practiced as tradition has now become a force of empowerment, a livelihood woven into every bead she threads.

Similarly, Agnes Naikuni, a widow from Maparasha village, had spent years creating intricate beadwork only to sell it for far below its true value. Like many women, she fell victim to middlemen who exploited artisans, buying their work cheaply and reselling it at premium prices elsewhere.

Through Ushanga Kenya, she learned to market her craft directly, cutting out intermediaries and increasing her earnings. The government-backed initiative links women to both local and international markets, ensuring they reap maximum benefits from their craft. Today, Naikuni's beadwork is shipped across Kenya and beyond, and the



President William Ruto admires beadwork at Kimalel in Baringo County.

income she generates allows her to provide for her children.

"We used to sell a bracelet for fifty shillings, not knowing that the same piece could be worth thousands abroad," she says, reflecting on how much her perspective has changed.

As part of its effort to eliminate exploitation by middlemen, Ushanga Kenya is urging more women to join cooperatives so they can be directly linked to buyers and markets without relying on intermediaries. This step ensures that women control pricing, maximise profits, and secure stable livelihoods.

Across Kajiado County, cooperatives have become vital engines of economic empowerment, enabling artisans to access funding, pool resources, and negotiate better prices for their products.

These cooperatives also serve as structured channels through which women can access training, business mentorship, bulk raw materials at reduced costs, and participate in exhibitions and trade fairs at county, national, and international levels.

At a recent Ushanga Kenya beadwork training session held in Olorien, Gladys Moses, Chairlady of the Elaroi Women Group, passionately urged fellow women to embrace the cooperative societies.

She emphasised that such societies are more than just business groups; they are safe spaces for shared learning, financial inclusion, and community resilience.

"For too long, women have worked in isolation, selling their crafts at low prices and being taken advantage of by brokers. Cooperatives give us the power to set fair prices, power to access funding, and power to grow together," said the Chairperson.

Through the cooperatives, the women can open group bank accounts, save consistently, and qualify for loans that can be used to expand their businesses or address personal needs such as school fees or medical care. Some groups have even established rotational savings (*chamas*) within the cooperatives, fostering a culture of accountability and support.

The Ushanga Kenya Initiative, a national government flagship project established in 2017, was created to empower pastoralist women involved in beadwork, transforming their traditional art into valuable, marketable commodities.

Targeting seven counties—Turkana, Samburu, Kajiado, Narok, Baringo, Marsabit, and West Pokot—the initiative aims to strengthen business and production capacity, making beadwork competitive in local, regional, and international markets.



Out With Middlemen!

Kajiado cooperatives enable women access markets and focus on value addition



CS Wycliffe Oparanya meets Kajiado women in dairy cooperatives.

For generations, Maasai women in Kajiado County have relied on milk as a vital resource, using it for household consumption and selling surplus at local markets. But the earnings have been meagre, dictated by middlemen who control pricing, leave women with shaky financial security. Despite owning the milk, they lack the power to turn it into a sustainable source of income.

However, that reality has changed. With the rise of hundreds of dairy cooperative societies, which have

empowered the women to take control of milk sales, negotiate fair prices, and access structured markets.

Through the cooperatives, women have gained direct access to formal markets, eliminating the middlemen. They now negotiate fair rates, receive timely payments, and access financial services, ensuring that milk sales translate into stable incomes. The ability to pool resources has also allowed them to purchase bulk animal feeds, invest in cooling facilities to prevent milk spoilage

and improve milk hygiene, making their products more competitive.

Leading this transformation is the Maasai Kajiado Women Dairy Cooperative Society, the largest women-owned dairy cooperative in the region, which has grown from 500 members in 2011 to an impressive 4,400 members today.

For Josephine Tima, of the Maasai Kajiado Women Dairy Cooperative Society, this transformation has been life-changing. Once struggling to provide for

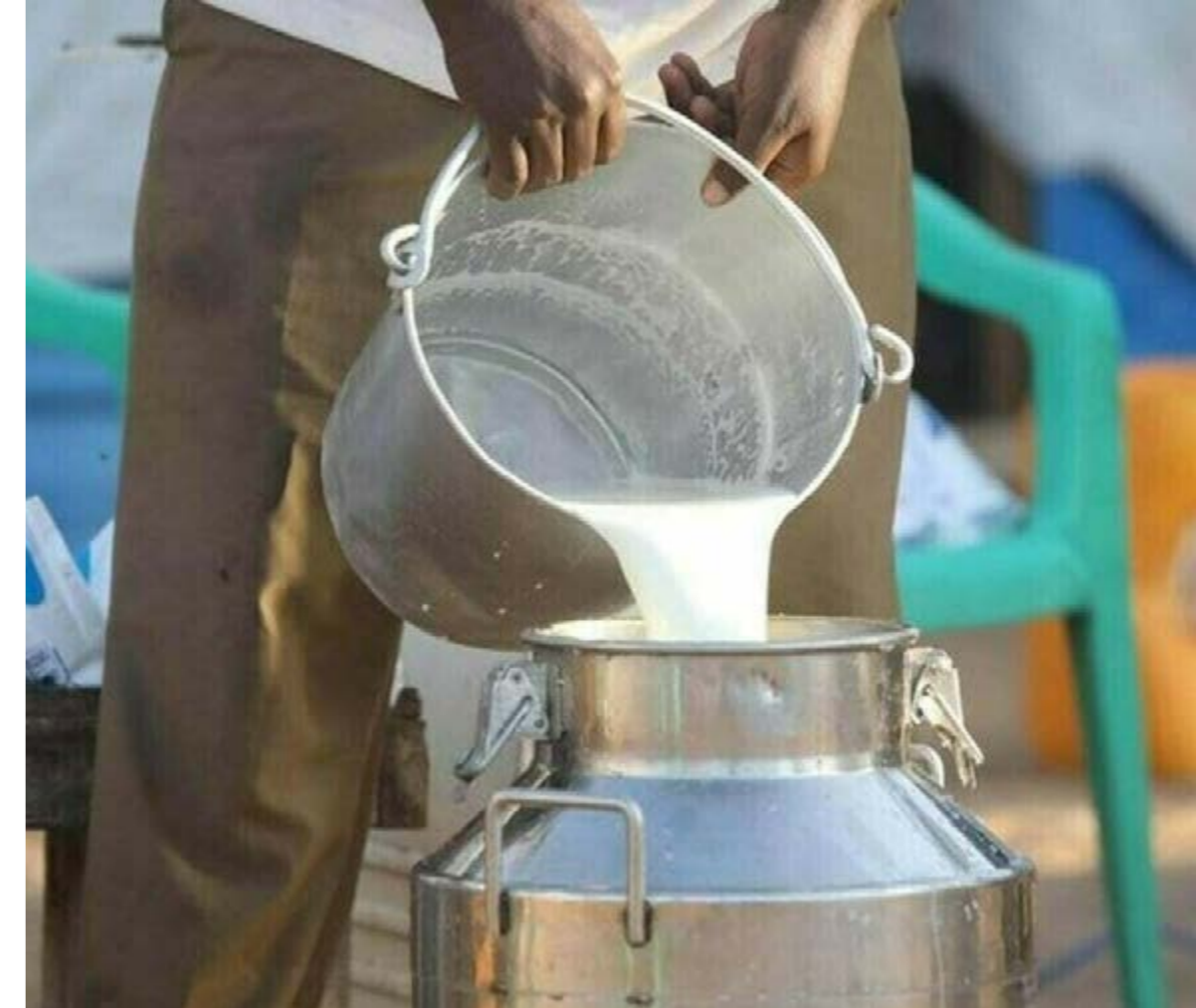
her children, she now earns enough from milk sales to pay school fees, improve her home, and save for the future.

“Before joining the cooperative, I would sell my milk to brokers who dictated the prices. Some days, I would make losses. It was heartbreaking to wake up early, milk the cows, walk for kilometres to the market, and still come home with a pittance,” she recalls.

Through the cooperative, Tima now sells her milk at competitive prices, ensuring consistent income for her family. The mother of five is able to provide for her children and even pay school fees without a struggle. “The cooperative has given me financial stability I never thought possible,” she says.

Similarly, Joyce Nasieku, a member of the Samli Women Dairy Cooperative, has seen her fortunes change. Like many Maasai women, Joyce initially viewed dairy farming as a subsistence activity, producing milk primarily for household consumption. However, after joining the cooperative, she discovered the economic potential of commercial dairy farming.

“I never imagined that milk could be a business opportunity. It was



Milk parlour in Kajiado County.

just something we used at home as pastoralists. We didn’t know about proper feeding or hygiene, and we never thought about selling to bigger markets. I used to give away what we didn’t consume or sell it at throwaway prices,” she explains.

Through training and mentorship, Nasieku learned modern dairy farming techniques, including proper animal nutrition, milk hygiene, and financial management. The cooperative also introduced her to structured markets, eliminating middlemen and ensuring she earns fair prices for her milk.

Today, her dairy farm has expanded significantly, and the income she generates has allowed her to pay school fees, improve her home, and invest in additional livestock. “Being part of the cooperative has changed my life completely. The money I earn from the sale of milk has enabled me build a small semi-permanent,” she said.

For Beatrice Kerei, Chairlady, Nasiru Farmers’ Cooperative Society, the goal has always been economic empowerment for Maasai women. For too long, Maa women have been financially dependent on their husbands, leaving them vulnerable in times of hardship, she laments.

“For a long time, Maasai women have been left at the mercy of their husbands

in matters of finances. It is high time they learned to fend for themselves,” she says. Kerei adds that apart from selling milk, the cooperative is focusing on value addition to ensure sustainability during periods of drought. “We want to focus on socio-economic empowerment for the women by focusing beyond usual products such as milk. We want to add value by producing yoghurt and maziwa mala,” Kerei explains.

Beyond individual success, cooperatives have fostered community resilience, allowing women to support each other through savings groups (*chamas*), access business loans, and invest in value-added dairy products such as yoghurt and *maziwa mala* (curdled milk).

The County Government of Kajiado has further strengthened this movement by providing training, funding, and market linkages, ensuring long-term sustainability.

In a culture in which cows belong to men but milk belongs to women, dairy cooperatives have given Maasai women economic power, transforming milk from a household staple into a pathway to financial independence.

With more women turning to structured dairy farming, the once-distant dream of self-reliance, quality education for their children, and long-term financial security is steadily becoming a reality.

KEY POINTS

- Cooperatives assist Maasai women transform milk from a household staple to financial independence.
- Members now control sales, negotiate fair prices, access structured markets.
- New era fosters community resilience, allowing *chamas* to access business loans, invest in value-added dairy products.



Solutions Sacco Solves Meru Trader's Challenge

Soft drinks distribution company that started small expands beyond couple's wildest dreams

Five years ago, Meru businesswoman, Mary Esther Mwangi, dared to dream and scaled the slopes of Mount Kenya, quite literally, to found a soft drinks distribution enterprise.

Along with her husband, Charles Mwangi Wahome, she had just joined Solutions Sacco, and her business, aptly named 'Meta meta Distributors' (translated to mean shine) actually shone as she scaled the mountain of success and prosperity.

Mrs Mwangi has never regretted the move. Neither has she ever looked back. Her business, which she started with a loan from Solution Sacco, has flourished and expanded. She wishes she had joined the Sacco earlier.

Meru town is one of the fastest growing towns in the country and hosts numerous financial institutions, including a Central Bank of Kenya branch.

Thus, it automatically became a destination of choice for the Mwangis. The couple felt they should expand in order to serve

more customers. But there was a hiccup. Financial constraints held them back.

Fortunately, and as fate would have it, field staff of Solution Sacco happened to visit them at their offices. They convinced the couple to join the Sacco.

"They convinced us to start buying their products including loans and insurance cover. After we registered, the rest is history. We are smiling all the way to the bank," said Ms Mwangi.

She says interacting with Solution Sacco staff exposed them to products on offer before opening an account favourable to their needs.

"We started saving with them before applying for a loan. The Sacco staff came for the savings from our offices daily," said Ms Mwangi.

New territories

The growth trajectory prompted them to think of venturing into new territories.

That called for lots of travelling, as they prospected for fresh horizons.

"We approached Solution Sacco again and requested them to buy us a vehicle. They readily agreed. Today we use the vehicle to transport our products. We currently operate in Meru and Timau towns. I can assure you business is booming and we have no regrets. I will continue to partner with Solution Sacco for financial support," says she.

Ms Mwangi says they have diversified their business to incorporate events management.

The couple loves Solution Sacco because their staff are approachable, are open to discuss issues, find solutions and the outcome is always positive.

"After joining the Sacco, we secured funding to complete construction of our building in Samburu County. We saved some funds in our personal account," she adds. "We enjoy mobile banking services because our clients make payments without charges."



Ms Mwangi during the interview at her Meru soda depot.

The Sacco pays double digits in dividends, which can serve as pension after retirement.

Through the sacco, the couple has bought a plot of prime land in Nanyuki, built a permanent house and bought a car. Solution Sacco is a one stop shop where one can make all transactions.

"We are very proud to be associated with a financier whose products are tailored to the customers' needs. Since I joined Solution Sacco it has completely transformed my life for better by improving my living standards. They have given me different business options which I am still working on and in two years I will reap the fruits," says Mwangi.

She appeals to other people, especially the young generation, to join the Sacco in order to enjoy the immense benefits of membership.

Further, one can save gradually, starting with as little as KSh50 or KSh100 daily before climbing the ladder, translating to amazing results and benefits.

Mwangi would like the Sacco to incorporate into the board other cadres of professions as currently only teachers are represented.



Ms Mwangi beams as she explains her plans for growth.

"After joining the Sacco, we secured funding to complete construction of our building in Samburu County. We enjoy mobile banking services because our clients make payments without charges."

~ Ms Mwangi





Creative Industry Blends With Capital

Formation of Sanaa Sacco aims to bring monetary inclusion to performing arts



Chipukizi Youth Worker Cooperative performing during the launch of Cooperative Leadership, Engagement, Advocacy and Research (CLEAR) at The Co-operative University of Kenya.

Kenya's creative industry—spanning music, film, fashion, design, and literary arts—is experiencing an inspiring renaissance thanks to savings and credit cooperative societies (Saccos).

They have stepped in to provide financial support, foster community togetherness, and empower creatives to transform talent into sustainable businesses. Until recently, accessing financial services was a formidable challenge to many artists who often lacked stable income or formal pay slips. This shifted in December 2023, with the establishment of Sanaa Sacco that aimed at bringing financial inclusivity into the creative sector.

Launched by the Kenya@50 initiative and officially unveiled at the National Museum by the Cabinet Secretary, Dr Hassan Wario, Sanaa Sacco immediately registered 2,000 members across music,

film, fashion, literature, and performing arts. Additionally, in July 2024, Kenya Copyright Board (KECOBO) announced plans to create a Creatives Sacco. The Sacco would offer low-interest loans to content creators and fund county recording studios—a government-endorsed move to institutionalise creative financing.

Business and membership

- With 2,000 members across Kenya, Sanaa Sacco is quickly building momentum. Each member pays an initial KSh500 registration fee and contributes KSh1,000 monthly.
- The broader Sacco movement comprises 357 regulated Saccos with 6.84 million members that manage KSh682 billion in deposits and KSh758 billion in loans as of 2023

This scale shows the potential for creative Saccos to tap into a wider ecosystem and develop tailored financial products for content creators.

Contribution of creative Saccos

Saccos such as Sanaa address a crucial need—bank loans are often inaccessible to artists with informal incomes. Dr Wario states, “Very many of our artists struggle to access loans from banks because they lack official pay slips. With this Sacco, they will apply for credit at affordable rates”. This enables creatives to invest in equipment, production, and promotional campaigns.

By pooling resources, artists have a secure platform to invest surplus income that cultivates long-term saving habits that cushion them from fading fame. Marketing manager Susan Gatheru explains, “Most officials in this Sacco are artists. They relate with it and come up with ideas to ensure a secure future”.

Create business support structures

Sanaa Sacco also offers financial management advice, partnership platforms, and distribution channels for creative outputs thus helping members innovate and scale.

The Kenya Copyright Board (Kecobo) intends to establish recording studios in every county, supported via a creative Sacco, shows how cooperatives combine finance with infrastructure to nurture talent.

Mainstream Saccos offer compelling examples to nascent creative Saccos like Sanaa and KECOBO's. These models provide blueprints for creative Saccos to emulate.

- Imarisha Sacco, established in 1978, now has US\$142 million in assets and over 190,000 members hence showing longevity and scale.
- UN Sacco, founded in 1975 for UN staff, now has 6,916 members, KSh13.7 billion in deposits and

KSh11.09 billion in loans thus demonstrating strong financial discipline and capacity.

Like other cooperatives, creatives Saccos require mobile and cloud-based services to operate efficiently—a capability still developing.

Governance and management

Studies in counties such as Kirinyaga highlight poor leadership and weak or inadequate policies. Trans-creative Saccos must learn from these failures to build robust internal controls.

With just 2,000 members, Sanaa Sacco is still small. It needs significant growth to offer impactful loan and investment volumes.

Reddit narratives recount instances where Sacco funds have disappeared hence harming reputations. Creative Saccos must learn here.

Way forward

With ambitions to reach all 47 counties, Sanaa Sacco should pursue county-level chapters that engage creatives from diverse regions. In line with mainstream Sacco innovation, creative Saccos must implement mobile banking, USSD codes, and online tools to enhance access and transparency.

Strengthen governance practices Implementing bylaws, audit requirements, and leadership training is essential. Learning from SASRA-regulated Saccos will help maintain credibility.

Forge strategic partnerships

Collaborations with SHA, KECOBO, the Media Council of Kenya, and tech platforms can expand services and infrastructure support. Creative Saccos should explore revenue-generators such as media licensing deals, equipment rental services, and artists' displays to boost capital.

Although young, Kenya's creative Saccos signal a transformative shift in how to fund and grow the arts. With 2,000 members and structured financial services, Sanaa Sacco is creating a safety net and opportunity pool for artists. Initiatives from KECOBO promise a national infrastructure boost for creatives.

Drawing from the robust frameworks of established Saccos such as Imarisha and UN Sacco, Kenya's creative cooperatives are well poised to become financially sound, professionally governed, and digitally savvy.

Creative Saccos can sustain Kenya's cultural renaissance and serve as a financial engine for creative talent nationwide if they address governance and tech gaps, and leverage partnerships.

Kenya stands at the forefront of Africa's frontier of financing creatives. Here, cooperatives and culture come together to build an industry that is both commercially viable and artistically vibrant.



Chipukizi Youth Worker Cooperative Voice of Drama team pose for a group photo with Prof. Isaac Nyamongo of The Cooperative University of Kenya after being awarded for their innovation in their art and drama.



Opportunities Abound!

Women are saving, accessing credit and going into business



KEY POINTS

- Membership of women hits the 30 per cent mark
- Coops herald more access to resources, empowerment
- Members boost savings, access credit, start small businesses
- Affirmative action is a direct consequence of the movement
- 63 per cent of Kenyans derive livelihoods from co ops
- Group-based table banking concept takes root, mobilises immense resources

The meteoric rise of women in cooperatives in Kenya has crystallised into a game changer, transforming lives especially at the grassroots where majority of the population lives.

In recent years, the membership of women in these groups has risen to an impressive 30 per cent, up from virtual

oblivion, signifying a change of fortune and turn around, especially for rural women.

The fact that their numbers have risen to the current levels in spite of setbacks and challenges in leadership and representation is testament that the future is bright, both for women and

their nuclear families who are direct beneficiaries of these improved fortunes.

Cooperatives present significant opportunities for women's empowerment, even as they herald increased access to resources, financial opportunities, and leadership capabilities. To ascend to the current impressive levels, women have

had to overcome cultural barriers and social expectations that have hitherto stood in the way of advancement. It is, to all intents and purposes, a quantum leap that will transform lives for the better.

Cooperatives have provided women with opportunities to boost savings, access credit, and venture into businesses. This has positively impacted living standards for families, with a multiplier effect being felt at national level. Another net outcome of women participation in cooperatives has been the advent of affirmative action, which has seen women taking bold steps to assume leadership roles, and to sit at the high table of decision-making. Such opportunities continue to grow as the number of women groups rises.

Women's cooperatives have especially climbed the ladder of success because they tend to disregard the dictates and rigours of organisational structures and opted for more democratic participation that appreciates and recognises the input of all members.

With a wide range of activities undertaken by the cooperative societies across the country, the Cooperative Alliance of Kenya has, under its ambit, over 27,141 registered groups with a membership of 14 million. Thus, the impact at grassroots level is enormous. Statistics indicate that 63 per cent of Kenyans derive their livelihood directly or otherwise from the activities of these cooperatives.

Indeed, the high number of women membership has seen their representation on boards and supervisory committees rise to almost 40 per cent. This figure compares well with their population figures, which put their numbers at 47.6 million or 49 per cent (2019, Kenya Population and Housing Census).

These figures rose steadily to hit the 50.28 per cent mark in 2023, according to the World Bank. The women may not yet be where they seek to be but the journey is not only on course but has gained momentum as well.

The endeavour to empower women

50.28 % ↑
high number of women membership has seen increase in 2023 according to the World Bank.

through cooperatives is not only spurred by the women themselves. The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (Kussco) has mooted deliberate policies that lay emphasis on supporting women-based Saccos. This is not only commendable but laudable too.

According to research, women-led cooperatives help buttress three social development goals: promoting gender equality, economic growth and eliminating poverty.

Perhaps one micro-finance concept that has gained currency in recent years is the table banking system, largely group-based, in which members save and borrow immediately during meetings.

It is remarkably simple and empowers members, especially in rural areas to access credit away from the strictures of formal banking procedures. Members borrow at minimal rates. Lengthy and convoluted application processes and the attendant collateral are eliminated.

Thus, the net effect in poverty reduction can be felt at family unit level, where patriarchal systems have typically tended to exclude women from making decisions about money and family property, leaving that to the male figures.

Further, these funds have also been used to start and grow small businesses for members, thus providing a source of income, and by extension, boosting economic independence.



Re-imagining Economic Freedom

Cooperatives train members and give them a say in their future



PS Kilemi, centre, with his Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Development counterpart Susan Mang'eni, extreme left, bade farewell to women cooperative managers off to Canada for a mentorship conference in 2024. The leaders included, Kenya USA Diaspora Sacco CEO Evelyn Olunja, Winnie Sergon (Boresha Sacco), Joyce Bett (Stima Sacco), Fredah Njeru (Harambee SACCO), and Grace Kung'u of Joinas Sacco.

Once the turf of retirees and farmers, Kenya's cooperatives sector has morphed into a vibrant space where youth and women are reimagining economic freedom.

What was once dismissed as old-school is now teeming with innovation, mobile apps, agribusiness startups, and even climate-smart enterprises. And the world is watching.

Reforming the sector

In the early 2000s, most cooperatives were riddled with poor governance. But the Cooperatives Societies Act (1997) and the creation of SASRA in 2009 shifted the terrain. "We had to clean up the system to build trust. Only then could

we attract new blood—young people, women, investors," says George Magutu, Chairperson, Cooperatives Alliance of Kenya (CAK), in a 2022 forum on youth inclusion.

These reforms laid the groundwork for a more accountable and transparent sector, creating room for fresh voices and ideas. Institutions such as Kenya Women Microfinance Bank (KWFT) and Imarika Saccos have championed women-led growth in coops.

"When a woman joins a cooperatives, she is not just saving. She's buying her freedom," says Pauline Warui, Deputy CEO, KWFT, during the 2021 Women in Finance Conference. Imarika Saccos, with roots in Kilifi since 1974, launched its Women

Empowerment Programme in 2015. By 2023, over 22,000 women had benefited from enterprise loans and agribusiness training.

Maisha Bora Saccos's "Mama Smart" product, launched in 2022, provides informal women traders with tailored loans. It has supported over 5,000 Mama Mbogas and kiosk owners in Central and Eastern Kenya.

Youth forming their cooperatives

Take the Young Farmers' Cooperatives Society in Nakuru, formed in 2018 by youth under 30. They run greenhouse projects, pool investments via a mobile wallet, and even partner with county governments.

"Cooperatives give us what banks don't: trust, training, and a say in our future," says Martin Kibet, Chairperson, Young Farmers' Cooperatives Society, speaking at the 2023 National Cooperatives Youth Forum in Nakuru.

In 2021, Biashara Saccos introduced a Youth Biz Account with business mentorship and digital savings tools.

"We're banking the hustler generation —this is not your grandfather's coop," says John Kinyua, CEO, Biashara Saccos, during the launch of their youth strategy.

State support and strategic push

"For every cooperatives that thrives, a community wins. We are intentional about empowering women and youth because that's where the future is," says Ali Noor Ismail, Principal Secretary, State Department of Cooperatives, during the 2020 Kenya Cooperatives Leaders Conference.

To walk the talk, the ministry, in partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and EU, invested KES 600 million (approx. €5 million) in youth and women-based agri-coops between 2020–2023.

Big players such as Mwalimu National Saccos and Stima Saccos are not left behind. They've launched apps and mobile platforms for deposits, loans, and group savings.

In 2022, CIC Group rolled out the Jipange Savings Plan, targeting millennials and gig workers with flexible, app-based policies.

"We're creating hybrid financial tools —cooperatives at heart, but digital in form," says Patrick Nyaga, CEO, CIC Group, at the 2022 Nairobi Financial Inclusion Summit. And international partners are taking note.

"Kenya's cooperatives model is among the most vibrant in Africa. The youth and women angle makes it even more attractive for sustainable development," says Michael Kilpatrick, Director of Cooperatives Development at USAID, during a visit to Kenya in 2023.

What is clear is this: cooperatives in Kenya are no longer about old men in rural offices. They are about M-Pesa-enabled greenhouses, market-ready mama mboga, and university students pooling savings for startups.

This is not charity. It is business, done the Kenyan way—communal, inclusive, and increasingly global.

So if you're young and skeptical, maybe it is time you paid attention. The coop revolution is not coming. It's already here—and it has your name on it.

KEY POINTS

- Cooperatives sector brimming with innovation, mobile apps, agribusiness startups, climate-smart enterprises.
- Reforms laid foundation for a more accountable and **transparent sector.**
- Imarika Saccos has seen **22,000 women** benefit from enterprise loans and agribusiness through Women Empowerment Programme by 2023.
- Youth under 30 in Nakuru's Young Farmers' Cooperatives Society run greenhouse projects, pool investments **via a mobile wallet.**



Savers with Kenya National Police DT Sacco.



Entrepreneur's Dairy Labour Calves Into Financial Rewards

With white collar jobs fading fast, young science graduate ventures into daily farming and makes roaring success



Pinton Koome attends to his dairy cattle.

KEY POINTS

- Dairy farming venture started off with just three heifers, which have grown to 20 cows.
- Koome saw his opportunity in the fact that Kenya faces a milk deficit of 4 billion litres annually.
- Meru Dairy Cooperative Union held his hand and offered financial advice.
- 20 young people have since emulated Koome.

Just as the world was grappling with the ravages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, an idea was being incubated in Pinton Koome, a young Bachelor of Science graduate in Entrepreneurship from Egerton University, Nakuru. Koome had grown up seeing his parents and neighbours carry out tea farming but

wanted to do things differently. Along the way, he developed a passion for dairy farming. It is from this tiny seed of hope that he sought advice from one of the fastest growing cooperative societies in the Country - Meru Dairy Cooperative Union. With his curiosity sharpened even more, he embarked on a mission to acquire as much knowledge as he could about dairy farming.

He had his dream already. He was ready to start. He acquired three in calf heifers from the union. "Generally, I have a strong passion in farming and dairy farming to be specific. During my research, before venturing into the real business, I realised that Kenya has a deficit of 4 billion litres of milk annually. Therein lay my opportunity. My spark of passion became a flame. There was no stopping" says the entrepreneur.

"I also wanted to shift my community from the usual and over-reliance on tea farming by diversifying into dairy farming," says Koome. And with that, Mount Kenya Heifers Company Limited was born. From his little savings, Koome started with three in calf heifers which have grown to the current herd of 20 cows.

Seven of these produce about 150 litres of milk daily, which translates to KSh1500 per day and KSh225, 000 monthly at KSh50 per litre. Apart from the dairy cows and to lower expenses in buying feeds, Koome leased about 20 acres of land in Mitunguu where he has a factory that produces farm feeds. Here, he has

employed five staff, in addition to the two who permanently look after the cows at home.

"I have some extra 10 acres where I produce silage, thereby creating jobs for 40 people annually," says Koome. He is the Regional Coordinator of Kenya Commercial Bank Foundation, but gives enough attention to his farm to ensure it thrives. This he takes in his stride as he oversees the processing and selling of commercial dairy feeds.

Koome gives credit to Meru Dairy Cooperative Union for his entire success in dairy farming and hopes to scale greater heights of success. They have been at hand to assist whenever the need arose.

"Meru Dairy has held my hand throughout this journey. I look upon them for veterinary services, and more importantly they are a ready and reliable market for our milk," says Koome. The union also conducts trainings on new and best methods of managing dairy farms. This has helped a great deal. The union also supports him by buying cows from him, which they sell to others farmers under the union.

From this endeavour has sprung financial stability, creation of jobs to his peers in the neighborhood. The businessman has acquired several properties. But the journey has not been without challenges. The high cost of materials to process dairy feeds, high cost of electricity, and labour eat into his profit.

Koome encourages young people in Meru County and Kenya to venture into this type of farming by starting small. Persistence is key in order to grow in the business. "Young people should know that farming is lucrative and the population is growing, which means someone should step in to feed the population," says he.

Koome has been a role model, too and has influenced his peers to follow suit. So far, twenty of them have already ventured into dairy farming. His story is testament that the spirit of hard work, persistence and focus rubs off on peers and observers. And Meru Dairy will be there to hold their hands in the journey to chart new territories.



Koome speaks at the Meru Dairy Cooperative Union Annual Farmers' Field Day in 2024.



CHAPTER 6

The Value Chain





Cotton Returns, Weaves Success

Economic prosperity, sense of purpose and national dignity beckon as industry spins fresh narrative

The cotton value chain, worn out to threadbare level, is roaring back to life, buoyed by bold reforms by the Kenya Kwanza administration through the State Department for Cooperatives and strategic partnerships with counties, private textile industries, and development partners.

For decades, the cotton industry in Kenya lay dormant, crippled by collapsed ginneries, mismanaged cooperative societies, lack of quality seeds, and the flood of second-hand clothes (mitumba) that decimated demand for locally manufactured garments.

Fast forward. The once-forgotten “white gold” is now re-emerging as a key pillar of the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), giving thousands of farmers across the country a renewed sense of purpose, economic hope, and national pride.

Cotton prices soar, farmers smile

When the Kenya Kwanza government took office, the price of cotton stood at a dismal KSh52 per kilogramme. This discouraged many smallholder farmers from engaging in cotton production. Today, that price has risen significantly to KSh72 per kilogramme—a direct result of government intervention and market linkages that have empowered farmers with immediate payments upon delivery. “This is the first time in years we are seeing such prompt and fair returns,” said Simon Ondolo, a cotton farmer from Busia. “At KSh72 per kilo, cotton is once again a viable livelihood for us.”

In Siaya, where the county targets to plant over 50,000 acres of cotton this season, up from 26,000 acres last year, County Director of Agriculture Isaac Munyendo says last year alone the crop injected more than KSh18 million into the local economy.

Government-Private sector synergy

The revival is not accidental. It is the result of deliberate, multi-sectoral collaboration. The State Department for



Principal Secretary Patrick Kilemi leads distribution of cotton seeds in Homa Bay County.

Cooperatives, under the stewardship of Principal Secretary, Patrick Kilemi, has rolled out extensive reforms, including the Cooperative Bill 2024, currently in the Senate. The proposed law seeks to eliminate rogue officials and fake cooperatives by introducing term limits and tighter regulations.

“The days of corruption and mismanagement in our cooperatives and ginneries are numbered,” said Kilemi. “President William Ruto is personally committed to ensuring that cotton regains its lost glory.”

One of the key players in this transformation is Thika Cloth Mills, a major textile manufacturer working hand-in-hand with the government. Together, they have flagged off over 80 tonnes of certified cotton seeds to farmers in Lamu, Busia, Machakos and Siaya counties—

ending a chronic seed shortage that had frustrated farmers for years.

Tejal Dhodhia, CEO of Thika Cloth Mills, says their partnership with the government represents a new dawn. “We’re not just building ginneries—we’re building dreams,” she said during the launch of a new ginnery in Baharini, Mpeketoni (Lamu). “With government support, we’re transforming the entire value chain.”

New lease of life

From Luanda in Busia to Msambweni in Kwale, the government is investing heavily in the revival and modernisation of ginneries—crucial infrastructure for processing raw cotton. In Busia, the Luanda Ginnery has received a KSh20 million boost under Phase II of modernisation, following an earlier

KEY POINTS

“We have over **500** farmers now and we are targeting **1,500** by next year,” said David Kaloki, a farmer in Eastern Kenya.

“This cooperative is finally helping us access markets, inputs, and support.”

investment of KSh80 million. The funds are being used to install ginning machines, drying units, and spare parts, ensuring uninterrupted operations ahead of the next harvest. The facility serves not only Busia but also neighbouring Siaya County.

In Kwale, the construction of a modern ginnery in Msambweni is underway—funded through a public-private partnership involving the national government, Base Titanium, and the PAVI Cooperative. The initiative, which started in 2015 with 100 farmers, now supports over 3,000 farmers cultivating more than 2,000 acres of cotton. Over KSh1



Officials from the County Government of Siaya and local farmers inspect a cotton farm in Uyoma.

billion has been invested in the project to transform Kwale into a textile hub.

Meanwhile, in Yatta Sub-County, Machakos, the revival of Uvouni Cotton Farmers Cooperative Society, which had collapsed decades ago, is proving a game-changer. “We have over 500 farmers now and we are targeting 1,500 by next year,” said David Kaloki, a farmer in Eastern Kenya. “This cooperative is finally helping us access markets, inputs, and support.”

Seeds of transformation

access to quality seeds has been one of the most persistent challenges in cotton farming. The government has stepped in, distributing certified seeds—such as the new Cameroon and Chad varieties—suited for semi-arid conditions. In regions with sufficient rainfall, BT cotton continues to perform well.

Farmers in Lamu, Eastern, and Western Kenya have hailed the seed distribution as timely and transformative. “We were stuck without seeds for seasons,” said Milcent Akinyi from Siaya. “Now with the government stepping in, we can finally plan and produce with confidence.”

Buy Kenyan, build Kenya

As part of the “Buy Kenyan, Build Kenya” initiative, the government has also ensured that locally manufactured garments are prioritised for procurement—especially by disciplined forces such as the police, army, and prison departments. This has opened up lucrative and sustainable markets for local textile mills. “This is not just about producing for Kenya,” said Dhodhia. “We’re building capacity for regional and international markets as well. With

continued support, Kenya can become a textile powerhouse in Africa.”

The road ahead

Despite the progress, some challenges persist. Farmers still raise concerns over timely access to seeds, delayed payments in some regions, and the need for continuous policy consistency.

“We need to ensure this is not a short-term excitement but a long-term transformation,” emphasized Akinyi. “We don’t want another collapse due to poor planning.” But with the momentum already building, many believe that the worst is behind. The revival of cotton is now a national movement—driven by policy, powered by partnerships, and inspired by farmers who never gave up on their crop.

Fresh blossom

From the Coastal plains of Lamu and Kwale to the highlands of Busia, Siaya, and Machakos, and other potential growing regions, cotton is once again blossoming under the Kenyan sun. The synergy between government, private players, and farmers is turning what was once a dying sector into a beacon of economic hope. Indeed, as the ginneries roar back to life and cooperatives rise from the ashes, it is evident that Kenya is weaving a new legacy—one cotton bale at a time.

“The future of Kenya’s textile industry lies not in importing garments, but in empowering farmers and spinning hope from our own soil,” says Kilemi. And so, Kenya’s cotton story is being threaded—afresh—not just for economic prosperity, but for national dignity.



Marsabit Eyes Billions

People expect fortunes to change because of artisanal mining

Marsabit County is on the threshold of an economic boom amid plans to operationalise at least 59 artisanal cooperative societies in the mining sector.

A new wave of transformation is sweeping through the belt. Stakeholders have moved to align their operations with the Mining Act of 2016 to revive, formalise, and secure the county's vast mineral wealth. To formalise the process, a cooperative union to coordinate activities of the newly registered artisanal societies has been established, according to Meshack Owour, the County Assistant Commissioner for Cooperatives.

The cooperative union aims to harness the potential of over 10,000 members, with renewed focus on gold extraction in the Hillo region of Moyale sub-county.

"The cooperative movement is not only helping us organise the miners but is also the key to ensuring compliance with safety, environmental and legal standards. Already, 45 cooperatives have received acknowledgment letters from the National Environment Management Authority

(NEMA) and await full licensing," says he.

According to the Regional Mining Officer Peterlis Osamba the Hillo mining belt had potential to generate over KSh2 billion annually. He says the enforcement of the 2016 Mining Act is essential not just for legal compliance but for sustainable development.

The state department of mining projects that the cooperatives could create over 4,500 jobs directly and 10,000 indirect opportunities. This is in addition to boosting national revenue and ensuring Marsabit contributes meaningfully to Kenya's Vision 2030.

The Hillo mining region had been closed due to unregulated operations that caused severe environmental degradation, rampant insecurity, and infiltration by illegal foreign miners. Trees were felled indiscriminately, charcoal production soared, and local wildlife, including dik-dik and gazelles, came under pressure from poachers.

With the new cooperative framework, the government has engaged NEMA, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), immigration authorities, county officials, and the National Police Service to ensure a safer and regulated environment for mining.

Grace Galmo, Marsabit County CEC for Water, Natural Resources, Climate, and Environment, highlights the importance of capacity building among artisanal miners. "This process is about more than just compliance. It is about empowering local miners to operate within a simplified legal framework, ensure environmental conservation, and promote inclusive economic participation," she says.

Over 10,000 acres of land have been earmarked for mining, and efforts are underway to construct water kiosks and health facilities across 13 active sites. A new police station and improved road infrastructure are part of the county's development blueprint.

Among cooperatives already formalised are Hillo Artisanal Cooperative Society,

Haldagon Mineral Marketing Cooperative Society, Jariya Artisanal Mining Cooperative, and Dabel Artisanal Miners' Cooperative Society.

According to Mohad Dida, Marsabit's Chief Officer for Trade and Cooperatives, the renewed focus on cooperatives will anchor artisanal mining in a sustainable development model that supports micro-enterprises and protects local livelihoods.

"Artisanal mining remains a critical livelihood for many residents. Formalising the sector through cooperatives ensures that it becomes safer, more profitable, and aligned with national goals," Dida notes.

Governor Mohamud Ali's administration has expressed commitment to supporting local miners while welcoming responsible investment from other regions. The goal is to balance economic growth with preservation of culture and environmental sustainability.

Rashid Karayu, Chairperson of the Marsabit Artisanal Mining Cooperatives Union, welcomed the changes. "We finally feel seen and supported. With proper structures in place, we can now mine responsibly, legally, and profitably," he said, expressing optimism about the economic future of Hillo and the broader Marsabit region.

While gold remains the most sought-after mineral. Marsabit is also endowed with deposits of mica, beryllium, chromite, and various gemstones—resources that, if tapped wisely, could drive the county into a new era of prosperity.

The cooperative aims to harness the potential of over 10,000 members with renewed focus on gold extraction in the Hillo region.



Sample of gemstones found in Hillo Mining Belt in Marsabit County.



Members of the Marsabit Artisanal Mining Cooperative Union during the election of officials in Moyale town.



The State Department of Mining projects that the cooperatives could create over 4,500 jobs directly.

Marsabit County Executive Committee member for Water, Natural Resources, Climate and Environment, Grace Galmo during the interview.

KEY POINTS

- Hillo mining belt in Moyale has potential to generate over KSh 2 billion annually
- 45 cooperatives have received acknowledgment letters from NEMA
- Over 10,000 acres of land earmarked for mining, water kiosks, health facilities coming up in 13 sites
- Renewed focus on coops to support micro-enterprises, protect local livelihoods



Cooperatives Bring Back Fishing

Fisher communities have brought back their gear and the future is looking up

Fishermen are saying goodbye to years of market challenges, post-harvest losses, and low incomes thanks to the establishment and revival of blue economy cooperatives in Kilifi County in Kenya's coast. Fisher cooperative societies, which had collapsed due to operational difficulties have been revived while new ones formed across the county through efforts by the national government and partners in the blue economy sector.

This will empower fish traders by improving their access to markets, enhance livelihoods, and foster sustainable development in the sector.

Members of several cooperative societies led by Mr Amani Ali, who chairs Kilifi Central Beach Management Unity Cooperative are optimistic about their economic future, noting the state's commitment to supporting them.

Among the key projects underway is the construction of bulk fish storage facility at Kilifi Old Ferry Beach, an infrastructural investment critical to reducing post-harvest losses and improve the bargaining power of fishermen.

"We are recruiting members and expect to begin operations during the high season, around October, once the construction of fish storage facility is completed," said Ali.

Being a seasoned fisherman, Ali says the cooperative would enable members to bypass exploitative brokers and middlemen by providing secure storage for their catch, giving them time to negotiate for better prices at local, national, and even international markets.

He added that the government, through the Wezesha Fund, had pledged financial grants to support these cooperatives. Additionally, a proposal has been submitted to the county government for a cold storage van to transport fish to lucrative markets like Nairobi.

"President William Ruto promised to come back and officially launch these cooperatives, which will fast-track access



KEY FIGURES

18 registered cooperatives are operating in Mnarani, Mtwapa, Wesa, Malindi, Ngomeni and Marereni.

Fish traders in Kilifi County reach for their nets again.

to capital and other forms of support necessary for re-starting operations," added Captain Issa Shallo, Chairman of Kilifi Boat Operators.

Captain Shallo pointed out that well-run cooperatives would help safeguard the economic security of their members by providing access to loans and dividends during off-peak seasons, particularly during periods of bad weather when fishing activities slow down.

However, there is concern over slow membership registration, attributing it to a general lack of awareness about the benefits of joining cooperatives. Officials emphasise the need for widespread civic education to rebuild public confidence in cooperative societies.

Currently, 18 cooperative societies have been registered in Kilifi, operating in Mnarani, Mtwapa, Wesa, Malindi, Ngomeni, and Marereni areas. These

cooperatives will play a vital role in strengthening the livelihoods of fisherfolk while promoting sustainable marine resource management.

According to data from the Department of Fisheries, Kilifi produces more than 5,000 metric tonnes of fish annually.

However, the county's fishing sector has long been held back by post-harvest losses and inefficient market structures that limit profitability for fishermen.

The revival of cooperatives is expected to address these challenges, ensuring that fishermen and their families derive greater benefits from their trade.

Leaders and stakeholders remain hopeful that with proper leadership and accountability, these cooperatives will not only boost incomes but also promote responsible fishing practices and marine conservation for future generations.



Fishermen offloading their catch in Kwale County.



Tannery Turns Fresh Page

Billion-shilling shot in the arm for Maa pastoralists

KEY FIGURES

■ **KSh1.1 billion**
State investment.

■ **2.4 million square feet**
Annual processing capacity of hides and skins.

■ **\$100 billion per year**
What leather industry in Africa generates annually.

A key pillar of the Kenya Kwanza administration's Bottom-up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), as indeed any political administration is creation of employment opportunities for the swarms of jobless young people as well as empower small-scale traders to expand their businesses.

The leather industry was particularly marked as one of the drivers of these while ensuring pastoralists reap handsomely from the sale of hides and skins, which have hitherto been disposed of in a manner that shortchanged the farmers.

The leather industry in Africa generates up to \$100 billion per year, which Kenya should tap into so as to raise the economy of the pastoralists.

Humans interact with livestock and their products from wakeup to sleep-time in one way or the other. What better way to ensure the industry/sector delivers a fortune to local herdsmen (live animals), butchers (meat and milk), hides and skins sellers (tanners), shoemakers (everyone

wears shoes or sandals), apparel makers (belts, buttons, shoes, sandals, beads), hospitality sector (urban eateries), farmers (compost, fertiliser), animal feeds and homesteads (pets, hides and other animal products). This ensures a continuous source of revenue for the government, thereby boosting the national economy.

One of the leather industries that the government has invested in is the Ewaso Nyiro South Development Authority (ENSDA) leather factory pumping KSh1.1 billion to construct and equip the outfit. The factory that began its operations five years ago, and was relaunched by President William Ruto in May 2025 has a capacity of processing over 2.4 million

square feet of hides and skins annually.

The authority's Chief Executive Officer Ngala Oloiptip noted that the industry gets its raw materials from the surrounding community of Maa pastoralists.

Mr Oloiptip added that the factory had been expanded from handling 1.2 million square feet to producing 2.4 million square feet of leather per year. The expansion, effectively reduces the need to import leather products and create about 500 jobs directly and over 1,000 jobs indirectly. "The tannery is well utilised. We can confidently say that we are able to sustain ourselves," he added.



Finished products at Ewaso Nyiro Leather Tannery in Narok County.



Inside Ewaso Nyiro Leather Tannery.

Leather is a new and promising frontier as there are adequate raw materials and processing capacity. If well harnessed, it can become a major player in the economy as the country will no longer import shoes. Mr Oloiptip encouraged farmers to form groups and register with cooperatives so that they could find it easier to market and sell their leather products and raw materials to the factory and attract better rates and ensure they have a say in the value addition right from the factory level.

"The farmers' groups should register with us to facilitate easier purchase and payment of their products. We encourage the farmers not to throw away skins and hides when they slaughter their animals," he continued. The ENSDA management continues to sensitise and hold capacity building forums with the herders and traders regarding upholding the quality of skins and hides to ensure they fetch the highest prices in the market, adding that skins of branded animals fetch lesser money.

Narok Governor Patrick Ntutu has also severally encouraged farmers to join cooperatives to avoid exploitation from middlemen, who take advantage of the illiteracy and lack of exposure of Maa to exploit them. "Inside cooperatives, you will have power to negotiate for better prices for your product. You will also receive state-sponsored teachings on better farming methods and access loans

through the cooperatives," he added. Mary Kipai, a Loita livestock farmer and a beadmaker, said the factory came as a blessing to the Maa who used to throw away hides and skins into the bush to be eaten by wild animals.

"We now get value for the hides and skins as we have a ready market to sell them. Even when our livestock die from disease or drought, the farmer does not lose everything since there is a ready buyer for their hides," she said.

The 61-year-old encouraged farmers, and particularly, more women, to develop a saving culture where they can borrow loans to expand their livestock herds. In the past three years, for instance, she has been saving with Good Hope Sacco based in Narok town with proceeds from her farming. This has enabled her to borrow to boost her business. "My cashflow is now steady and I can access loans from the financial institution to buy more livestock. I encourage more women to save in Saccos and grow their businesses," she said.

Emily Kipila, a bead trader lauded the factory for employing many youths in both professional capacities and casual labour. Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry South Rift Region Director David Mpatiany underscored the need for the industry to partner with the factory to raise production and meet market demand.



From Farmgate to Graduation

Maziwa Ni School Fees initiative boosts the local dairy industry

Whoever believed cows cannot take children through school thought wrong on so many fronts.

A wonderful initiative by milk cooperative societies in the North Rift has rewritten the rules after the Uasin Gishu County government rolled "Maziwa Ni School Fees" (Milk Is School Fees) project to ease the financial burden on parents while boosting the local dairy industry.

Under the ambitious initiative, cooperatives will establish agreements with schools, allowing parents to pay school fees using milk.

The programme, being piloted at Tuiyo Farmers' Cooperative Society, will then be expanded to other cooperatives across the county.

Dairy milk delivered by parents will be recorded at Tuiyo on account, and at the end of each month, the milk equivalent to prorated monthly school fees will be deducted and used to settle what parents owe the respective schools. Learners just need to turn up.

"To ensure transparency and minimise risk, the county has partnered with Space AI, a leading technology company, to provide visibility of milk deliveries from the farmgate to the processor. This advanced tracking system safeguards the integrity of the programme," according to Uasin Gishu Governor Jonathan Bii.

Should a farmer under the programme fall short due to low milk supply, Uasin Gishu County government, through its extension services, will provide support the farmer to increase their production.

The innovative programme empowers farmers to pay children's school fees through milk supply proceeds, eliminating the need to sell off their livestock for this purpose.

"It also strengthens the dairy value chain, ensuring consistent productivity and economic growth for farmers," said Mr Bii. The county chief reiterated his administration's commitment to ensuring



CS Wycliffe Oparanya and Uasin Gishu Governor Jonathan Bii, second from left, when they presided over the launch of Maziwa Ni School Fees (Milk is School Fees) initiative in 2025.

access to education for all children, emphasising that the initiative not only reduces financial pressure on parents but also enhances the livelihoods of dairy farmers.

"The programme is testament to Uasin Gishu County's dedication to community-driven solutions that foster economic empowerment and educational advancement," said the Governor.

Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Cabinet Secretary Wycliffe Oparanya presided

over the launch of the programme on 28th February at Tuiyo Farmers' Cooperative Society, showing the goodwill from the Cabinet and hands-on approach.

The county government has also rolled out a school milk distribution programme targeting 40,000 ECDE learners across 673 public schools.

The milk distribution is in collaboration with Kenya Cooperative Creameries Ltd (KCC), which will handle packaging of the milk to ensure hygiene is up to industry standard.

KCC Managing Director Nixon Sigey cited the benefits of the programme to dairy farmers.

School heads of many schools that have benefitted from the school milk lauded the programme, notably for boosting attendance.

"Apart from addressing hunger and malnutrition, the school milk programme has also helped children stay focused and engage in their studies. This has led to better academic performance and reduced absenteeism," said Sosiani Primary school deputy headteacher Beatrice Yay.

Milk provides essential nutrients, particularly calcium and vitamin D, which are crucial for healthy growth and development.

Tuiyo Farmers' Cooperative Society is just one of the success stories, demonstrating that if well managed, cooperative societies can turn around economic livelihoods at the grassroots.

Uasin-Gishu County is known as the country's grain basket but a decision by a group of farmers to venture into dairy farming is turning around the region's economy.

Tuiyo members are reaping big from milk coolers installed in all six sub-counties by the county government to preserve and enhance sale of quality milk and reduce losses and boast delivery of more than 29,000 litres monthly to Brookside Milk Ltd.

Tuiyo chairman Paul Kipkemboi credits the change in fortunes to the new milk handling technologies across the county in 2017 to boost preservation and bulking of milk handling raising farmers' profit margins.

"This reduced milk hawking and stopped traders who used to adulterate milk with substances not suitable for human consumption," Mr Kipkemboi said.

QUOTE:

To ensure transparency and minimise risk, the county has partnered with Space AI, a leading technology company, to provide visibility of milk deliveries from the farmgate to the processor.

~ Jonathan Bii
Uasin Gishu County Governor





Soapstone Sculptors eye Cooperatives

Training equips artisanal miners with important skills

The exquisite art of designing breath-taking sculptures and carvings from soapstone speaks to the vast potential in Kenya's minerals to create employment and improve livelihoods for thousands of artisanal miners.

Indeed, in June, 2025 the Principal Secretary in the Ministry of Mining, Elijah Mwangi hosted Mzee Peter Obegi Onyancha, a veteran soapstone carver who is also the chairperson of Kisii Scouts Soapstone Carving Group that operates at Tabaka township in Kisii County.

Comprised of 50 soapstone artists, the Kisii Soapstone Group has cultivated a formidable reputation from years of designing, shaping, carving and sculpting stunning art pieces and charming handcrafts, products that have become the signature of their individual genius and creativity.

Their engaging discussions revolved about the soapstone value-chain, mining, processing and marketing. They also delved into the issue of health and safety for the miners and sculptors.

To promote their trade and spur the growth of soapstone cottage industry in Kisii, the State Department for Mining has deployed officials to train the artisanal miners in critical aspects of the sector, including formation of marketing cooperatives, miners' safety, mine health and marketing of their products.

Such trainings enable miners to take a proactive role in adopting practices that promote safety and avoidance of accidents and injuries in the soapstone pits. To inject vibrancy into the sub-sector, the State Department for Mining is committed to supporting the miners through capacity building and provision of modern equipment to streamline and enhance their operations.

Under their nimble but gifted fingers, chunks of shapeless boulders are gradually transformed into exquisite pieces of wonderful carvings and sculptures by the talented soapstone artists in Tabaka, Kisii County. Their

legendary carving skills continue to inspire through creation of the most beautiful works of art.

Among the signature items produced through this sheer talent, skills and dedicated labour of this cottage industry include sculptures of animals, humans, utensils, jewellery boxes and ornaments.

While aware of the potential of soapstone to improve livelihoods and communities, the promotion of this industry demands the strengthening and investment in

proper value addition strategies that support the diversification of the uses of soapstone by thousands of artisanal miners in Kisii County.

Apart from carving and sculpturing, soapstone is also used in construction. One of the most sustainable ways is through the formation of artisanal miners marketing cooperatives where miners will benefit from market diversification, capacity building and training to enhance their investment, marketing and financial skills.



1. An artisan carving his soapstone in Kisii County.
2. A display of soapstone carvings in Tabaka.
3. Two members of the Tabaka Chigware Self Help Group carving and shaping a piece of stone at their workshop.





CHAPTER 7

Types of Cooperatives





Cooperative and Sacco: Which is What?

You thought they are one and the same? They are not!

Cooperatives have existed for eons. They are perhaps as old as the agricultural revolution. However, what precisely is a cooperative?

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet common economic, social, or cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise.

Cooperatives are founded on the principles of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, and solidarity.

Types of cooperatives in Kenya

Kenya recognises several categories of cooperatives based on their functional focus:

- **Agriculture-based cooperatives** help farmers to pool resources for production, marketing, and bulk purchasing of inputs. Examples include dairy, tea, coffee, and horticulture cooperatives.
- **Savings and Credit Cooperatives Societies (Saccos)** provide financial services including savings, credit facilities, and insurance. Saccos dominate Kenya's cooperative space and serve both rural and urban populations.
- **Housing Cooperatives** assist members to purchase land, build homes, or access affordable housing schemes.
- **Consumer Cooperatives** facilitate collective purchasing and distribution of consumer goods to reduce costs.
- **Transport Cooperatives** organise matatu, taxi, and bodaboda operators to improve service delivery and earnings.
- **Worker Cooperatives** are enterprises owned and managed by employees. They are often found in manufacturing, service industry, and construction.

Tiers of cooperative structure

1. **Primary Cooperatives** comprise individual members with a common goal (e.g., farmers' dairy cooperative).
2. **Secondary Cooperatives (Unions)** are composed of multiple primary cooperatives, typically offering joint services such as marketing, training, or processing.
3. **Tertiary Cooperatives (Federations)** are national bodies representing sectors or interests at policy and advocacy levels. The Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) serves as the apex body.

Economic impact

Cooperatives have created over 500,000 direct jobs and support millions more through value chains in agriculture, retail, housing, and transport.

They promote income distribution, particularly in rural areas, by enabling collective bargaining and reducing exploitation by middlemen. They also support financial inclusion for people often excluded from traditional banking systems. The International Labour Organization (ILO) notes, "The cooperative business model offers a unique blend of social purpose and economic performance."

Kenya exemplifies this model, particularly in agriculture, where cooperatives help stabilise prices and reduce dependency on middlemen.

QUOTE:

Cooperatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility.

~ **Ban Ki-moon**
Former UN Secretary-General



Legal and regulatory framework

Cooperatives in Kenya are governed by the Co-operative Societies Act, Cap 490 and regulated by the Commissioner of Co-operative Development under the Ministry of Co-operatives and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development.

KEY POINTS

All registered cooperatives must:

- Have a written constitution.
- Elect a board.
- Conduct regular audits and general meetings.
- Submit annual returns to the Commissioner.

Membership and governance

Membership in a cooperative is voluntary and open to individuals or organisations that meet eligibility criteria defined in bylaws. Each member holds one vote regardless of his or her capital contribution.



Governance is democratic. Members elect a Board of Directors, which oversees operations. A Supervisory Committee often monitors compliance and accountability.

Annual General Meetings (AGMs) are mandatory for reviewing financial statements, electing officials, and making key decisions.

- A portion is retained as reserves.

- Some is reinvested to grow the cooperative.
- The remainder is distributed as dividends or patronage refunds based on a member's level of participation (not capital contribution).

This model ensures that wealth created remains within the community and fosters long-term sustainability.

As former UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, once stated, "Cooperatives are a reminder to the international community that it is possible to pursue both economic viability and social responsibility."

The sector faces ongoing challenges, including:

- Mismanagement or weak leadership in some cooperatives.
- Limited participation by youth.
- Need for stronger audit and compliance mechanisms.

However, the good heavily outweighs the bad. Cooperatives are also evolving as evidenced by:

- Digitisation is improving record keeping and member engagement.
- Women and youth-led cooperatives are gaining momentum.
- Policy support and donor funding are enabling more robust governance training.

With improved transparency, tech adoption, and value addition, cooperatives are poised for even greater impact.

"Cooperatives are a tested model for people-centred and sustainable development," says the International Cooperative Alliance.

Kenya's cooperative sector plays a central role in economic empowerment, social inclusion, and rural development.

With clear structures, legal backing, and growing digitisation, cooperatives continue to offer scalable and sustainable solutions to local and national challenges.

As the country works towards inclusive economic growth, cooperatives remain a vital vehicle for collective prosperity.



Drivers of the Cooperative Sector

Transparency must follow when money meets community



The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSCCO) team celebrate Customer Service Week, 2024.

Kenya's cooperative movement is a vibrant, tech-ready and values-driven force touching the lives of over 14 million people. The movement pools billions of member savings and transforms how grassroots economies interact with global capital. A set of strategic institutions—connectors, enablers, and disruptors—is behind this powerful engine. The institutions make this model not just sustainable but also ideal for investment.

Here is a look at the ecosystem behind Kenya's cooperative might that matters to techno-savvy investors and socially conscious entrepreneurs.



The movement's compass

The Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) has played the role of policy advocate, sector strategist, and standards watchdog since its establishment in 1964.

It lobbies for friendly legislation, ensures cooperative governance stays robust, and represents Kenya's movement on global platforms like the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA).

Recently, its focus is on digitising rural cooperatives, building climate resilience among farmer groups, and championing youth-led cooperative enterprises.

For international partners, CAK offers a well-governed gateway to grassroots networks.

KEY POINTS

- With assets worth KSh500 billion, Co-op Bank posted a Sh13.8 billion (\$94 million) half-year profit in 2024.
- Cooperative Alliance of Kenya is the policy advocate, sector strategist, and standards watchdog.
- Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) regulates slightly under 400 Saccos, and ensures stability and consumer protection.
- KUSCCO is the umbrella union of thousands of Saccos. It is the cooperative sector's liquidity warehouse, training hub, and insurance partner.
- National Housing Cooperative Union enables low to middle income earners access affordable housing through collective financing.



Guardian of trust

Transparency must follow when money meets community. That is where the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) comes in.

SASRA is also preparing for the future by rolling out a tiered licensing framework to accommodate non-deposit taking digital Saccos thus offering a regulatory sandbox for innovators targeting informal finance.

Young investors eyeing fintech for cooperatives or blockchain-backed Saccos should see SASRA not as a hurdle but a signal of maturity and security in the market.



Giant behind the scenes

The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSCCO) serves as an advocacy organisation for Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOS) in Kenya. Since it was founded in 1973, the union has been empowering SACCOS through capacity building, research and consultancy, policy advocacy, and representation on both national and international stages.

KUSCCO is an advocate for the SACCO sector, lobbying for policies and legislation that create a supportive environment for Saccos to thrive. KUSCCO collaborates directly with government agencies, regulators, and global stakeholders to push for reforms that safeguard member interests, enhance financial inclusion, and bolster the governance and sustainability of the sector.



National Cooperative Housing Union

NACHU comes in where urban youth may not immediately connect with the cooperative movement until they hear about cooperative housing.

Since the 1980s, it has helped thousands of low to middle-income earners access affordable housing through collective financing and planning.

As Kenya's real estate sector booms, NACHU is experimenting with green building materials, rent-to-own models, and urban Sacco-led housing clusters. It is opening space for impact investors looking to back sustainable cities.



The financial backbone

Founded in 1965, Cooperative Bank of Kenya (Co-op Bank) is a unique commercial bank owned by cooperatives. Co-op Bank's very DNA interweaves with the movement it serves. With over \$5 billion in assets and over 190 branches, the bank provides tailored credit and payment solutions, mobile banking via the MCo-op Cash, and financial literacy training.

The institution offers something rare in emerging markets: commercial returns blended with social dividends.

In 2024, it posted a KSh13.8 billion (\$94 million) half-year profit. Much of it flows back to cooperative shareholders who range from small-scale farmers, women's groups, and youth Saccos.

"It is not just about banking on people. It is about banking on their potential," says Dr Gideon Muriuki, Chief Executive Officer of Co-op Bank.

Timely Institutions

Cooperatives and the institutions behind them are the front and centre of a Kenya leaning into its Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA).

The cooperative model is morphing into something far more scalable and attractive, thanks to tech disrupting finance, agribusiness, and housing. That is a digitally connected, financially disciplined, and community led economic system.

For investors, this ecosystem offers:

- Deep market penetration with built-in consumer trust.
- Real impact with returns that reflect both profit and purpose.
- Strategic partnerships with institutions that understand governance, risk, and scale.

Smart money is watching

From Nairobi's boardrooms to rural counties, Kenya's cooperative institutions are rewriting how inclusive economies grow. They are stable, transparent, and tech-aware. Global capital is starting to prioritise these traits. For Gen-Z innovators and global ESG funds alike, the question is no longer whether to engage. Rather, how soon.

QUOTE:

From Nairobi's boardrooms to rural counties, Kenya's cooperatives are rewriting growth of economies.





The Co-operative Bank of Kenya

Inclusive Growth for Shared Prosperity



 The bank took off on an admirable note by closing the first year of business with a KSh 172,000 profit, a capital base of KSh 634,000, customer deposits of KSh 5.3 million and total assets of **KSh 5.7 million.**

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

The Co-operative Bank of Kenya is predominantly owned by the over 15 million-member co-operative movement who hold a majority 64.5 per cent stake in the bank. With shareholders coming from all regions of the country, the bank is the face of Kenya and is also the biggest co-operative bank in Africa with an asset base of Ksh 774.1 Billion and over 9 million account-holders.

The Co-operative Bank of Kenya (Co-op Bank) was founded by indigenous co-operative societies and unions immediately after Kenya's independence in 1963, which were experiencing challenges accessing credit and other financial services from banks then.

Co-operatives were fast emerging as key mobilisers of resources required to enable farmers, mostly in coffee, cotton, dairy and pyrethrum to jointly market their produce. They needed crucial support by way of affordable credit.

Whilst banks were all too eager to accept their deposits, they were unwilling to advance them credit, on account of their lack of securities, detailed financial statements, credit histories and other formal requirements. This difficulty in



accessing affordable financial services drove co-operatives to seek an alternative path - of founding their own bank that would serve their interests.

Around the same time in 1984, the Government was also contemplating setting up a proper mechanism of supporting the co-operative movement, and conducted a survey to ensure the bank is set on sound footing.

As a result of initiative and advice of the Kenya National Federation of Co-operatives (KNFC) - the apex body to promote the interest of the co-operative movement - a group of people from the Department of Co-operative Development visited Israel to study ways and means of establishing a viable co-operative bank.

The same year, a joint paper by the

Ministry of Finance and Marketing & Co-operatives Development recommends the establishment of the bank. The Government accepted the recommendations and an official from Standard Chartered Bank Mr. D G Landells was appointed General Manager to assist with the establishment of the Co-operative Bank of Kenya Limited.

The Co-operative Bank opens for business on 10th January 1988 with a modest capital base of Ksh 255,000. The Government supplements the capital with a KSh 214,000 interest-free loan repayable in 10 years. The Banking Act, however, requires banks to have a minimum capital of a "staggering" KSh 2 million. The Government grants an exemption and offers a grace period within which the required capital is to be raised.

The bank took off on an admirable note

by closing the first year of business with a KSh 172,000 profit, a capital base of KSh 634,000, customer deposits of KSh 5.3 million and total assets of KSh 5.7 million.

The Bank has since diversified to become a full-service universal bank especially after 1994 when the Government allowed the bank to offer services beyond the co-operative movement. Today, Co-op Bank is a leading player in all banking spaces including digital banking, retail banking, corporate and trade finance, foreign exchange, stock brokerage, fund management, asset finance, mortgage, bancassurance and custodial services - in addition to banking co-operatives.

The growth path of the bank faced a major setback in 1998 when the bank's head-office was destroyed in a terrorist attack apparently targeted at the neighbouring



With shareholders coming from all regions of the country, the bank is the face of Kenya and is also the biggest co-operative bank in Africa with an asset base of **Ksh 774.1 Billion** and over 9 million account-holders.



The Co-operative Bank of Kenya is predominantly owned by the over **15 million-member** co-operative movement who hold a majority 64.5 per cent stake in the bank.



Increasing Access to Quality Education

Over 11,500 needy bright students sponsored for Secondary & University Education



Nairobi Embassy of the United States of America, and thereafter needed a complete relocation. Co-op House was subsequently rebuilt fully and the bank resumed occupation in 2003.

In 2001, the bank made a leadership transition and embarked on a successful restructuring programme arising from the over KSh 2.3 billion loss recorded in 2001. The bank has since achieved a remarkable turnaround that continues to report progressive improvement in financial performance year after year, with 2024 posting a record KSh 34.8 billion profit before tax.

In December 2008, Co-op Bank went public, raising substantial additional capital and got listed on the Nairobi Securities Exchange. A unique shareholding structure was created to retain the identity and control of the co-operative movement who retain a 64.6 per cent equity stake thereby becoming the strategic investor in the bank. The bank stock is among the key counters that constitute the NSE 20-Share Index among other market indices.

In September 2013, Co-op Bank opened its first regional outlet in Juba, the South Sudan capital. The South Sudan operations are a joint venture between the Bank and the Government of South Sudan on a 51 per cent/49 per cent shareholding, respectively, with the understanding that the 49 per cent shareholding will be transferred to South Sudan co-operatives in due course.

In 2008 the Bank established a wholly-owned consultancy company, Co-op Consultancy Services Limited, to provide capacity-building on a subsidised basis to Kenyan co-operatives. Kenyan co-operatives have for the last 10 years been able to access world-class consultancy in the areas of Training & Capacity-building, HR sourcing, ICT Systems Audits & Procurement, Strategic Planning,

Restructuring & Turnaround Strategies, among others, from Coop-Consultancy. Co-op Consultancy runs hundreds of consulting mandates every year, which has assisted Kenyan co-operatives become

more professional and competitive players in their chosen spaces.

Our unique model of retail banking services enable access to cash for FOSA operations, enabling 619 FOSA outlets to support over 15 million Sacco members access banking services even in rural/remote areas. The bank supported the establishment of the Kenya Co-operative Coffee Exporters Ltd (KCOE) to protect the interest of small-holder coffee farmers. KCOE was the first coffee marketing firm in Kenya that is wholly-owned by small-holder coffee farmers. KCOE continues to greatly support market access for small-holder farmers. This has significantly enhanced their earnings.

Co-op Bank has strongly supported the recapitalisation of Co-operative Insurance Company (CIC Group), by way of enhanced equity investment amounting to 24.8 per cent equity stake making the bank a strategic investor in CIC Group. In addition, the bank invested in a stockbroking company, Kingdom Securities Limited to offer greater safety and reliability

to investors, notably the co-operative movement.

Co-op Trust Investment Services Ltd is the fund management subsidiary of the bank that is a leading player in the industry with Funds Under Management currently at over KSh 380 Billion.

Digitisation of the bank continues apace, with Mco-op Cash Mobicash wallet graduating to become a prolific channel through which the bank disburses an average KSh 6.4 Billion in loans via mobile phones every month. The mobile e-credit product disbursed KSh 14 Billion to MSMEs in the year 2024 alone.

The Bank established the Co-op Bank Foundation in 2007 to serve as the Group's social investment vehicle. The Foundation continues to provide full education scholarships to gifted but needy students from all regions of Kenya. The sponsorship includes fully paid secondary education, full fees for university education, internships, and career openings for beneficiaries. The foundation is fully funded by the bank and has supported over 11,700 students since inception.

The bank continues to cherish and nurture the bonds of partnership with the movement, as seen during the Covid-19 pandemic when many listed companies made the decision to withhold dividends. However, Co-op Bank, determined that it was indeed during such moments of challenges that the bank was created, and proceeded to seek a special exemption from the Central Bank of Kenya to be allowed to pay dividends.

The approval was granted, allowing the bank to pay the regular dividend to shareholders totalling over KSh 1.1 billion for 2021 and 2022, thereby offering a much-needed cash injection that became a critical lifeline to the movement.

RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

The successful co-operative banking model has won admiration and recognition from many parts of the world, the latest of which is Overall Winner Award at the Sustainable Finance Catalyst Awards organised by the Kenya Bankers' Association.



Sustainability Awards

Most Sustainable Bank in Kenya



Asanteni Sana!

OVERALL WINNER

Sustainable Finance Catalyst Awards



-  Most Innovative Bank
-  Best in financing Commercial Clients
-  Best in Financing MSMEs
-  1st Runners up – Best In promoting People with Disability (PWD)
-  2nd Runners Up – Best in Promoting Gender Inclusivity



Outreach Capacity Building Transforming Cooperatives In Kajiado County: The Need To Scale Up Support



Noting cooperatives to be critical vehicles in enabling Kajiado County to tap the immense economic potential in the County, the County Government of Kajiado, through the Department of Gender, Cooperatives, Culture, Tourism, and Wildlife, has placed special attention on capacity development in the cooperative movement in the County.

To achieve this, the County Government of Kajiado in 2022 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with The Cooperative University of Kenya (CUK), through which the two committed to working together towards a strong cooperative movement in the County.

Through this MOU, for the last three years, the Institute of Cooperative Development (ICD), an outreach arm of The Cooperative University of Kenya, in collaboration with Department of Gender, Cooperatives, Culture, Tourism and Wildlife have run different transformative initiatives that have been highly beneficial to the cooperative movement in Kajiado County.

During the 2024/2025 Financial Year, ICD conducted three different capacity-building workshops targeting Boda Boda Associations and Cooperative Leaders across various sub-counties in Kajiado. The training covered key thematic areas including the Cooperative Business Model, governance, leadership, and resource mobilization strategies.

Participants were taken through practical sessions on how to transform the boda boda SACCOS into Boda boda transport cooperatives in line with the reforms envisioned to achieve formalization and order in the sub-sector.

Special emphasis was placed on the cooperative business model, governance in cooperatives, financial planning, and collective savings as a vehicle for economic empowerment among riders.

Through this initiative, the Institute of Cooperative Development aims to contribute to transforming Boda Boda SACCOS in Kajiado County into vibrant, financially sustainable transport cooperatives.



Prof. Wycliffe Oboka, the Director of the Institute of Co-operative Development at The Co-operative University of Kenya, undertakes training of Boda Boda SACCOS in Kajiado County on 24th April 2025.

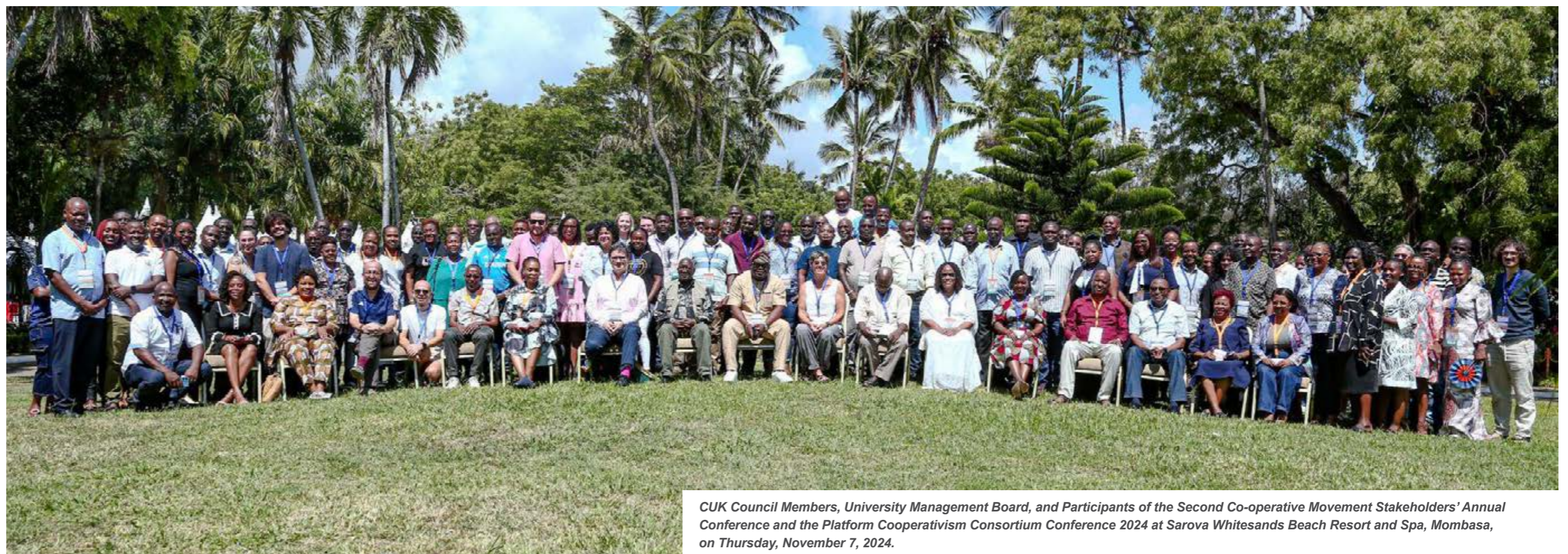
Further, the Institute of Cooperative Development extended its outreach to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) within Kajiado County.

Through targeted training on the Cooperative Business Model and Resource Mobilization, MSMEs were also introduced to new models of collective entrepreneurship. The highly interactive training sessions are aimed at equipping participants with knowledge on how to use a cooperative business model and structures for scaling their businesses.

Participants were also sensitized on how to mobilize local and external resources, including tapping into county and national government programs. This intervention supported MSMEs in formalizing and growing sustainably while fostering collaboration among local businesses.



Deputy Vice-Chancellor (ACDRI) Prof. Isaac K. Nyamongo (left), the Commissioner for Cooperatives in the Ministry of Co-operatives and MSMEs Development, Mr. David Obonyo (3rd left), and NEDAC Delegation during the signing of the CUK-NEDAC collaboration agreement on February 27, 2025, at The Co-operative University of Kenya, Main Campus, Karen-Nairobi.



CUK Council Members, University Management Board, and Participants of the Second Co-operative Movement Stakeholders' Annual Conference and the Platform Cooperativism Consortium Conference 2024 at Sarova Whitesands Beach Resort and Spa, Mombasa, on Thursday, November 7, 2024.



THE CO-OPERATIVE UNIVERSITY OF KENYA
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 Email: enquiries@cuk.ac.ke | 0724 311 606

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Kamau Ngamau (centre), Dr. Ibrahim Awwal (4th left), Deputy Vice-Chancellor—Academic, Co-operative Development, Research, and Innovation Prof. Isaac K. Nyamongo (4th right), with a delegation of co-operative Officers from the Federal Government of Nigeria and officials from the State Department of Co-operatives during a Benchmark Visit to The Co-operative University of Kenya, Main Campus, Karen-Nairobi, May 7, 2025.

Further, the Institute, as part of its outreach in Kajiado County, offered tailored training to leaders and members of Let's Support Persons with Disability, a Community-Based Organization (CBO) in Kajiado, focusing on empowering Persons Living with Disabilities (PLWDs) through cooperatives.

Through the training, strategies to foster inclusiveness in cooperatives for PLWDs were explored. The outreach for PLWDs is in line with the special focus that ICD has on contemporary issues of concern to the cooperative movement.

The Institute has taken measures to integrate these concerns into its outreach

capacity development programme for the movement.

There is evidence that the capacity development outreach, which ICD has delivered in Kajiado County, has contributed to transformation in the targeted organizations.

This is mainly because the short courses that ICD offers are designed to meet the needs of the target groups, tapping into our more than 70 years of experience in training and capacity building for the cooperative movement.

Through partnerships and collaborations with county governments, development

partners, and other stakeholders, we have adopted flexible approaches to the delivery of our short courses to make them affordable and accessible to a wide audience.

There is a need for partnership to scale up the outreach initiatives to reach more groups across Kajiado County and other parts of Kenya.

For more information or to schedule a training, kindly reach out to us through directorid@cuk.ac.ke. Together, we can build resilient, inclusive, and sustainable cooperative enterprises.



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New KPCU PLC: Transforming Kenya's Coffee Sector

Driving value, exports, and the future of Kenyan coffee.



**NEW KENYA PLANTERS
CO-OPERATIVE UNION**
FARMER CENTRIC • TRANSPARENT • ACCOUNTABLE

The coffee sector in Kenya is a key economic undertaking in terms of income generation, employment creation, foreign exchange earnings and tax revenue.

The sector is categorized into two systems namely the estate and smallholder with a total of about 4000 estates and over 800,000 smallholder producers who operate and process their coffees in about 550 cooperative societies.

It is estimated that five million people depend on coffee for their livelihood along the value chain which includes nursery operators, growers, the agrochemical industry, millers, marketers, transporters, roasters, packers, financial institutions, insurance companies and coffee houses.

Due to its significant contribution to our country's economic growth, coffee is one of the few crops that have established economic support programs, currently managed under the New KPCU PLC.

The New KPCU PLC was established as a State Corporation under the State Corporations Act Cap 446 and incorporated as a Public Limited Company pursuant to the provisions of the Company's Act 2015, on 4th Day of November 2019. Strategically domiciled in Nairobi, the company has branches in Sagana, Meru, Tala, Kisii, Bungoma and Kitale.

Its principal activities are Milling, warehousing and marketing of farmers coffee, optimum utilization of the assets, administration of the Coffee Cherry Advance Revolving Fund and offering agronomy support services to coffee farmers, while its mission is to provide farmers with affordable and sustainable services along the coffee value chain.

Kenya's coffee industry has remained a vital pillar of the nation's agricultural economy, contributing significantly to foreign exchange earnings and supporting millions of livelihoods.

However, persistent challenges including



CS Oparanya at NKPCU laboratory for a coffee cupping session. From left, Anthony Ndung'u, Quality Assurance Specialist, CS Wycliffe Oparanya, NKPCU Chairman Daniel Chemno, NKPCU Managing Director Timothy Muriqi and PS Patrick Kilemi.





price volatility, limited access to quality inputs, and gaps in agronomic knowledge have constrained the sector's full potential. As the industry's leader, New Kenya Planters Cooperative Union (New KPCU PLC) has been implementing groundbreaking solutions to revolutionize coffee farming and marketing across the country as it outlines below:

Expanding Processing Capacity and Market Reach

New KPCU PLC has achieved remarkable growth in its core operations through strategic infrastructure development. This includes the complete implementation of modern milling plants in Dandora, Sagana, Meru, Bungoma, and Tala, along with efficient collection points in Kisii and Kitale, significantly enhancing service accessibility for farmers.

The expanded network has facilitated a 173% increase in coffee volumes processed, growing from 1,108 metric tons in 2019 to 3,025 metric tons in 2023.

Correspondingly, sales revenue surged from Kshs. 227.8 million to Kshs. 820.3 million, delivering greater value to farmers.

Enhancing Productivity Through Input Subsidies and Training

In addressing critical input shortages, New KPCU PLC implemented the Coffee Farming Inputs Subsidy Program following the October 2021 Presidential Directive. To date, the program has distributed Kshs—1.44 billion worth of high-quality fertilizers, pesticides, and seedlings to 131,000 farmers.

It has also trained 200,000+ farmers on sustainable practices, pest management, and emerging market trends. These interventions have greatly enhanced farm productivity and reinforced Kenya's status in global coffee markets.

Financial Inclusion: The Coffee Cherry Advance Revolving Fund

Recognizing the financial constraints facing coffee growers, New KPCU PLC



was mandated in 2020 to administer the Coffee Cherry Advance Revolving Fund (CCARF) with an initial allocation of Kshs. 3 billion.

Following an additional Kshs. 4 billion government injection in October 2023, the Fund's disbursements reached Kshs—8.8 billion by mid-June 2025, benefiting 576,000 coffee farmers nationwide.

This strategic financial support has enabled continuous farm investments and stabilized production cycles.

Building a Modern Coffee Infrastructure

New KPCU PLC has made substantial investments in critical infrastructure including:

- Five fully operational milling facilities strategically located across key growing regions.
- Nine renovated warehouses, including at Wakulima House headquarters.
- State-of-the-art cupping laboratories in Sagana, Meru, and Dandora for premium quality assurance.

These developments have significantly enhanced processing efficiency and quality control standards.

Digital Transformation and Market Innovation

Embracing technology as a growth driver, New KPCU PLC has implemented digital platforms for real-time payment tracking and market information.

In addition, the company has established direct sales channels that consistently deliver 20-30% price premiums over traditional auction rates. Besides, it has developed traceability systems to meet stringent international market requirements.

Sustainable Sector Development

Through cooperative revitalization programs and expansion into emerging growing regions, New KPCU PLC is ensuring the long-term viability of Kenya's coffee industry.

The organization's holistic approach combines Farmer training in climate-smart practices, Quality seedlings distribution to expand production areas and Value-chain financing solutions.

Driving National Economic Impact

New KPCU PLC's interventions are delivering measurable results including enhanced farmer incomes and rural economic stability, increased foreign exchange earnings through premium coffee exports and strengthened global competitiveness of Kenyan coffee. As Kenya's coffee sector evolves, New KPCU PLC remains committed to expanding financial inclusion through innovative funding mechanisms and scaling climate adaptation initiatives across coffee landscapes.

The company also endeavors to enhance digital integration for greater transparency and efficiency as well as developing new markets for Kenyan coffee products.

With Kshs. 8.8 billion already disbursed to farmers and comprehensive infrastructure in place, New KPCU PLC is uniquely positioned to lead Kenya's coffee sector into a new era of sustainable growth, profitability, and global recognition.

- www.newkpcuplc.go.ke
- info@newkpcuplc.go.ke
- New KPCU PLC
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- New KPCU



CHAPTER 8

A Moral Economy





Cooperatives Stir a Revolution

Testimony to homegrown, tech-enabled, and community driven service

Before Silicon Valley heard of M-Pesa and equity banking became a tool for the masses, Kenya had already engineered one of the most radical economic revolutions in Africa—quietly, persistently, and from the grassroots up. That revolution was the cooperative movement.

Kenya's cooperative journey began before independence but President Jomo Kenyatta's post-independence administration laid its most important foundation.

The government took a bold step in 1966, by creating the Ministry of Cooperative Development. That made Kenya one of the first African countries to institutionalise cooperative economics formally.

That same year, Parliament passed the Cooperative Societies Act that provided a legal backbone for member-owned organisations. Speaking at the opening of the Cooperative College of Kenya in 1967, President Kenyatta declared: "The future of our economy will depend on how well our people come together to build shared prosperity."

This was not political rhetoric. The government backed it with resources: funding education, sending cooperative officers into rural areas, and ensuring strict audits and supervision.

Kenya's cooperative success did not just come from policy. It came from people. The Harambee spirit, deeply embedded in Kenyan culture, aligned perfectly with the cooperative model.

Whether it was dairy farmers in Nyandarua pooling milk or schoolteachers in Kisii pooling savings, the cooperative was a trusted vessel for shared dreams.

By the 1980s, cooperatives were powering entire sectors:

- Dairy cooperatives ensured farmers got fair prices.
- Savings and Credit Cooperatives (Saccos) gave civil servants, bodaboda

riders, and jua kali artisans access to affordable loans.

- Housing cooperatives helped low-income Kenyans own homes in cities like Nairobi and Eldoret.

This grassroots foundation created giants. Mwalimu National Sacco, for example, serves over 100,000 teachers and controls over KSh60 billion in assets.

Stima Sacco, originally for Kenya Power workers, now serves thousands of Kenyans across sectors.

Mud huts to mobile apps

While cooperatives in other African countries struggled to modernise, Kenya's cooperatives adapted. With mobile

penetration surging in the 2000s, Saccos began digitising.

Today, apps like MCo-op Cash, M-Tawi by Kenya Police Sacco, Ukulima Sacco's mobile app, and the Jijenge app allow members to:

- Save and borrow via mobile phones.
- Access instant credit.
- Monitor accounts remotely.

Kenya's Saccos did not collapse when Covid-19 hit in 2020 — they innovated. Many restructured loans, launched emergency funds, and extended grace periods hence cushioning over 500,000 affected members.

To protect depositors, enforce transparency, and bring the much-needed



Solomon Atsiaya, the Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya National Police DT SACCO, hands over the trophy for Best Managed Sacco won at the 2024 Ushirika Gala Awards in Nairobi.



Cooperative leaders at the SACCA 2024 exhibition in Naivasha.

supervision to the sector, the government created the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) in 2009. According to SASRA data, 70 per cent of regulated Saccos were profitable by 2023.

The silent catalysts

Beyond numbers, cooperatives in Kenya are schools of economic discipline. They teach millions how to save, budget, and plan.

Even diaspora Kenyans are tapping into the cooperative model—forming investment groups to buy land, fund projects, and build homes back home. As Egerton University's cooperative economist Peter Njuguna puts it:

"Kenyan cooperatives did not wait for the economy to come to the people. They brought the economy to the people."

Financial and moral economy

Of course, Kenya's cooperative story is not without blemish. Governance failures, cyber fraud, and high loan defaults, remain a concern. KFA, once a paragon of cooperative agriculture, fell into financial ruin in the 1990s. Due to mismanagement and state interference,

its debts eventually led to asset seizures and loss of farmers' trust. Even here, the lesson is clear: without good governance, the cooperative model falters. That is why the modern movement is doubling down on audits, training, and transparency.

As African countries seek inclusive growth, Kenya's cooperative blueprint stands out: home-grown, tech-enabled, and community-driven.

Countries such as Rwanda, Tanzania and Ghana are already studying Kenya's cooperative society laws and digitisation tools. With proper support from government, fintech, and academia, Kenya's cooperative movement could become Africa's greatest economic export.

In a world addicted to profits, Kenya's cooperatives remind us that real wealth is collective, not individual. From cowsheds to code, from tea farms to touchscreen apps, Kenya's cooperative sector is not just a financial system—it is a moral economy.

One simple truth beats in the heart of every Sacco, in every pooled shilling, and every shared risk: when people unite, anything is possible.



Power From the Grassroots

They are testimony to a homegrown, tech-enabled and community-driven blueprint

In structure, a board of directors leads most cooperatives. For consensus during voting, an odd number of members elect the board. Boards set the general direction of cooperatives and hire senior management officers such as the Chief Executive Officers and Chief Finance Officers. A board is expected to report to members annually.

The senior management runs operations of a cooperative. They oversee hiring

staff, administration, and programme development. Senior managements report to boards of directors. Management staff handle member deposits, investments, and the general day-to-day running of cooperatives. However, the number of shares bought does not affect the weight of a vote as cooperatives operate on the one person one vote system.

Members have different rights and responsibilities. They have the democratic right to elect their leaders without interference. They also reserve the right to decide on dividends, policies and investments since their deposits channel to these causes.

However, responsibilities come with rights. Members have the mandate to attend Annual General Meetings and participate actively. They also support the cooperative financially. Thus, empowerment flows down while accountability flows up. Boards' eventual accountability to members shows where true power lies. Members run cooperatives.

Secondary cooperatives are above primary cooperatives. Several primary cooperatives that come together to provide shared services form them. These services include but are not limited to bulk marketing, processing, marketing, training, and advocacy.

The Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSSCO) understands this role and implements it in ways emulated through the continent. With a national reach and a full calendar targeting every region, cooperatives enjoy a symbiotic relationship with KUSSCO.

The movement thrives in a clearly defined legal and regulatory framework by registering cooperatives under the office of the Commissioner of Cooperatives. The Sacco Societies Act is also clear on governance and the roles of cooperatives.

The Ministry of Cooperatives oversees everything. Members approve the by-laws governing co-ops. By-laws are unique to each cooperative, in line with its values and goals.

KEY POINTS

- By-laws are unique to each cooperative. They align with values and goals.
- Senior managements run operations and administration, and report to the board.
- Anyone eligible to join regardless of social class, race, tribe or religion.
- Membership can be ordinary, corporate, and youth and women groups.
- Members reserve the right to decide on dividends, policies and investments.
- Co-operative Association of Kenya, KUSSCO, National Cooperative Housing Union are key apex bodies.





Quiet but Powerful Change

Traditional lenders scaled back operations, but savings and credit societies remained accessible



Government officials, leaders of the cooperative movement came together to celebrate Stima DT Sacco's Golden Jubilee celebrations.

If you live in Kenya, chances are high that someone close to you is a member of a cooperative. It may be a motorbike taxi rider, a woman vegetable vendor, your landlord, or even a family member. It is not by coincidence.

Cooperatives have been quietly, but powerfully, shaping Kenya's economy for decades. Far from being a relic of the 1960s, the movement is gaining fresh relevance in a fast-changing world.

Collectively, they manage assets worth more than KSh1.5 trillion (around USD 11 billion) and contribute close to 10 per cent of Kenya's GDP. Even more striking is that over 30 per cent of national savings are mobilised through Saccos (Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies).

This widespread reach and economic clout make the cooperative movement one of the most resilient pillars of Kenya's development and one of Africa's most dynamic.

The cooperative movement's roots are steeped in the spirit of independence. Shortly after gaining self-rule in the 1960s, Kenya's founding President Jomo Kenyatta strongly endorsed cooperatives as engines of economic empowerment.

The landmark Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 made it clear that development would move only by enabling ordinary Kenyans to participate in the economy meaningfully.

A year later, Parliament passed the Cooperative Societies Act of 1966 to

lay the legal foundation of forming and running cooperatives.

Whether it was dairy farmers in Nyeri, coffee growers in Kericho, or matatu owners in Nairobi, cooperatives provided a structure for Kenyans to pool resources, grow incomes, and uplift communities. Like any major sector, cooperatives have not been immune to challenges.

The 1990s brought mismanagement, fraud, and political interference operatives thus sparking a crisis of confidence. However, the sector rebounded impressively.

A major turning point was the creation of the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) in 2009 to introduce stricter oversight for deposit-taking Saccos.

Today, over 360 Saccos operate under regulations akin to commercial banks.

That builds public trust and financial discipline. Performance of Saccos during the Covid-19 pandemic further demonstrated their resilience.

While many traditional lenders scaled back, Saccos remained accessible, offering credit relief, restructuring loans, and supporting members through tough times.

Forget the myth that cooperatives are for older generations. A new wave of youth-focused cooperatives that the Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs supports is taking shape. These groups are addressing needs of young Kenyans looking to save, invest, or borrow without being locked in high-interest debt.

Programmes like the Ajira Digital Initiative that supports freelancers and gig workers are exploring Sacco-based models to help digital workers build financial security.

Meanwhile, digital-native cooperatives such as Y-Save and Yetu Sacco have

revolutionised access with mobile onboarding, real-time loan approvals via USSD or apps, and tailor-made financial products for young entrepreneurs. In short, cooperatives are evolving fast. They are speaking the language of Kenya's tech-savvy youth.

Smart bet for investors

Both local and foreign investors are taking note. The World Bank and IFC have consistently highlighted Kenya's cooperative sector as one of Africa's most self-reliant and investable financial ecosystems.

Integration with mobile money, digitisation of operations, and enhanced governance have made Saccos more attractive and less risky.

This is not just theory. Kenya is now exporting its cooperative model to the region. Countries like Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania are sending delegations to Nairobi to learn from the Kenyan experience.

With the United Nations declaring 2025 the International Year of Cooperatives, Kenya is confidently stepping onto the global stage as a thought leader in cooperative innovation and sustainability.

Whether you are a young person planning your future, a professional trying to save and invest wisely, or an investor searching for high-impact opportunities, Kenya's cooperatives offer unmatched value.

They combine the stability of grassroots community support with the scale and structure of formal financial institutions.

They are no longer our grandmothers' financial network. They are digital, dynamic, and ready for the future.

Remember something next time you ride a bodaboda, buy vegetables from a mama mboga, or hear about someone buying a plot of land through a Sacco: you are witnessing the power of a movement that is still very much alive.



PS Kilemi addressing a Cooperative leaders conference in Mombasa.



Powered by Ordinary Folks

Saving and Credit Cooperative Societies, better known as Saccos, are the people's bank



Is it a bank? Is it a Sacco? It is the latter and it has quid for loaning members.

In a country where over 80 per cent of the population operates within the informal economy, Saccos have long served as the people's bank. That is even before mobile money revolutionised African finance. Saccos are not just about pooling money. They are about pooling trust, shared purpose, and community resilience.

Today, Kenya's Saccos sector is undergoing a transformation that could reshape access to credit, asset ownership, and entrepreneurial capital for millions of folks.

A legacy that began in 1964

The Saccos movement in Kenya officially began in 1964, soon after independence, as part of the broader effort to promote economic self-reliance. That same year, Kenya saw the registration of its first Saccos: Kenyatta Hospital Staff Saccos,

which provided workers access to affordable credit and savings services.

Driven by a strong policy environment—including the landmark Sessional Paper No. 10 of 1965 on African Socialism—teachers, farmers, civil servants, and police officers across the country soon embraced Saccos.

Saccos had grown into a major grassroots financial system by the 1980s, with more than a million members participating nationwide.

A people-powered engine worth billions

Kenya's Saccos had by 2023 mobilised over KSh900 billion (\$6.3 billion) in assets, served more than 6 million active members, and managed deposits nearing KSh600 billion. Unlike traditional banks,

Saccos build on democratic principles. Each member gets one vote, regardless of his or her savings.

This sense of ownership has made Saccos especially attractive to low and middle-income Kenyans, particularly in rural areas where banks are sparse but cooperatives societies thrive. Saccos provide credit for everything.

From farming inputs and school fees to home construction, from purchasing bodabodas to expansion of small businesses. In fact, a Saccos has made it possible for many Kenyans to own their first loan, first home, and first plot of land.

Titans leading the charge

Kenya's Saccos landscape is dotted with high performers. Some have become household names.

KEY POINTS

- Saccos pool money, trust, shared purpose, community resilience.
- Kenyatta Hospital Staff Saccos registered in 1964.
- By the 1980s, Saccos penetrated grassroots with more than a million members.

- Originally formed to serve workers in the energy sector, Stima DT Saccos now boasts of branches and members nationwide. With an asset base of over KSh56 billion.
- Mwalimu National Saccos that primarily serves teachers remains one of the largest in Africa, with over KSh60 billion in assets. Despite turbulence, including losses from its investment in Spire Bank, Mwalimu Saccos has shown resilience and a willingness to correct course.
- Unaitas, now a model of modernisation in the sector, was once a small rural Saccos. It has transformed into a full deposit-taking institution offering mobile banking, insurance, and SME loans.

Digital disruption

Gen Z's perception that Saccos are a relic of their parents' generation is quickly changing. Younger Saccos and credit unions are going digital.

Platforms such as Fahari Saccos and Tujenge Saccos are app-first. They serve gig workers, digital freelancers, and side hustlers who want fast and transparent lending.

Many established Saccos are also onboarding FinTech solutions. Cooperatives Bank's Saccos Link allows Saccos to issue ATM cards and integrate with mobile money systems.

Meanwhile, the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSCCO) has launched IRNET. An ICT platform linking Saccos to Kenya's national payments grid.

Crises that changed rules

Still, Saccos have not always been immune to scandal. In the 1990s and early 2000s, dozens of Saccos collapsed due to insider lending, poor governance, and fraud.

The collapse of Ekeza Saccos in 2019 where over 50,000 members lost savings exposed how charismatic leaders could exploit regulatory gaps.

The formation of the Saccos Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) in 2009 was a turning point. Today, Saccos must meet capital adequacy requirements, submit audited financials, and protect member deposits.

In 2023, SASRA began the bold process of regulating even non-deposit-taking Saccos.

Five trends to watch

- Digitisation will be non-negotiable. Saccos that do not modernise will lose relevance.
- Youth-centric products will drive growth. Loans for side hustles, digital businesses, and affordable housing will define the next frontier.
- Greater integration with national finance. Saccos may soon offer green bonds, remittance services, or partner with FinTechs to expand reach.
- Consolidation and federation. Smaller Saccos will need to merge or share resources to remain viable.
- Global investment opportunities. Social impact investors and DFIs are watching Kenya's Saccos sector as a channel for inclusive finance.

Reclaiming relevance

Kenya's Saccos have been grassroots enablers of building wealth for nearly 60 years. They helped teachers buy homes, farmers purchase inputs, and small traders grow their stock.

Saccos must now reinvent themselves for the digital generation without losing the cooperatives DNA that made them trustworthy in the first place.

For Gen Z, Saccos could be more than a loan source. They could be the collective saving culture that builds intergenerational wealth.

Saccos are not just relevant for investors. They are the sleeping giants of Africa's inclusive finance future.



Marketing Drives Growth

Promoters provide vetted and structured supply chains already compliant with international standards

Agricultural cooperatives in Kenya trace their roots to the colonial era. The first legal framework—Cooperatives Societies Ordinance of 1931—was crafted not to empower local farmers, but to regulate European settler interests in cash crop farming.

However, real transformation began after independence in 1963, when President Jomo Kenyatta’s government actively promoted cooperatives to empower African farmers.

In 1966, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Marketing was established to institutionalise support. By the early 1970s, agricultural cooperatives had become the main channels for marketing key cash crops like coffee, tea, pyrethrum, and cotton.

“The government saw cooperatives as vehicles for Africanisation of the economy,” says Dr. Gabriel Kariuki, former director at the Cooperatives College of Kenya.

These cooperatives are farmer-owned associations that help members aggregate, process, and sell produce locally and abroad. Rather than each farmer struggling to find a market alone, they pool resources, negotiate better prices, and even offer inputs and credit.

The best-known examples include:

- Kenya Planters Cooperatives Union (KPCU) – Formed in 1937, revived in 2019 to market coffee.
- Kenya Tea Development Agency (KTDA) – Initially part of the Ministry of Agriculture but restructured as a cooperatives in 2000, managing over 600,000 smallholder tea farmers.
- Murang’a County Avocado Cooperatives Union, launched in 2018, exports to Europe and the Middle East.

How they have reformed

For years, many cooperatives struggled with corruption, mismanagement, and



President Ruto appreciates soapstone carvings in a past exhibition.

political interference. But over the last decade, a quiet transformation has taken place, driven by:

- SASRA regulation (2010): Forced transparency.
- Digital platforms: KTDA’s electronic weighbridge system; KPCU’s e-payment system for farmers.
- County-based cooperatives: Devolved governance revived dormant unions and formed new ones aligned to specific crops and value chains.

“Digitisation saved us. Youth now want to track their coffee payments via phone, not sit under a mango tree for updates.” — David Njiru, CEO, New KPCU, speaking in 2022.

Just How Big Is This Sector? As of 2023:

- There are over 5,000 agricultural cooperatives in Kenya.
- These serve more than 6 million farmers.
- Combined, they transact over KSh 100 billion annually, mostly in export crops (tea, coffee, flowers, macadamia, mango, and avocados).

KTDA alone exported KSh 90 billion worth of tea in 2022, while KPCU paid over KSh 250 million to farmers in bonuses that year after a major revival.

“If you want to understand Kenya’s real economy, don’t look at the stock exchange. Look at the cooperatives movement,” — Ali Noor Ismail, former PS, State Department for Cooperatives, during the 2022 Cooperatives Leaders Convention.



Government officials sample coffee beans at an event in Nandi County.

What Are They Involved In Today? These coops do more than just buy and sell. They’re now involved in:

- Value addition: Coffee milling, avocado oil extraction, tea packaging.
- Financial services: Some run Saccos or partner with banks.
- Climate-smart farming: Cooperatives like Kibwezi Hort Growers offer solar-powered irrigation and drought-resistant seed banks.
- Export partnerships: Cooperatives are aligning with EU and China export standards, with help from USAID, IFAD, and private sector players.

For a young person thinking of farming as “dirty work,” cooperatives offer:

- Group leverage: Sell better, buy cheaper.
- Training: On agribusiness, marketing, and finance.

- Digital access: Many have apps for tracking deliveries and payments.

- Profit: Value chain profits are now more transparent and shared among members.

For international investors:

- Agricultural cooperatives offer de-risked entry points into Kenya’s food systems.

- They provide structured, vetted supply chains already compliant with international standards.

Kenya’s agricultural marketing cooperatives are mutating into tech-enabled, youth-friendly, climate-conscious business machines.

With proper governance and digitisation, they could become the engine of rural renewal and a magnet for green investment.

These institutions are moving containers full of avocado oil to Shanghai, running blockchain-based milk records, and writing dividend cheques in the millions.

They’re looking for new members, fresh energy, and bold investors.

KEY POINTS

What Are They Involved In Today?

Cooperatives do more than just buy and sell. They are now involved in:

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- Financial services: Some run Saccos or partner with banks.
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Why Youth and Investors Should Care For a young person thinking farming is dirty work, cooperatives offer:

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Ministers Since Independence

The 1970s saw a massive increase in the number cooperatives

The history of the Ministry of Cooperatives dates back to 1946 when a Department of Cooperatives was established, a registrar of cooperatives set up and a Registrar of Co-operatives appointed.

The Sessional Paper No 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya recognised cooperatives as an important vehicle in the Africanisation of the economy.

As a result, there was massive growth of cooperatives especially for marketing cash crops such as coffee, pyrethrum and cotton. This increase in cooperative activities led to the establishment of a full-fledged Ministry of Cooperatives Development in 1974.

However, following the liberalisation of the economy in the 1990s, the Ministry

of Cooperatives was abolished in 1999 and the reduced role of government in cooperatives transferred to Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

But in 2003, the newly elected National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government re-established the Ministry of Cooperatives and renamed it the Ministry of Cooperative Development and Marketing.

The promulgation of the Constitution of Kenya 2010 saw the role of the National Government in co-operatives reduced as the cooperative function was devolved.

Subsequently, the Ministry of Cooperative Development and Marketing was abolished and the role transferred to the State Department of Industrialisation in the Ministry of Industrialisation and Enterprise Development.

The government was reorganised through Executive Order No 1 of 2016 which established the State Department for Cooperatives under the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Cooperatives.

In 2020, there was reorganisation of government through the Executive Order No 1 of 2020 which transferred the State Department for Cooperatives to the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Cooperatives.

The Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development was re-introduced through Executive Order No 2 of 2023.

Several prominent Kenyans have held the dockets of ministers and cabinet secretaries for Cooperative Development since independence. These are:



Eliud Ngala Mwendwa (1965)

He was the minister for Commerce, Industry and Cooperative Development



Ronald Ngala (1966)

He was the minister for Cooperatives and Social Services.



Kamwithi Munyi (1993)

Kamwithi Munyi was minister for Cooperative Development from 1993.



Peter Njeru Ndwiga (2006-2007)

He was minister for Cooperative Development and Marketing and Member of Parliament for Manyatta and Runyenjes.



Joseph Nyagah (2008-2012)

The late Joseph Nyagah was minister of Cooperative Development and Marketing from 2008.



Aden Mohammed (2013 and 2018)

Was Cabinet Secretary for Industry, Trade and Cooperatives.



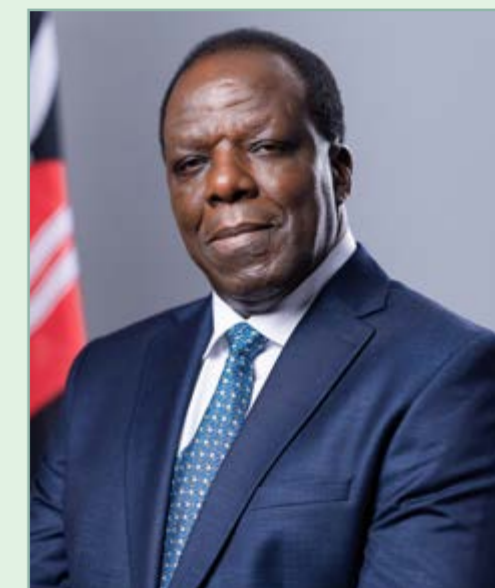
Peter Munya (2018-2022)

He was CS for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Cooperatives.



Simon Chelugui (2022-2024)

He was Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development from 2022.



Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya (incumbent)

He is the current Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Development. He was appointed in 2024.

The State Department for Cooperatives envisions a sustainable and vibrant cooperative sector and endeavours to promote it through provision of appropriate policy, legal, regulatory frameworks and capacity building.

The continent is expected to adopt the aspirations of Africa Agenda 2063 which envisions a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development with cooperatives playing the role of enablers.

Note: The Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development was re-introduced through the Executive Order No. 2 of 2023.



Steering Cooperatives to Success

They have worked hard and long for the success of Kenya's cooperative movement

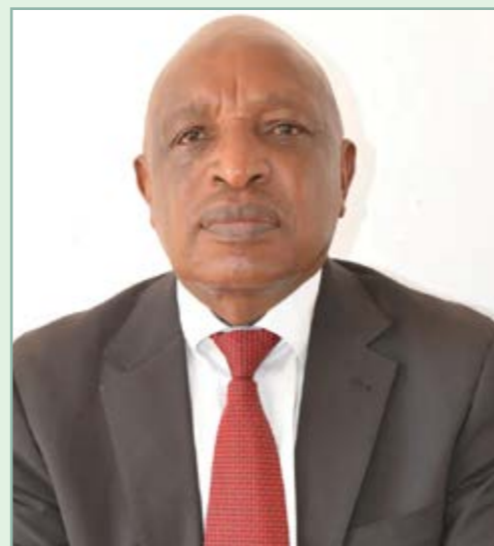
When the seeds of Kenya's cooperative movement were first sown in 1908 by European settler farmers in Lumbwa (modern-day Kipkelion), no one imagined that over a century later, cooperatives would touch nearly every facet of Kenyan economic life, from housing to agriculture, banking, and transport.

Behind this transformation stands a pivotal figure; the Commissioner for Co-operative Development, often referred to simply as the Commissioner of Cooperatives.

Tasked with registering, regulating, and safeguarding the interests of cooperatives and their members, the office of Commissioner has been the silent but steady architect of Kenya's cooperative infrastructure.



Fredrick Fanuel Odhiambo (1977 – 2013)



Patrick Musyimi (2013 – 2015)

Legacy: Supervised the rollout of the Saccos Societies Act (2008) and establishment of SASRA, the regulator for deposit-taking Saccos. Promoted the integration of mobile technology in Saccos.



Philip Nderitu Gichuki (2015 – 2016)



Mary Mungai (2017 – 2019)

Legacy: First woman to hold the office. Led reforms that demanded higher professional standards for management. Focused on curbing embezzlement and tightening audit trails.

Quote: "We must professionalise management, or we risk turning cooperativeness into vehicles of organised chaos."



Didacus O Ityeng' (May – July 2019)



Geoffrey Njang'ombe (2019 – 2021)

Legacy: Pushed for digitisation of co-op operations, including electronic registration and online audits. Strengthened governance standards and led campaigns against dormant "briefcase cooperativeness."

Quote: "Technology will bring the cooperatives sector to every doorstep."



David Obonyo (2019 to-date)

Legacy: Known for pushing the Cooperatives Societies (Amendment) Bill 2024, which introduced digital transparency systems, leadership term limits, and tightened internal controls.

Quote [2024 Budget Forum]: "With digitisation, we aim to end ghost cooperativeness and strengthen real ones."

They served as commissioners

1. Herman M. Mwangi
2. Stephen Kirugi
9. James Isaboke
3. Mathanjuki
4. Raymond Bomett
5. Johnson Muthama
6. Erastus Muriithi
7. Alfick Birgen

Kenya transformed socially and economically through sustainable cooperatives.

Keep Cooperatives in Check

Kenya Society of Professional Cooperators (KSPC) is a professional organisation for cooperative practitioners in Kenya. The organisation was registered in 2018 as a cooperative sector response to deteriorating professionalism and infiltration of the sector by persons masquerading as cooperative experts.

The mandate of KSPC is to certify, register, develop and regulate cooperative professionals in Kenya. To deliver this mandate KSPC is working closely with other professional organisations, especially the Institute of Certified Public Accountants of Kenya (ICPAK), Institute of Human Resource Management (IHRM), the national and county governments, universities among others.

Vision

To be a distinguished global hub of professionalism for cooperative practitioners.

Mission

To be a distinguished global hub of professionalism for co-operative practitioners

Values

Our values include Professionalism, Integrity, Teamwork, Equity & equality, Creativity & innovation

Mandate of KSPC

Kenya Society of Professional Cooperators was registered with the mandate to register, certify, regulate, develop and protect cooperative practitioners.

- KSPC is to deliver its mandate by: Promoting cooperative management as a profession;
- Registering persons who meet the required minimum qualifications in cooperative management;
- Administering Certified Co-operative Professional (CCOP) examinations and prescribe tests of competency deemed appropriate to qualify for membership and certification by the society;
- Developing and enforcing a code of professional conduct for its members.



- Establish, monitor and publish the standards of professional competence and practice amongst cooperative professionals.
- Promote research in Co-operative practice and related areas.
- Organise and conduct Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programmes.
- Publish books, periodicals, journals and articles on Cooperatives;
- Promote and protect the welfare and interests of the members;
- Carry out any other functions prescribed for it under any of the provisions of KSPC constitution or under any written law.



CHAPTER 9

Faith and Money Matters





Faiths Stake Sacco Claim

Savings and credit outfits forged to drive financial inclusion



The Most Reverend Maurice Muhatia Makumba at the launch of the Kisumu branch of Waumini Sacco.

Faith-based Saccos in Kenya have quietly carved out a vital niche in the country's cooperatives finance sector, blending spiritual values with financial empowerment to serve millions of members across the nation.

While these institutions have only recently garnered broader attention, their roots trace back much farther than many realise. They stretch to the birth of the Sacco movement in Kenya during the 1960s.

The story of faith-based Saccos begins alongside the early cooperative movement in Kenya. In the 1960s, various community groups that included religious organisations started forming thrift societies as grassroots responses to widespread financial exclusion.

These societies, based on collective savings and credit principles, evolved over the following decades into the modern Sacco model. Faith-based institutions had taken a leading role in formalising

these savings and credit cooperatives by the 1970s. Notable early examples include Biblia Sacco, which employees of the Bible Society of Kenya established in 1976, and Waumini Sacco. They registered in 1980 under the Cooperatives Societies Act.

These early pioneers set a foundation for faith-based financial services that emphasised trust, community, and stewardship—values deeply embedded in their religious ethos.

Faith-based Saccos typically serve members linked by a common religious affiliation, including congregations, church employees, faith-run schools, and hospitals. This shared spiritual identity fosters a unique sense of trust and accountability that strengthens both governance and loan recovery rates.

The Saccos offer a variety of financial products tailored to the needs of their members, ranging from savings accounts and personal loans to funding church projects and community initiatives.

The focus is on not only individual financial well-being but also promoting social impact such as economic empowerment and community development.

Among the most prominent faith-based Saccos in Kenya is Waumini Sacco, affiliated with the Catholic Church and founded by the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Today, Waumini Sacco serves over 34,000 members and manages deposits exceeding KSh10 billion. That makes it one of the largest in the sector. Chief Executive Officer Margaret Muthoni notes, "The Church has always been a pillar of trust and we extended that trust into finance."

The PCEA Murera Sacco from the protestant community links to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and caters to over 5,000 members with a deposit base of approximately KSh250 million. This Sacco emphasises welfare and responsible lending practices deeply grounded in community values.

Biblia Sacco remains a leading institution in the evangelical domain, alongside Mwea Tabere Christian Sacco that focuses on agricultural finance for smallholder farmers in Kirinyaga County. Mwea Tabere Christian Sacco manages assets of over KSh300 million.

Similarly, Nairobi Pentecostal Church (NPC) Faith Sacco and Deliverance Church Umoja Sacco continue to innovate while embracing digital platforms to serve

a younger tech-savvy membership while upholding biblical principles.

Other notable faith-based Saccos include the Anglican-affiliated Ukristo na Ufanisi DT Sacco, Stima Sacco (with a large membership from various faith groups), and KAG Sacco that associates with the Kenya Assemblies of God church.

Growth amid challenges

Several socio-economic factors drive the expansion of faith-based Saccos. Financial exclusion remains a significant barrier in rural and peri-urban Kenya where commercial banks have limited reach.

Faith-based Saccos bridge this gap by leveraging the informal moral contracts embedded within religious communities.

A 2022 policy brief by the Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis highlighted that aspect. It credits these institutions for higher-than-average loan recovery rates.

Yet, the sector faces hurdles. Many smaller Sacco struggle with the costs of regulatory compliance, including audits mandated by the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) and upgrading ICT systems to meet modern standards. Digital transformation also poses challenges as ageing leadership teams adapt to mobile and online financial services.

Governance risks persist. Some Saccos have been flagged for weak internal controls and unresolved loan defaults. Succession planning remains critical as many faith-based Saccos rely heavily on ageing clergy and lay leaders.

Balancing faith and innovation

Experts see tremendous potential in faith-based Saccos to deepen financial inclusion and drive grassroots economic development, provided they embrace modernisation while preserving their core values.

"These institutions possess one of the most intimate connections to communities—a trust premium that commercial banks cannot replicate," says Prof Lydia Kwamboka, an economist at the University of Nairobi.

Efforts to enhance governance, invest in digital platforms, and actively engage younger members could ensure these Sacco remain not only spiritually anchored but also financially competitive in Kenya's dynamic financial sector.

Faith-based Saccos in Kenya represent more than just financial institutions. They are pillars of community trust, social cohesion, and economic empowerment.

From their modest beginnings in the 1960s thrift societies to their present-day status as major cooperatives players managing billions in assets, they exemplify how faith and finance can combine to build resilient inclusive economies.

As Kenya's financial landscape evolves, the continued growth and modernisation of faith-based Saccos will be critical to expanding access to affordable financial services for millions across the country.

Sources:

- Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) 2023 Report.
- Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPR) 2022 Brief.
- The Standard newspaper interview with Waumini Sacco CEO.
- University of Nairobi, Department of Economics.
- Internal Reports: PCEA Murera Sacco (2023 AGM), Mwea Tabere Christian Sacco (2023 Financial Summary).
- NPC Faith Sacco, Church Bulletin 2022.
- Deliverance Church Umoja Sacco, Leadership Statement 2023.



Yasar's Choice and Principle

There are several Sharia-compliant products on offer



Stima DT Sacco CEO Gamaliel Hassan.

- Mudarabah Profit-sharing partnerships.
- Musharakah Joint ventures.
- Tawaruq Commodity-based liquidity solutions.
- Salam Forward financing agreements for goods.

Through these structures, Shariah finance offers not just alternatives, but transformative options for those seeking dignified, ethical, and inclusive access to capital.

The Yasar Difference

For more than half a century, Stima DT Sacco has been one of the most trusted and high performing financial cooperatives in Kenya, with a growing membership and a solid reputation for reliability and innovation. OAs such, the Sacco's introduction of a Shariah-compliant line lies in purpose-driven leadership and a future-focused vision.

The Sacco's decision to introduce Islamic finance products was not about filling a gap in its portfolio but about fulfilling a larger mandate that places financial inclusion, equity, and member-centricity at the heart of all innovation.

"We weren't chasing numbers," says CEO Dr. Gamaliel Hassan. "We were responding to our members, current and prospective, who needed an option that respects their values: members who had been inadvertently excluded from the financial systems.

This member-first philosophy is what sets Yasar and Stima Sacco apart. Even in a crowded financial marketplace, very few institutions go out of their way to accommodate diverse ethical needs when it is not commercially urgent.

A new financial philosophy

Yasar, derived from the Arabic word for prosperity, is more than a product line. It reflects the Sacco's desire to promote shared prosperity and dignified financial access for all, regardless of religion, race, or background.

Whether it is saving for the future, purchasing a home, or accessing working capital, Yasar's equity-based products offer practical, values-aligned solutions.

The line is open to all members, Muslim and non-Muslim alike who are seeking ethical financing options anchored on fairness, risk sharing, and transparency.

Every offering under Yasar is designed and vetted in accordance with global Shariah standards and overseen by a dedicated Shariah Advisory Committee to ensure integrity and compliance.

Creating space for everyone

The introduction of Yasar is part of Stima Sacco's broader commitment to deepening financial inclusion across Kenya. As the legal and regulatory landscape evolved to support Islamic finance with ongoing critical reforms to the Banking Act, Sacco Societies Act, and Cooperative Societies Act the Sacco recognised a chance to go beyond the status quo and open its doors wider.

And it has done so with thoughtfulness and authenticity, not tokenism. Rather than merely rebranding conventional products, the Sacco took the time to restructure, realign, and retrain, ensuring that the Yasar suite meets not only ethical standards but also the Sacco's own high bar for member service and experience. Nationwide education forums, capacity-building for staff and open community dialogues have helped bridge awareness and trust, bringing a once-niche offering into the financial mainstream. In a diverse, dynamic country like Kenya, financial cooperatives must evolve to reflect the people they serve. For the Sacco, Yasar is part of a larger ambition to lead by example, empower through access, and ensure no member feels excluded simply because their values are different.

To learn more about Yasar and how you can benefit from Shariah-compliant financial solutions, visit your nearest Stima DT Sacco Branch, call us on 0703024000 or email us at customer@stima-sacco.com

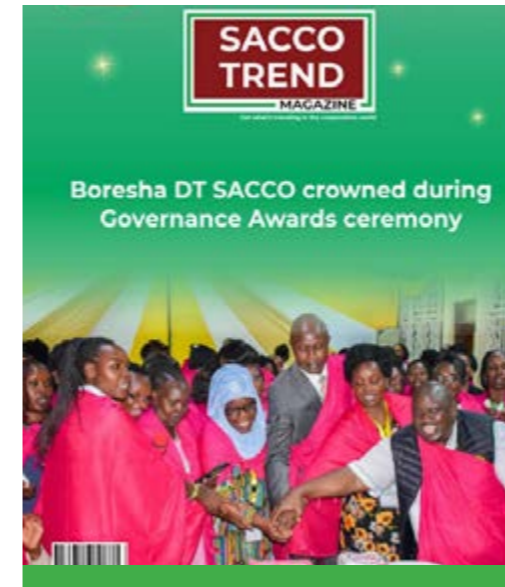


Attendees at the launch of Western Kenya Muslim Women Sacco at Kakamega in 2023.



Strong Sector Media Emerge

Reshaping how cooperatives communicate, inspire, and drive inclusive growth



Kenya's cooperative and Sacco sector has silently transformed from humble grassroots savings schemes into a robust financial ecosystem that manages over KSh 1.1 trillion in assets as of 2023, according to the State Department for Cooperatives. This phenomenal growth has sparked a parallel development: the rise of specialised cooperative and Sacco media, now an essential pillar of economic empowerment and public education.

From print to digital, podcasts to Instagram reels, Kenya's Sacco media ecosystem is reshaping how cooperatives communicate, inspire, and drive inclusive growth. The evolution of Sacco-dedicated media gained traction in 2015, dovetailing with Kenya's digital revolution and the growing sophistication of the cooperative movement. Spurred by increased internet access, improved mobile penetration, and youth-led innovation, Saccos began embracing multi-platform storytelling to engage their members more meaningfully.

Today, dozens of independent and in-house publications, websites, and digital platforms keep millions of Kenyans informed, connected, and inspired.

These platforms serve multiple purposes:

- Educating members on financial literacy, governance, and legal reforms.

- Inspiring others through real-life stories of transformation.
- Promoting innovation, accountability, and transparency.
- Influencing policy through research, opinion pieces, and sector advocacy.

Key Publications: Beacons of knowledge and inspiration

Co-op News (Kenya Edition)

Launched in 2020 under co-opnews.com, this globally aligned magazine delves into issues such as governance, resilience, CSR, and cooperative investment. It provides a bridge between local stories and international cooperative trends, attracting policymakers and sector insiders.

The Cooperative Magazine

Published by The Cooperative Alliance of Kenya (CAK) began publishing this official organ in 2020. It offers insights on legal reforms, success metrics, sector-wide projects, and member advocacy. Its credibility and institutional backing make it a respected voice in policymaking circles.

Sacco Review

With a focus on policy and sector analysis, Sacco Review is one of the few outlets offering deep dives and

commentary from regulators, financial experts, and academic voices. Its analytical approach appeals to SACCO managers, board members, and consultants.

Sacco Times

Dominant on Facebook, Sacco Times offers bite-sized, relatable stories showing how Saccos uplift lives in rural and peri-urban Kenya. From boda boda operators to mama mbogas, it captures impact at the grassroots—a rare and vital perspective.

Sacco Trend Magazine

Popular among financial analysts and Sacco managers, this publication highlights themes such as financial fraud, mobile lending innovations, regulatory updates, and youth inclusion. It is both practical and futuristic.

Sacco World Magazine

An Instagram-first digital publication, Sacco World Magazine uses storytelling through visuals to appeal to Kenya's tech-savvy youth. It celebrates member journeys, lifestyle achievements, and entrepreneurship, positioning SACCOs as aspirational spaces.

Sacco Star Magazine

Quarterly and active on Facebook, Sacco Star amplifies stories of female leadership, sector milestones, and award-winning Saccos. It is a platform for reflection and celebration.

Oasis Magazine – Powered by Imarika Sacco

Launched in 2022, Oasis is both a member engagement tool and brand builder. With features on digital transformation, agriculture financing, and youth-targeted products, it is a case study in modern cooperative communication.

Kenya National Police DT Sacco Magazine

Started around 2021, this magazine tailors financial information for Kenya's police officers. It explains everything from loan structures to retirement planning, helping to demystify financial services for disciplined forces.

SACCO Star Magazine

SACCO Star is the definitive voice of the SACCO sector in Kenya. An initiative of the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Co-operatives (KUSCCO Ltd.), the magazine has been at the heart of the SACCO movement for over 30 years. Each issue delivers researched content on governance, regulation, digital transformation, financial inclusion, and SACCO leadership. From expert legal columns and interviews with regulators to human-centered success stories and market intelligence, SACCO Star offers rich, actionable insights that inform strategy and inspire progress across all levels of the SACCO movement.

Why sacco media matters

Enhancing financial literacy. Many Sacco members come from informal or rural backgrounds with limited access to financial education. Sacco media simplifies complex topics — like interest compounding, savings culture, or investment diversification — into digestible formats. This enhances not only understanding but also confidence and participation.

Boosting accountability and trust. By publishing audit results, board election notices, AGM reports, and whistleblower stories, these platforms become informal watchdogs, holding leadership to account and strengthen democratic governance within Saccos.

Inspiring through real-world transformation Media stories about homeownership through Sacco loans, school fees paid by savings, or businesses started with small advances serve as powerful motivators. They challenge myths that Saccos are “only for the old,” showing growing relevance to Gen Z and millennials.

Creating employment and expertise The growth of Sacco media has generated demand for finance-savvy journalists, graphic designers, digital marketers, and podcast hosts, contributing to the creative economy and offering new career paths.

Fostering community and belonging Unlike traditional finance, Saccos are community-rooted. Digital platforms such as Facebook groups and WhatsApp broadcasts allow two-way engagement, building emotional bonds and collective ownership.

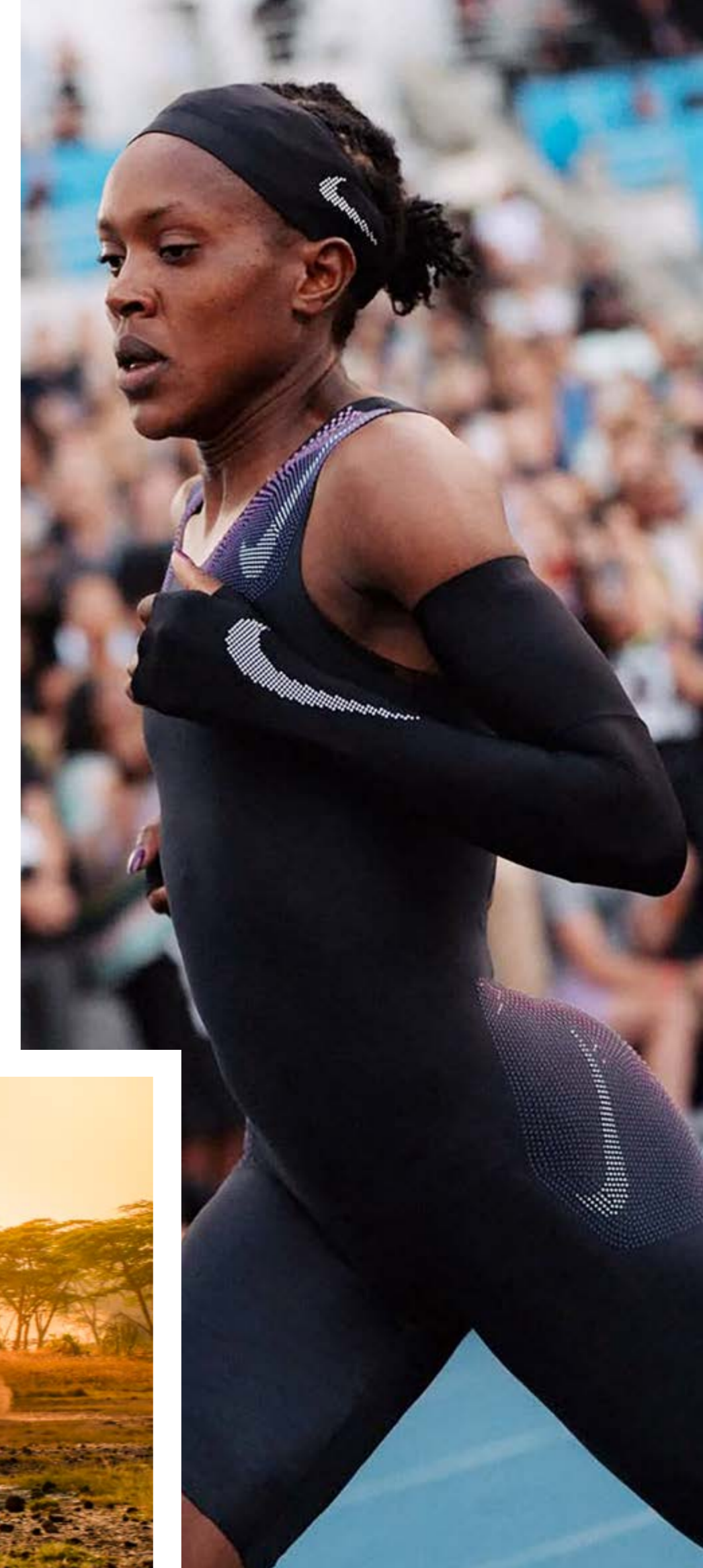
Institutions such as CAK have led the way with centralised, consistent messaging, while Saccos such as Imarika and the

Police DT Sacco have proved that in-house publications can be both informative and brand-strengthening.

Looking ahead: Trends and opportunities

- Bilingual Editions: To include non-English speakers, publishers are introducing content in Kiswahili, Kalenjin, Kikuyu, and other local languages.
- Member-Generated Content: Saccos now encourage testimonials, letters, and member articles, increasing relatability and authenticity.
- Regional Integration: With Sacco models gaining ground in Tanzania, Uganda, and Rwanda, there's growing potential for cross-border Sacco media partnerships.
- Professionalisation: Higher standards in fact-checking, design, and multimedia storytelling will increase influence and expand readership.
- Data Journalism: Platforms are starting to visualise Sacco impact through infographics, dashboards, and interactive content, making data more actionable for stakeholders.

Kenya's Sacco media no longer just reports events — it is shaping the future of economic empowerment. The over KSh 1.1 trillion now managed by the sector is a testament to the vision and discipline of ordinary Kenyans working collectively. And the media is the drumbeat keeping them in-sync. As Saccos evolve, their media will remain the mirror, megaphone, and motivator — amplifying voices that would otherwise go unheard. In this synergy of capital and communication.



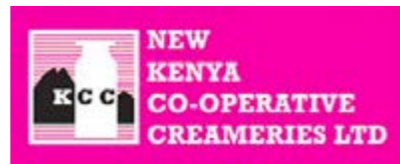
The Partners

They exemplify the principles of a cooperative and epitomise Kenya's continental leadership



MINISTRY OF CO-OPERATIVES AND MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) DEVELOPMENT

STATE DEPARTMENT FOR CO-OPERATIVES



Made possible by support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs



PROSPECTS



KENYA TEACHERS SACCO ASSOCIATION





SOLOMON ANGUTSA ATSIAYA CAPTAIN OF THE KENYA NATIONAL POLICE DT SACCO

“Efficiency, Value addition and Systems Pillars of My Success”



Mr. Solomon Angutsa Atsiaya – CEO Kenya National Police DT SACCO

“I create my green pasture by making the grass green,” he jokily recites his mantra during an interview. Living by this spirit, Solomon Atsiaya, the Chief Executive Officer of the Kenya National Police DT SACCO says he has left a mark in every institution he ever worked. He says he left them “better and well standing than he found.”

In his fourth organisation where he has served the longest, Atsiaya has spent his career life reflecting on his humble background, motivating him to be his best at all times. “I am a cooperative and I see the cooperative culture as a business,” he emphasises as he explains the value of having a favourable business model for cooperative societies.

His career began as a cooperative officer in the Busia division in the then Busia district where he oversaw coffee and tea planting cooperatives before promotion to head the Busia district cooperative office. Atsiaya later transitioned to manage the Egerton University SACCO hence honing skills in management while furthering his education.

“I outperformed myself and turned the SACCO into one of the best then. At the same time, I enrolled for my Bachelor in Commerce degree and later majored in management. I honed my skills in scientific decision making,” he explains.

To succeed in management, he says one must understand efficiency, value addition systems and how to remove elements that do not add value. These skills helped him turn around KWS SACCO in his tenure as the Chief Executive Officer.

However, his star would shine brighter at his duty in the Kenya National Police DT SACCO for over the last 15 years where he started as a Deputy General Manager before soon climbing to the CEO position. “My first assignment was to create systems to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in running the affairs of the society,” he says.

Among his outstanding achievements is the rollout of mobile banking, registry automation, and the adoption of Information technology within the SACCO. He says these systems have been integral in navigating the SACCO to its current standing as reported in its financial statement.

The 2024 performance paints a picture of strategic and steady growth. Assets rose by 10.3% from KES 54.2B to KES 59.8B, while non-withdrawable deposits surged by 9% from KES 28.5B to KES 31.1B. The loan book crossed the KES 50 Billion mark and revenue jumped nearly 13%, topping KES 9.9 Billion. Core capital expanded by over KES 1.9 Billion, a sign not just of profitability, but long-term viability.

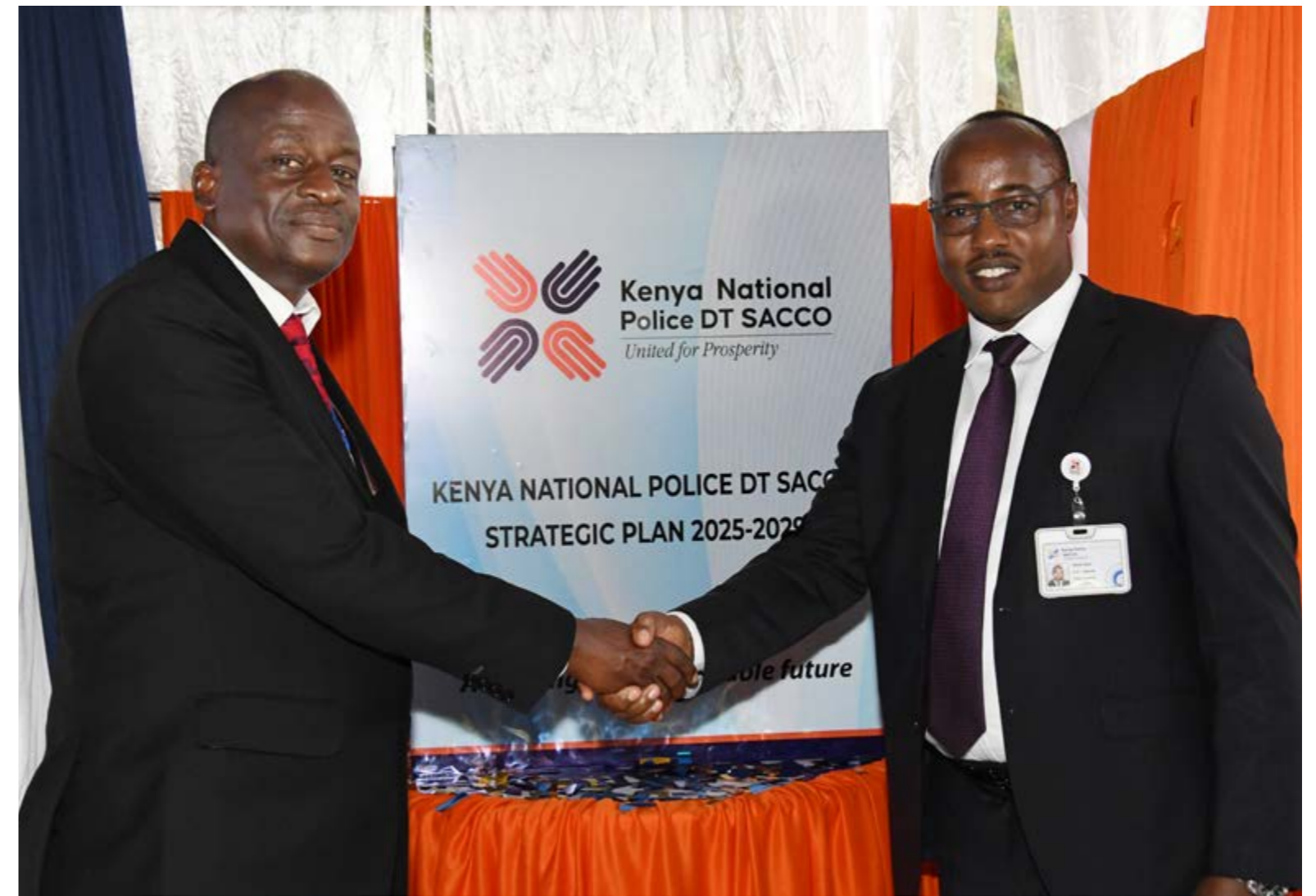
KEY POINTS

“The capital adequacy ratio, with core capital to total assets at 33 per cent, indicates a **fortress of financial stability**. Liquidity management has shown prudence with the ratio of liquid assets to total deposits and short-term liabilities reaching 30 per cent up from 27 per cent in 2023. That ensures the Sacco’s readiness to meet its obligations,” reads part of the statement.

“The capital adequacy ratio, with core capital to total assets at 33 per cent, indicates a fortress of financial stability. Liquidity management has shown prudence with the ratio of liquid assets

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Kenya National Police DT SACCO CEO Mr. Solomon Atsiaya and General Manager Operations & Strategy Mr. Simon Tanui during the launch of the Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029 at the ADM held in Nairobi Serena Hotel on 21st February 2025.

to total deposits and short-term liabilities reaching 30 per cent up from 27 per cent in 2023. That ensures the SACCO’s readiness to meet its obligations,” reads part of the statement.



Kenya National Police DT SACCO National Chairman Mr. David Mategwa, OGW, HSC, DSA, I-CUDE presents a gift the Principal Secretary for Cooperatives Mr. Patrick Kilemi during the launch of the Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029 at the ADM held in Nairobi Serena Hotel on 21st February 2025 as CEO Mr. Solomon Atsiaya looks on.

It notes that efficiency ratios reflect operational excellence where the total expense-to-total revenue ratio stands at 61 per cent hence indicating a lean operation that maximises value for members.

The focus on member welfare is evident in the dividend increase from Kes.3.6 billion in 2023 to Kes.3.9 billion in 2024. That represents a 9% growth benefiting members directly to show the power of investments in the SACCO,” he says.

Captaining the Kenya National Police SACCO, Atsiaya says the SACCO plans to focus on enhancing digital services, expand member education programmes and introduce new financial products tailored to the needs of members.

“We continue to monitor new trends like the needs of the Gen Z to tailor-make products that soothe them. We must continue improving a saving culture in our country. SACCOs must continue to influence our economy,” he concludes.



FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE: THE JOURNEY OF KENYA NATIONAL POLICE DT SACCO

How 690-members SACCO grew to a giant Economic development Force



Kenya National Police DT SACCO National Chairman Mr. David Mategwa, OGW, HSC, DSA, I-CUDE and CEO Mr. Solomon Atsiaya, receive the prestigious trophy for the Best Managed SACCO Countrywide from Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Cooperatives and MSMEs Hon. FCPA Wycliffe Oparanya, EGH. During the Ushirika Day 2024.

The Kenya National Police DT SACCO Society Limited was officially registered on November 20, 1972, in accordance with the Cooperative Societies Act, Chapter 490 of the laws of Kenya. It began operations in June 1973 dedicated to promoting a culture of saving and providing affordable credit facilities to its members.

The Society began with a modest membership of 690 members. Today, it serves over 74,000 members across the country with an asset base of over KSHS. 60 billion, member deposits of over KSHS. 35 billion and a loan portfolio of over KSHS. 52 billion.

According to its financial statements, as of 31st December 2024, Kenya National Police DT SACCO assets grew to Kes.59.8B, up from Kes.54.2B in 2023, recording an increase of 10.3%.

Non-withdrawable deposits grew by 9% from Kes.28.5B in 2023 to stand at Kes.31.1B at the end of the year 2024. Loans and advances grew by 10% to Kes.50.3B up from Kes.45.6B in 2023. Revenues grew by 12.9% to Kes.9.9B, up from Kes.8.8B in 2023. Core Capital increased by 10.4 % to Ksh.19.8 B from Ksh.17.9 B in the year 2023.

The SACCO's funding model remains stable, with non-withdrawable deposits accounting for 90.2% of total member funding. The deposit base is widely distributed, with the top 20 depositors contributing just 1.1% of the total.

"This year's results are a narrative of our collective journey towards financial empowerment and security. We are committed to a thriving and sustainable future for all our members," said Solomon Angutsa Atsiaya, the SACCO's Chief Executive Officer. The financial leverage ratio was 36.0% in 2024, with a five-year average of 36.9%. Liquidity remained strong at

61.0%, exceeding the 15.0% statutory threshold. The SACCO's net interest income accounted for 82.0% of total operating revenue in 2023, reflecting its reliance on interest-based earnings.

As a result, the Kenya National Police DT SACCO has retained its 2025 national scale issuer ratings, with GCR Ratings affirming a Long-Term National Rating of A-(KE) and a Short-Term Rating of A2(KE), both carrying a Stable Outlook.

The Johannesburg-based ratings agency cited the SACCO's strong capital position, stable funding structure, and its notable standing in Kenya's cooperative financial sector.

According to GCR, the reaffirmed ratings reflect consistent financial performance, robust capital adequacy, and prudent risk management. The SACCO plans to implement its

2025–2029 strategic plan, which focuses on expanding member services and maintaining financial stability. Initially, the society drew all its membership from the National Police Service and SACCO employees, however, the society revised its by-laws and now extends services to everyone.

Established with a vision to thrive and establish a sustainable future, the Kenya National Police DT SACCO seeks to impact its member's and communities' lives through sustainable and innovative solutions.

Atsiaya emphasizes the SACCO commitment noting "We prioritize member needs and aspirations as we act professionally undertaking our business ethically".

For the years it has been in existence as a Society, it has endeavoured to improve a permanent objective. Over the years, it has continuously strengthened its systems and processes to match the changing nature and complexity of our business.

"Just like any other entity that started in the early 1970s, most of our processes were initially manual. As the business kept on growing, so was the need for more robust information management systems." Solomon explains.

The Society has leveraged technology to automate its processes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery to its members. Critical products and services are fully available on the digital platform while maintaining a paperless back office. This is in addition to expanding its branch network to eight besides the "M-tawi" mobile banking application and the Headquarters in Nairobi.

Atsiaya highlighted the importance of digital transformation within cooperatives. He discussed technology as the gate way to capture the GEN Z population, noting their unique perspectives society and financial approaches. He emphasized the need for cooperatives to adopt youth-

driven innovations and digital tools to improve member engagement and expand their global impact.

"The young generation are motivated by technology that solves their needs instantly, tapping them into cooperatives means we must approach them with technology solutions that respond to modern day realities".

To bolster growth, the Society launched a five-year strategic plan running from 1st January 2025 until 31st December 2029. "Through implementation of the Strategic plan, we are committed to leveraging technology to streamline our services, ensuring that every interaction with Kenya National Police DT SACCO is seamless and satisfactory. This includes improving access to digital banking and expanding our product offerings tailored to diverse member needs." Explains Atsiaya.

With unprecedented growth in assets, deposits, and revenues, the Kenya National Police DT SACCO is setting new benchmarks for financial success. Within the period, the SACCO will focus on three key pillars:

1. Member-Centricity: This initiative prioritizes enhancing the member experience through technology and innovation. By improving service delivery, they aim to grow and retain their membership while mitigating concentration risks. A dedicated Member Experience Centre will be a hub for engagement and seamless service access, encouraging loyalty and trust.

2. Institutional Sustainability: The goal is to ensure the SACCO's long-term financial health and stability. Diversifying the membership base and enhancing financial and operational efficiency will build resilience, enabling the organization to meet evolving member needs. An engaged and mission-driven team remains central to this vision.

3. A Better World to Live In: Committed to positive change, the SACCO integrates

KEY POINTS

The Kenya National Police DT SACCO understands this important role and endeavours to create economic and sustainable social impetus to transform societies.

Thus, the SACCO believes in improving the livelihoods of its members and the community at large with a focus on education, health, sports, disaster relief and environmental sustainability.



environmental sustainability, social investment, and strong governance into its mission. Social programs support communities, while environmental initiatives aim to preserve the planet. Enhanced governance fosters trust and strengthens stakeholder relationships.

The Kenya National Police DT SACCO understands this important role and endeavours to create economic and sustainable social impetus to transform societies.

Sustainability is recognized as one of the five pillars of the International Co-operative Alliance's (ICA) Blueprint for a Cooperatives, positioning cooperatives as builders of economic, social and environmental sustainability. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) highlighted decent work as a central goal and driver for sustainable development and a more environmentally sustainable economy.

Thus, the SACCO believes in improving the livelihoods of its members and the community at large with a focus on education, health, sports, disaster relief and environmental sustainability.

Its programme to educate bright students has benefited 281 students in total, with 50 currently in university, 48 awaiting admission to the university, 128 in secondary school and 55 have successfully completed their education.

The program, a cornerstone of Kenya National Police DT SACCO's member-centred approach, is designed to uplift vulnerable students by providing not just financial support but also emotional and intellectual encouragement. Through interactive sessions with accomplished professionals, students are equipped with life



Kenya National Police DT SACCO Board of Directors, management, facilitators and sponsored students pose for a photo during the annual mentorship, support and coaching program held at Nairobi Safari Club on 11th April 2025.



Kenya National Police DT SACCO Board of Directors, management and staff pose for a photo with teachers and students of Utumishi Primary School GilGil during the launch of the multipurpose hall built through the sponsorship of Kenya National Police DT SACCO



Kenya National Police DT SACCO National Chairman Mr. David Mategwa, OGW, HSC, DSA, I-CUDE alongside GM Operations & Strategy Mr. Simon Tanui, GM Finance & Banking Mr. Moses Manyuanda and other members of management receive the ISO 9001:2015 Certificate from the Bureau Veritas Certifications Manager Mr. Kennedy Obuya on 6th February 2025.



Police SACCO Stadium

skills, career advice and strategies to overcome challenges.

The Society further supports the education sector with infrastructural development. On sports, it has enhanced the facilities at The National Police College in Kiganjo.

In 2024, It undertook to construct, equip, and brand a gym for use by the students and staff of the College. Additionally, the Society supported the College with a water tower and storage tank.

Additionally, a state-of-the-art Police Sacco Stadium in South C was officially handed over last year after its successful completion. This facility represents the unwavering commitment of the SACCO to supporting the well-being of the members and the larger community.

On financial Sustainability the society, while prioritizing growth, will also focus on maintaining a robust and sustainable financial foundation.

Other focus areas include corporate social responsibility initiatives and reinforcing its commitment to uplifting society. This is in addition to investing in the knowledge and skills of its staff and members as well as expanding its services by identifying and analyzing market trends.

The continuous streamlining of the Society's operations and systems culminated in ISO certification under the ISO 9001:2015 quality management system standard. This certification affirms the Society's focus on the members, quality, and continual improvement.

The Society was also recertified for ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management Systems) in November 2024 for the fourth time. "This is to ensure that the SACCO will continue to offer the highest quality service as well as products and services to its members." Says Atsiaya.

With a vision of "A Thriving and Sustainable Future," and mission, "To impact the lives of our members and communities through sustainable and innovative solutions," and its motto- United for Prosperity, the SACCO is dedicated to improving services, empowering stakeholders, and creating opportunities for success.

Guided by core values of Member Centricity, Integrity, Teamwork, and Innovation, Kenya National Police DT SACCO is building a legacy of trust and confidence for future generations. Moreover, by addressing current needs while anticipating future demands, it continues to redefine financial excellence and community impact.

The Society has continuously excelled during the Ushirika Day celebrations, bagging multiple awards in 2024:

-  Best Managed SACCO Countrywide: Position 1
-  Best Managed Deposit Taking SACCO: Position 1
-  Best in Capitalization Deposit Taking SACCO: Position 2
-  Best in Deposit Management Deposit Taking SACCO: Position 2
-  Best in Credit Management Deposit Taking SACCO: Position 2
-  Best in Risk Management Countrywide: Position 2
-  Best in Risk Management Deposit Taking SACCO: Position 2



50 years of Empowering A Global Membership with Innovative Financial Solutions

With an asset base of KES 19.1 billion and a well-established track record in corporate social responsibility, the organization upholds innovation and global relevance as key pillars of its continued growth



UNSACCO Chairperson Mr. James Ouka



CPA. Esther Mailu, Ag. CEO UNSACCO

Outstanding Performance

Over the years, UN Sacco has been consistently recognised as one of the best-managed in Kenya, thanks to its commitment to transparency, governance, and member-focused leadership. The Sacco has earned several industry

In an increasingly competitive financial landscape, United Nations Deposit Taking Sacco (UN Sacco) stands out as a model of high performance, innovation, and global relevance.

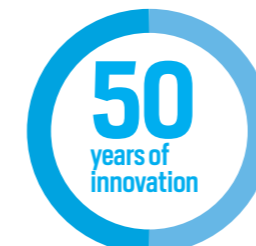
Since its establishment in 1975 to serve United Nations staff in Kenya, the Sacco has evolved into one of the top-tier Saccos in Kenya and Africa. What sets UN Sacco apart is its ability to blend the trusted principles of cooperative with the efficiency, professionalism, and sophistication expected by a global membership. With a commitment to service excellence, financial empowerment, and sustainable impact, UN Sacco has emerged as more than a financial institution — it is a trusted partner for individuals seeking secure, dynamic, and inclusive financial solutions.

Unlike Saccos that serve a broad general membership, UN Sacco caters to a niche base of over 7,500 members drawn from the United Nations, diplomatic missions, international NGOs, and affiliated institutions. The Sacco's impressive asset base of over KES 19.1 billion and a loan book exceeding KES 14 billion reflects its prudent management and sound investment practices. Members benefit directly through consistently high returns, positioning UN Sacco as a top performer.



KEY POINTS

- Impressive asset base of over KES 19.1 billion and loan book exceeding KES 14 billion
- First Tier One Sacco in Kenya to offer savings accounts in both Kenyan Shillings and US Dollars, thus meeting members cross-border financial needs
- Caters to a niche base of over 7,500 members drawn from the United Nations, diplomatic missions, international NGOs
- Sacco offers consistently strong returns, unmatched loan flexibility, seamless digital access, 50 years of trusted performance



accolades for its excellence in service delivery, operational efficiency, and prudent financial stewardship. It has also received awards for technological innovation, cementing its place as a forward-thinking Sacco that leverages digital solutions to enhance member experience. These recognitions underscore UN Sacco's reputation as a benchmark institution within the cooperative sector.

Dollar Savings Account

One of the UN Sacco's most distinctive competitive advantages is its dual-currency savings. UN Sacco is the first Tier One Sacco in Kenya to offer savings accounts in both Kenyan Shillings and US Dollars. This flexibility caters to internationally posted staff, expatriates, and members with cross-border financial needs. It allows members to manage their finances with global ease while enjoying the security and structure of a cooperative model.

Additionally, members can access loans of up to seven times their savings, with approvals processed in less than 24 hours — a benefit rarely matched in the sector. Loan products range from emergency and development loans to school fees, rental income, and property loans, including self-guaranteed options for greater flexibility.

Driving Convenience Through Technology and Innovation

Technology and Innovation remain at the core of UN Sacco's strategic vision. Through a secure, user-friendly mobile app and online banking portal, members can access their accounts anytime from anywhere in the world. Real-time account balances, mobile loan applications, 24/7 access to statements and fund transfers bring convenience and control to members' fingertips. This commitment to digital banking ensures that even members in remote duty stations or traveling internationally can stay connected to their accounts.

Community Impact Through CSR Initiatives

Despite its international outlook, UN Sacco is deeply rooted in Kenya's development and cooperative landscape. Its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives are designed to create meaningful, sustainable impact. Through its partnership with

Cheleta Primary School, the Sacco has supported infrastructure improvement, helping provide a conducive learning environment for hundreds of children. At Miji wa Huruma home for the elderly, UN Sacco has improved living conditions for some of society's most vulnerable.

The Sacco also supports wellness and unity through its sponsorship of UN staff sports teams participating in global events. These community-based initiatives speak to the Sacco's belief that prosperity should uplift not just members, but the broader community as well.

Empowering Members Through Financial Literacy

Financial literacy remains a core pillar of UN Sacco's empowerment model. Recognising that long-term success is tied to informed financial decisions, the Sacco invests in regular education programmes, webinars, and agency visits for its members. From helping young professionals develop smart budgeting habits to guiding retiring members through investment options, UN Sacco ensures its members are equipped for every financial stage of life.

Strategic Growth

UN Sacco continues to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in areas of financial inclusion. Plans are in place to grow its global membership, introduce new investment vehicles, and further integrate sustainable finance into its offerings. With digital transformation and service automation at the forefront, the Sacco is focused on delivering faster and more efficient member experiences.

Trusted Financial Partner

For individuals seeking a Sacco that understands both the global and local financial landscape, UN Sacco is the clear choice. It offers consistently strong returns, unmatched loan flexibility, seamless digital access, and the assurance of 50 years of trusted performance. More importantly, it offers membership in a community where values matter. Whether you are based in Nairobi, stationed in Geneva, or serving in a field office, UN Sacco gives you a financial home built for global citizens with a local heart.



UN SACCO
Your Financial Anchor

DOLLAR SAVINGS Account

Do you earn your income in US Dollar?
Join UN SACCO as a Member today and open a
Dollar Savings Account!



**JOIN
NOW**

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**BECOME A MEMBER
OF THE BEST
GLOBAL SACCO**

**JOIN US
TODAY!**

**UN SACCO membership
is open to:**

- Staff of United Nations Agencies
- Staff of Diplomatic Missions
- Staff of approved International Organizations in Kenya
- Immediate family members of the primary members – (Spouses and Children)

For more information
customercare@unsacco.org | 0709115800 | www.unsacco.org



Kenya Teachers' SACCOs Association

Advocacy stands as the core of KETSA's mission

Catalyzing growth and resilience in the cooperative sector

Established as a unifying body for teacher-based SACCOs in Kenya, the Kenya Teachers Sacco Association (KETSA) has been instrumental in fostering collaboration, enhancing governance, and promoting financial inclusion in the cooperative sector. Through strategic initiatives, KETSA has significantly contributed to the robustness and resilience of teacher-based SACCOs, positioning them as key players in the national cooperative movement.

Role and Impact of KETSA

Advocacy: Championing the Interests of Teacher-Based SACCOs

Advocacy stands as the core of KETSA's mission. The association actively engages



KETSA delegates during the Annual delegates workshop



Mr. Patrick Kilemi (PS.), Mr. David Obonyo, Mr. Robert Njue (KETSA Chairman), Mr. Peter Njuguna (CEO SASRA) & Mr. Daniel Marube (CEO CAK)

with regulatory bodies, including the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) and the Commissioner's office, to address challenges affecting member SACCOs. Through continuous dialogue and representation, KETSA ensures that the unique needs of teacher-based SACCOs are considered in policy formulation and implementation.

This proactive approach has been instrumental in creating a conducive environment for SACCO operations and growth. KETSA serves as a central platform for teacher-based SACCOs, facilitating the exchange of ideas, best practices, and innovations. By organizing annual leadership conferences, workshops and summits, KETSA has provided avenues for capacity building and strategic planning. These forums have been pivotal in addressing challenges unique to teacher-based SACCOs and in formulating policies that enhance their operational efficiency.

Moreover, KETSA has been at the forefront of advocating for the adoption of technology and innovative financial solutions among its member SACCOs and the cooperative movement in general. This has not only improved service delivery but also expanded the reach of SACCO services to members in remote areas, thereby promoting financial inclusivity.

Performance of Teacher-Based SACCOs

Over the past three years, teacher-based SACCOs have demonstrated remarkable growth and resilience, contributing significantly to the cooperative sector's overall performance. In 2023, the 40 teacher-based SACCOs collectively held a total asset base of Ksh 286.11 billion, gross loans totaling to Ksh 245.1 billion and total deposits of Ksh 205.65 billion. Membership in teacher-based SACCOs grew to 1.54 million in 2023.

Contribution to the Cooperative Sector and National Economy

Teacher-based SACCOs, under the umbrella of KETSA, have been instrumental in driving the cooperative sector's growth. Their substantial asset base and widespread membership have not only strengthened the financial stability of the cooperative movement but have also contributed to national economic development. Notably, teacher-based SACCOs contribute a total asset value close to 2% of Kenya's nominal

GDP, underscoring their significant role in the country's financial ecosystem. Furthermore, the sector has been pivotal in promoting savings culture, providing affordable credit, and supporting socio-economic activities across the country.

Organizational Structure and Leadership



KETSA Chairman Mr. Robert Njue

KETSA is governed by a democratically elected Board of Directors led by the chairman Robert Njue, reflecting the association's commitment to transparency and member-driven leadership. This leadership structure ensures regional representation and incorporates diverse perspectives in decision-making.

CEOs Forum: A Platform for Strategic Collaboration



Chairlady KETSA CEOs' Forum CPA Joyce Ndegwa

The CEOs Forum, led by the Chairlady Joyce Ndegwa, serves as a vital platform for chief executives of member SACCOs to collaborate, share insights, and address common challenges. Under her leadership, the forum has facilitated knowledge exchange and fostered a unified approach to tackling issues within the cooperative sector.

Staff and Operational Excellence



Ivy Kageni – KETSA CEO

KETSA's operations are managed by a dedicated team based at the Police Sacco Plaza in Ngara, Nairobi led by the CEO Ivy Kageni. The staff, which comprises qualified professionals, work diligently to implement the association's programs and initiatives. Their efforts have been pivotal in coordinating training sessions, managing communications, and supporting the day-to-day activities that drive KETSA's mission forward.

KEY POINTS

In 2023, the 40 teacher-based SACCOs collectively held a total asset base of Ksh 286.11 billion, gross loans totaling to Ksh 245.1 billion and total deposits of Ksh 205.65 billion. Membership in teacher-based SACCOs grew to **1.54 million in 2023.**



Towering Financial Giant

Shirika DT SACCO adapts and flourishes in ever changing economic landscape



Prof. Esther N. Gicheru - The National Chairman Shirika DT Sacco



CPA Ibrahim M. Njiriri - The Chief Executive Officer Shirika DT Sacco

The story of Kenya's transformation in the financial landscape and particularly in the cooperative sector cannot be told without Shirika Deposit Taking (DT) SACCO in mind. Founded by members from the then Ministry of Co-operatives Development, on April 24, 1969, Shirika DT SACCO has grown and evolved over time to attain its current stature as a formidable player in the financial sector in Kenya and beyond.

With over 56 years in business, Shirika DT SACCO's journey is a testament to resilience, innovation, unwavering trust and loyalty from its members and continued commitment to not only provide financial products, but more so deliver customised and well-tailored financial solutions to meet the diverse needs of its membership.

Vision and commitment

For over five decades now, Shirika DT SACCO has become a beacon of hope, growth, change, transformation and socio-economic empowerment for its members through provision of all-inclusive and diversified financial products and solutions. In doing this, the Sacco has emerged as a most preferred and leading cooperative enterprise with membership footprints in the 47 counties of the Republic of Kenya and, indeed, globally.

Corporate governance

At the heart of Shirika DT SACCO's success is the excellent, bold and strong leadership and governance structure. The Sacco's Board of Directors, composed of nine professional directors and three supervisory committee members, is chaired and led by Prof. E.N. Gicheru while a dedicated management team and staff is led by CPA Ibrahim M. Njiriri as the CEO.

Their expertise and passion to deliver excellent services to members have been a key driving force for growth and transformation of the Sacco over the years. Moreover, the leadership has continued to uphold equity, integrity, transparency, ethical and professional standards in running the affairs of the Sacco.

Additionally, the Sacco delegates system of members' representation across the various counties, ministries, parastatals and other institutions, has ensured that the voice, needs and interests of members remain the core and key area of strategic focus in making growth and development and expansion decisions of the Sacco. Noting the indispensable role that the members and delegates play and as the engine of present and future growth, the Sacco has focused on their empowerment through regular annual trainings.



H.E. Hon FCPA Dr Wycliffe Oparanya, Cabinet Secretary Ministry of Co-operatives and MSMEs, The National Chairman Shirika DT Sacco Prof. Esther N. Gicheru, Commissioner of Co-operatives Mr David Obonyo, Mr Patrick Kilemi Principal Secretary Ministry of Co-operatives and MSMEs and other guest's during the 56th Annual Delegates Meeting (ADM) held on January 31st 2025.



Regulation of Shirika DT SACCO

Licensed and regulated by the SACCO Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA), Shirika DT SACCO continues to be a trusted growth partner for all its members seeking to build and grow their wealth and attain financial freedom through provision of affordable, convenient, accessible and sustainable financial solutions.

Growth and expansion

To address emerging member needs, the changing business landscape and strategic growth objectives, the Sacco opened its common bond to include members from other ministries, parastatals, other employer organisations and even business enterprises beyond the original membership from the parent ministry.

Today, Shirika DT SACCO boasts an impressive membership of over 10,000 across the 47 counties and in the diaspora.

The Sacco's asset base has surged to an impressive KSh5.45 billion, with total member deposits exceeding a whopping KSh4.18 billion as at the end of December 2024. Loan advances to members had surpassed the KSh4.07 billion mark by the same period.

These growth figures, not only reflect the members' trust in the Sacco's ability to safeguard their money but also its commitment to fuel their dreams, goals and ambitions through provision of affordable and easily accessible credit.

COVID-19 and Shirika's recovery strategy

The COVID-19 pandemic tested the mettle and resilience of many businesses worldwide and Shirika DT SACCO was no exception. With disruptions in operational efficiency in many businesses and shrinking incomes of many, the Sacco swiftly rose to the occasion by implementing and expanding provision of digital financial services, offering flexible loan repayment options and even loan restructuring solutions to its members.

These, among other interventions, built a sustainable framework for operational efficiency and ensured that the Sacco's stable and secure financial position was not adversely affected with

potential threats of loan delinquency. To date, the Sacco's membership continues to enjoy the fruits of timely, prudent and appropriate interventions by the board and management. They demonstrated the Sacco's resilience during those turbulent times formed a bedrock upon which the current and future success is anchored.

Legacy of innovation, excellence and transformation

In a world where technology is reshaping the financial landscape, Shirika DT SACCO has embarked on a radical digital transformation journey leveraging top-notch current technology to enhance service delivery and streamline operations.

By integrating digital tools such as online member portal, mobile banking solutions to automated loans application and processing, Shirika DT SACCO is redefining convenience in the Sacco sector besides bringing financial services to members' fingertips.

Furthermore, financial inclusion has been made a reality for thousands by ensuring members in remote areas and financially underserved segments of the Kenyan populace, have access to the financial services they need digitally.

The promise of the future by Shirika DT SACCO continues to be the commitment to evolve and adapt to changing technological advances in order to expand its digital footprint to a wider variety of the products and services offered to members and other key stakeholders.

While technological advancement remains a key hallmark of Shirika DT SACCO's identity as an organisation, its true success and legacy lies deeply ingrained in the dreams it has empowered and the lives of members it has transformed.

From helping salaried business owners secure affordable financing, to owning homes and properties, to families securing their future through convenient savings options, to securing children's future through education financial solutions, Shirika's legacy is intricately woven into the fabric of members' success stories for generations.

Growth pillars in new Strategic Plan

With the launch of Shirika DT SACCO's Strategic Plan 2025-2029, the Sacco has set its sight on even greater heights of success.

The plan outlines the roadmap for double growth with a key focus on member-centric innovations and solutions such as expanded product offering, increasing operational efficiency in providing our financial services and solutions, increased digitisation of products and services, broadening the membership base and reach especially to the business community for increased impact and community and enterprises transformation agenda.

Conclusion

In an industry where many have faltered, Shirika DT SACCO has risen as a towering giant demonstrating impeccable ability to adapt, thrive and flourish for over 56 years.

The Sacco's member first approach in conducting business remains its short term and long-term strategy for business success and continuity.

Join Shirika DT SACCO today for a lifetime experience of change and transformation in your financial world.



SHIRIKA DT SACCO SOCIETY LIMITED

Your Financial Empowerment Partner

Are you a civil servant, salaried employee or a business person looking for affordable credit? Search no further!

Shirika DT Sacco is offering our members the most affordable credit ever within 24 hours!

JOIN US Today

Visit our website on www.shirikasacco.co.ke or call 0724 610 715 and open an account today to enjoy this and much more!



CIC Insurance Group: Building Resilient and Prosperous Cooperative Societies



As the world celebrates the International Year of Cooperatives in 2025 under the theme *Cooperatives Build a Better World*, CIC Insurance Group stands as an example of how the cooperative model can drive inclusive growth, economic resilience, and social protection.

From its humble beginnings to becoming one of Africa's leading cooperative insurers, CIC's journey is deeply rooted in service to the people and for the people.

Our History

The company started as an insurance agency within the Kenya National Federation of Co-operatives (KNFC) in 1968 and was later incorporated and licensed as the Co-operative Insurance Services Ltd (CIS) in 1978.

It later changed its name to the Cooperative Insurance of Kenya Ltd (CIC) in 1999 and finally to the CIC Insurance Group Limited in 2010 in preparation for the demerger of its business operations.

The demerger into three specialised entities: CIC Life Assurance Limited, CIC General Insurance Limited, and CIC Asset Management Limited in 2011 was a strategic move in line with regulatory requirements as well as to enhance efficiency, focus, and value for customers.

This expansion allows each subsidiary to operate with a dedicated focus on its core area of business, ensuring more tailored products, specialised customer service, and faster decision-making as well as adhering to the regulatory and governance requirements.

A Legacy Built on the Cooperative Spirit and shared prosperity

Over the decades, CIC has evolved into a fully-fledged insurance and financial services provider, serving millions of individuals and thousands of cooperatives across Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, and Malawi. CIC believes in shared prosperity with the cooperative movement and has built a business model that embeds this spirit.



CIC Group MD Patrick Nyaga (left) and CIS Chairman James Njue (far right) present the Best Insured National Cooperative award to Co-operative Bank Director Vincent Marangu and Company Secretary Samuel Kibugi during the 2025 CIS AGM.

First, CIC is owned largely by the cooperative movement through Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS). In Kenya, CIS owns 74.3 per cent of the company while 25.7 per cent is owned by corporate organisations and individual shareholders. The same model has been replicated in Uganda where CIC Group is the substantial shareholder owning 95.2 per cent. Uganda Cooperative Savings and Credit Union (UCSCU) owns 0.37 per cent, Uganda Cooperative Alliance (UCA) owns 0.19 per cent and 88 cooperative societies own 4.2 per cent. In Malawi CIC Group is also the substantial shareholder owning 89 per cent of the business as Malawi Cooperative Union (MUSCCO) owns 10 per cent and Farmers Union of Malawi (FUM) own 1 per cent.

As a member of the International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance Federation (ICMIF), the Group has a deep alignment with the cooperative ethos of being people-centred, cooperation with cooperatives, training and education, which has been instrumental in its growth and

KEY POINTS

First, CIC is owned largely by the cooperative movement through Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS). In Kenya, CIS owns 74.3% of the company while 25.7% is owned by **corporate organisations and individual shareholders.**



A delegate at the ACCOSCA conference interacts with a member of CIC staff at the exhibition stand

resilience. CIC has consistently developed customer-centric products that respond directly to the needs of the grassroots, from micro-insurance in medical business as well as funeral covers to agriculture and SACCO-linked life and credit insurance.

One of CIC's major contributions to the cooperative movement is the development of innovative insurance products that enhance financial inclusion. Through partnerships with savings and credit cooperatives (SACCOs), CIC has enabled millions of Kenyans to access credit with confidence, secure their health and livelihoods, and recover from unexpected setbacks.

Alongside the patronage of cooperative members, CIC Insurance continues to enjoy a strong relationship with cooperatives owing to engagements at the grassroots which have provided market insights over the years, informing product innovation. We have built solutions for cooperatives through constant engagement with members, adopting strategies such as white labelling products in health insurance to extend financial protection to vulnerable members of our community. White labelled

products include CoopCare, a medical solution for cooperatives and Group Personal Accident cover.

The Group's diverse portfolio reflects a deep integration and understanding of the cooperative sector's needs, factoring in cooperatives, chamas, savings, credit and cooperative societies and community-based organisations. These solutions safeguard members' assets, promote long-term growth and stability, and protect against everyday risks to investment and retirement plans that build future wealth. They include:

CIC General Insurance Solutions

CoopCare Health Insurance: A specialised comprehensive medical cover tailored for Saccos and cooperative members with inpatient and outpatient services.

Motor Commercial Insurance: A cover for vehicles used in business operations, safeguarding against risks such as accidents, theft, and third-party liabilities.

Work Injury Benefits Act (WIBA) Cover:

This protects employees against work-related injuries or illnesses, complying with statutory requirements.

Fire Industrial Insurance: A cover that offers protection against losses due to fire, lightning, or explosions, covering buildings, machinery, and stock. Like other asset and business protection covers offered, they help in securing cooperative investments, agricultural ventures, and SMEs. CIC's general insurance covers shield them from risks such as fire, theft, and natural disasters, safeguarding their long-term sustainability.

Group Personal Accident: This cover protects employees of a cooperative society in case of accidental injury while on duty. It provides benefits such as compensation for accidental death, permanent or temporary disability, medical treatment, and funeral expenses.

Employers liability common law: The policy protects the employer against legal claims if an employee is accidentally injured or becomes ill due to the employer's negligence or failure to follow safety rules. It covers compensation and legal costs related to such claims.

KEY POINTS

The Group's diverse portfolio reflects a deep integration and understanding of the cooperative sector's needs, factoring in cooperatives, Chamas, Savings, credit and cooperative societies and community-based organisations.

Bankers Blanket Bond and Cybercrime:

This policy is designed to protect Saccos and cooperative societies against financial losses resulting from fraud or dishonest acts, whether committed by employees or external parties. It covers risks such as theft, forgery, cybercrime, and other fraudulent activities that could negatively impact the institution's finances and member trust.

Cash (Money Insurance):

The policy covers against loss of money or theft by third parties who are not employees, either while in transit or premises during or out of business hours. Money insurance also covers damage to safes and strong rooms.

Crop Insurance:

An insurance cover that protects crops against a combination of risks referred to as perils. This includes drought, excess rains, flooding, hail damage, frost damage, uncontrollable pests and diseases.

Livestock Insurance:

The policy compensates against death of insured livestock as a result of perils such as uncontrollable diseases including epidemics, calving down, accidents, emergency slaughter on medical grounds, and fire.

CIC Medisure:

A medical insurance cover for cooperative institutions designed to meet prevalent medical needs for institutions with ten or more employees and directors.

The cover offers all benefits which include inpatient, outpatient, maternity, dental and optical benefit. CIC pays medical expenses arising from illness and accidents, preventing members from settling bills out of pocket.

CIC Life Assurance Solutions

Loan Guard: This cover ensures that Sacco members' loans are covered in case of unforeseen circumstances such as sudden death, thus safeguarding the institution against losses, and assuring members and investors of its financial stability. The society pays an annual premium to safeguard the institution.

MEPIP:

The policy covers members of an institution such as a cooperative society with outstanding loans, protecting the family of the borrower against the burden of loan repayment in case of loss of life or total permanent disability. It provides comprehensive insurance, covering the member throughout the repayment period.

Group mortgage: This product is designed

for Saccos that offer long term loans to their members for purchasing property such as houses. It is a special type of life insurance taken for the duration of the loan, and it ensures that the outstanding loan is fully repaid if the member dies or becomes permanently disabled during the loan term, protecting both the Sacco and the member's family from financial strain.

Group Funeral Expense:

It is a funeral cover tailored for cooperatives, providing quick financial support in the event of the death of a registered member or their dependent.

This insurance solution covers children aged 1 to 17 years and adults aged 18 to 75 years. The insured funeral benefit is paid within 48 hours, easing the financial burden on the family and allowing for dignified arrangements.

Employee Group Life:

A group life policy that covers the employees of a cooperative society in the unfortunate loss of life or permanent disability. This cover enables the employer/scheme holder to alleviate the financial distress that might affect the dependents of the insured member upon his or her death or permanent disability. CIC Asset Management Solutions

Money Market Fund:

A low-risk investment avenue with a chama option, allowing collective formal or informal groups to invest together. It offers competitive returns, and is ideal for cooperatives or societies seeking to grow their surplus funds.

CIC Umbrella Retirement Benefits Scheme:

A retirement savings plan designed for cooperative members, ensuring long-term financial security post-retirement. CIC's dedication to customer-centricity has also translated to expansion in products and services across countries of coverage, guided by its mission to provide insurance solutions that empower communities.

As a result, the company has continued to post positive financial results, demonstrating its financial muscle to handle larger and more complex claims reliably.

As of December 31, 2024, CIC Insurance Group declared a net profit of KSh 2.85 billion, a significant increase of 98 per cent from KSh 1.44 billion in 2023. The Group also saw a substantial rise of 81 per cent in earnings per share (EPS) to KSh 1.04, compared to KSh 0.57 in the previous year.



CIC Group's commitment to service excellence and industry leadership has been consistently recognised through numerous prestigious awards. At the Association of Kenya Insurers (AKI) Awards celebrating best performing insurers in 2024, CIC Life was recognised as the winner, most improved company and highest growth in life policies categories.

In 2022, CIC emerged as the Overall Winner of the Champion of Governance Award, highlighting its adherence to ethical and transparent practices. Additional accolades include being recognised as 1st Runners-Up in the Insurance Category at the prestigious 2024 Financial Reporting (FiRe) Awards in Kenya. The same recognition was bestowed upon the Uganda subsidiary by FiRe Awards, Uganda.

In addition, CIC Life Assurance was recognised for its outstanding financial reporting, high levels of transparency, and strong corporate governance practices. Adding to this honour, CIC Life was also named the Best Insurance Company of the Year 2024 in South Sudan by the Chamber of Commerce Quality Awards, demonstrating its growing influence and excellence beyond Kenyan borders, among many other accolades.

Making sustainable impact

CIC's impact on the cooperative movement has been demonstrated by more than its products. The company has played a significant role in empowering cooperatives across Kenya and beyond by offering targeted training and capacity-building programmes.

This is in recognition that strong, well-informed cooperatives are essential to economic growth and financial inclusion. In this regard, CIC has equipped cooperative leaders and members with the knowledge needed to manage risks, enhance governance, and strengthen their financial management skills.

Through regular workshops, seminars, and tailor-made training sessions, CIC supports cooperatives in understanding insurance principles, claims processes, compliance, and sustainable business practices. This hands-on approach has helped build more resilient cooperative institutions that are better able to serve

their members, access credit, and create long-term value. In 2025, the Group targets to train 6,000 cooperative society leaders on different aspects of governance to serve their members better.

Last year, CIC trained 5,000 Sacco and cooperative leaders in financial literacy, cooperative governance, leadership, and risk management. As part of its partnership-driven approach to development, CIC collaborated with the World Bank to register and train approximately 50 Saccos in Meru and Kajiado regions.

Using training and education CIC reached 50,000 members in 2024, with the number expected to rise from 2025 owing to the insurer's commitment to empower cooperatives for the future.

To further strengthen its business and community partner networks, CIC Insurance Group last year launched its sustainability Integration roadmap that will guide the seamless integration of sustainability principles into its business strategy.

This will focus on six core areas notably, encouraging community development through the CIC Foundation, supporting local entrepreneurship, fostering sustainable practices, promoting diversity,

equality and inclusion (DEI), improving the employee engagement Index and improving the customer engagement index. This is in line with the commitment to global sustainable development initiatives as demonstrated when the company became a member of the UN Global Compact Network through the Kenyan Local Network and signed the Nairobi Declaration on Sustainable Insurance (NDSI).

These commitments reflect a dedication to aligning its operations with internationally recognised principles and guidelines that promote sustainability and responsible business practices. In line with its sustainability commitments, CIC Insurance Group has intensified efforts to address climate change through deliberate actions aimed at reducing its environmental footprint.

Guided by its Sustainability Strategy and Integration Roadmap, the Group is implementing measures to lower Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions. The Group has also adopted a phased waste management approach, which will eventually lead to segregation at source, increased recycling, and responsible disposal practices.

Additionally, CIC is working on aligning its underwriting and investment practices to promote climate-smart investments. As part of its commitment to sustainable development, CIC is continuously strengthening its product portfolio to align with emerging social and environmental needs.

Flagship solutions such as Coopcare, Seniors Mediplan, SME Medipack, Kameza, and Abwenzi are designed to expand access to healthcare and financial protection for under-served, vulnerable, and low-income communities.

These products enhance community resilience by addressing socio-economic inequalities while supporting households and small businesses in navigating the impacts of health, climate, and financial shocks.

As we mark the International Year of Cooperatives, CIC reaffirms its commitment to driving sustainable development and financial security for millions of cooperative members by providing tailored risk management and financial solutions.

KEY POINTS

In 2025, the Group is targeting to train 6,000 cooperative society leaders on different aspects of governance to serve their members better. Last year, **CIC trained 5,000 SACCO and cooperative leaders** in financial literacy, cooperative governance, leadership, and risk management.



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P.O Box 47815-00100 (GPO), Nairobi – Kenya.



Merry-go-round Spins Winning Society



Harambee DT SACCO promises members a life of dignity and accomplishment

Over 5 decades ago, workers at the Office of the President (OP) joined a revolving loan scheme (commonly known as merry-go-round) that lent out short-term loans for personal growth and development among its members.

The noble idea was transformed and officially registered as a society in 1970 – Registration No. CS/1916, marking the formal journey of the Harambee DT SACCO Society Ltd.

Driven by a shared desire to grow, bound together by the cooperative common bond, Harambee DT SACCO Society Ltd has not stopped growing. It has since become a commercially autonomous, democratically controlled and self-reliant business enterprise. It serves the needs of over 70,000 Kenyans through a network of branches in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Eldoret, Nakuru and Nanyuki.

Harambee DT SACCO has a long history of providing financial services to its members, with a focus on promoting financial inclusion and empowerment. The SACCO offers a range of products and services, including savings, loans, insurance, and investment opportunities.

According to its 2024 financial statements, the SACCO's total assets grew by over KSh2 billion from KSh36.7 billion in 2023 to KSh38.6 billion by the close of business on December 31, 2024, claiming a seat at the table among the largest societies in Kenya.

It now uses its assets to empower members to live with dignity and accomplishment throughout their lives. In its 54th Annual Delegates Meeting on March 3, 2025, the SACCO announced its improvement in its financial performance for the year 2024. For the first time since its inception, the SACCO declared an all-time high dividend of 15 per cent on share capital.

“Ladies and gentlemen, the society is proposing to pay an all-time high interest on deposits of 9%, against what we paid out in 2023 at 8.5%. We are also proposing to pay another all-time high



Harambee DT SACCO's National Chairman Mr Macloud Malonza addressing delegates during the 54th Harambee DT SACCO ADM held on 3rd March 2025.

of 15% on share capital, up from 12% in 2023.” Announced National Chairman, Macloud Malonza during the 54th Annual Delegates Meeting.

The loan book of KSh29.1 billion in 2023 now stands at an all-time high of KSh32 billion while in 2023, members' deposits which stood at KSh24.6 billion, now stand at KSh26.2 billion. In addition, the SACCO's core capital, which stood at KSh5.1 billion in 2023 grew to KSh6.3 billion by the end of 2024.

The SACCO's achievements have not gone unnoticed. In 2024 Best in Credit Management Deposit Taking SACCOs Employer Based SACCOs Tier 1 and in 2022, Harambee DT SACCO was recognised as the highest Shareholding in the union overall.

The Cooperative Alliance of Kenya also crowned it as the Best SACCO in technology optimization countrywide. This is in addition to recognition as the Best Insured Government Sector Cooperative of the Year in 2022, an award by the CIC.

The SACCO was feted as the leading in shareholding within the Nairobi region, according to the cooperative bank.

With a current and growing membership of 79,691 members, it is employing 139 staff across its six branches.

Since its formation in 1969, the society has been operating on a common bond model, drawing membership primarily from government institutions. However, through the 47th Annual Delegates meeting, delegates endorsed a proposal to open the common bond, granting the SACCO an opportunity for faster growth and expansion.

Growing from a basic SACCO, Harambee DT SACCO prides itself as a special-purpose vehicle that is now set to meet and exceed the expectations of its growing membership. Besides, The Harambee Insurance Agency offers members all insurance needs at one stop shop. The General insurance and Life Assurance products offer members a great benefit while covering all your insurance needs.

OVER THE YEARS, THE SACCO HAS ACHIEVED MANY MILESTONES INCLUDING:

- 2025 FOSA Office Opened in Nanyuki
- 2024 Harambee DT SACCO declared an all time high dividend of 15% on share capital
- 2024 Best in Credit Management Deposit Taking SACCOs Employer Based SACCOs Tier 1
- 2023 Acquired state of the art Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) for better member records management.
- 2022 Harambee DT SACCO shutters its revenue generation history thereby paying a double-digit dividend return of 10%
- 2021 Open bond Operationalization kicks off
- 2021 Harambee Insurance Agency is established
- 2021 Open bond Operationalisation kicks off
- 2021 Harambee Insurance Agency is established
- 2020 Migration of all Harambee SACCO loans into the online platform
- 2020 Mortgage Section is launched
- 2020 Instant ATM Card Issuance Solution is launched
- 2020 Harambee DT SACCO marks Golden Jubilee
- 2017 First Mobile banking platform acquired
- 2017 Changeover of the ICT system from Bankers Realm (BR) to Navision
- 2014 Harambee Investment Co-operative Society (HICS) is established
- 2001 1st FOSA Office opened in Nairobi
- 1986 Completion of Harambee Co-operative Plaza. A great achievement for the Society as it got enough space to serve the increasing membership. The SACCO had earlier moved offices from the Office of the President (OP) to Government Printers, and later to Shankadas House.
- 1979 Ground-breaking of the magnificent Harambee Co-operative Plaza
- 1970 Registration of Harambee DT SACCO
- 1969 Formation of Harambee DT SACCO with its first office at the Office of the President (OP)



Harambee DT SACCO CEO Dr. George Ochiri with Dolphine Aremo, the Director of Cooperatives, Nairobi County during the 54th Harambee DT SACCO ADM held on 3rd March 2025.

The SACCO has embarked on digitalisation, innovation and institutional strengthening with the ultimate goal of attracting and retaining a large and loyal, youthful and diverse membership through creating superior personalised customer experience while providing innovative products and services that support the social and financial well-being of our members.

Among the technologies it has rolled out include the Harambee M-Cash, an app that allows members to access their money anytime, anywhere, SACCOLink ATM Card and Harambee Pesa Agents. The Society believes in living its purpose while leveraging on enablers and mitigating challenges and plans to expand its activities by reaching out to hundreds of thousands of Kenyans.

Harambee DT SACCO picture of success is that of a SACCO with a regional presence, with a large one-stop financial solutions provider to a membership that mirrors the Kenya's demographics, and provides value-added services to growing sectors of the economy.

The SACCO's ambitious plans to expand further hold a tremendous opportunity to engage much more in the economy, translating to total societal transformation today and, in the years, to come.

Giving back to the community is an essential part of its agenda. Its aim is to improve the lives of “not only our members but also the community at large.” It is in this stride that the SACCO engages in social performance programs, where it sustainably delivers water tanks to the communities.

The SACCO also engages in Humanitarian acts as well as environmental conservation as a way of giving back to the society. Activities such as partnering with communities have helped the SACCO stay focused on its role of realising better and more prosperous communities.

The SACCO's focus is now anchored on five key strategic areas, namely revenue growth, strategic plan for the next five years, service delivery, ICT excellence, and improved stakeholders' engagement.

With a vision to become the most trusted SACCO, the society values accountability and empowerment by holding people accountable for performance and giving its members the legitimate right to make judgements, form conclusions, reach decisions, and then act.

Service and empathy are also at its core, stepping into the shoes of its members to understand their feelings and perspectives, and use that understanding to guide its actions.

Besides, in an effort to keep close to its members, the society organises periodic member education forums. These are forums geared towards interacting with members and updating them on new products and services as well as any new developments in the SACCO. The forums also aim to enlighten members on investments and business management, and capacity building.

These engagements create total societal transformation, fulfilling the SACCO's purpose which is to empower members to live with dignity and accomplishment throughout their lives.



Golden jubilee kindles legacy of resilience

Mwalimu National DT SACCO (MNDTS) celebrated its 50th anniversary in October, 2024. In this Q&A Chief Executive Officer, CPA Kenneth Odhiambo, reflects on the institution's journey of growth, expansion and resilience. Herewith excerpts.



Mwalimu National DT SACCO CEO Mr. Kenneth Odhiambo addressing members and guests during the 50th anniversary celebrations at The Nairobi Club in October 24th, 2024

Q. Looking back what have been your greatest achievements during this period?

A. We made investment decisions to protect the institution from financial losses, particularly to safeguard members' funds, while membership grew from 106,602 in 2021 to 148,579 members as at the 31 December 2024 last year. Total assets increased from KSh60.63 billion to 68.89 billion. Effective this year, a new corporate strategy aims to reach 180,000 members and further asset growth within three years.

Q. What plans do you have for further expansion?

A. The institution is concentrating on financial services and moving away from unrelated investments. Previously limited to teachers, membership is now open to all salaried employees and business people. This expansion has attracted interest from unexpected sectors, including banks. The aim is to reach KSh100 billion in assets and 180,000 members in the next few years. A primary focus is improving member experience through digitalisation and self-service options.

Other key areas of focus include expanding members' financial offerings beyond salary-based services, membership growth, deposits, loans and revenue to support retention and build capital for sustainability.

The institution prioritises Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives, forming partnerships and collaborations to drive holistic growth beyond credit services.

Q. Mwalimu National DT SACCO is the largest Sacco in Africa. How many people in Kenya know this fact? What

does MNDTS do to spread this fact in the Sacco confraternity?

A. The institution runs ongoing visibility initiatives through digital platforms such as social media. We also have regular engagements with stakeholders through webinars and physical meetings. As part of the 50th anniversary celebration, there are efforts to raise public awareness about MNDTS, including media campaigns via radio, TV, and banners. The focus is shifting from teachers to the general public, mainly growing the quasi-banking unit for business expansion.

Q.The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) employs over 400,000 teachers, making it the largest public sector employer. Its wage bill in 2023 was KSh285 billion which accounted for 34.2 per cent of the total public sector wage bill. How many public-school teachers have accounts with MNDTS and how much money flows into the Sacco at the end of each month?

A. In terms of numbers, we currently have 148,579. Our monthly inflows, from TSC alone, should be KSh2.1 billion per month. The other segments are around KSh800 million. (Around KSh780 million) per month. So that's pushed us to around KSh2.9 billion. We aim to increase this figure to KSh3.5 billion monthly in the next two years. That will give us a solid ground in terms of doing business and growing the institution in relation to what we offer and our asset base.

Q.In 2023 there were 93,988 schools and 64 teacher training colleges in Kenya. Of this 28,240 (30 per cent) were private entities. Do teachers in private institutions also belong to MNDTS?

A. We are targeting partnerships with private institutions, specifically focusing on teachers, staff, and heads of functions within these institutions. We currently have data on around 17 per cent of these institutions, but we aim to increase that to around 60 per cent within the next three years. We see this segment as a major growth opportunity.

Q. The Kenya Private Schools Association (KPSA) says that its members teach over 2.1 million primary school pupils and over 277,000 secondary school students. What is the inflow into MNDTS from teachers in private schools?



A. We have already partnered with the KPSA and have engaged with them. We're working with them to access private schools and expect to onboard other institutions. Our goal is to cover 60 per cent of private institutions within two years. This partnership will help us achieve that target despite the mobility of teachers and employees in private institutions, who tend to be more agile than their TSC counterparts. This agility presents lower risks in managing credit products, though we refine our credit risk management processes as we grow. In addition to the KPSA, we are pursuing partnerships in the pension sector. This focus will guide our next two years. This year marks the start of our short-term review strategy to reshape our business model.

Instead of focusing on the masses, we are prioritising initiatives that add more value, as we recognise that many teachers face constrained incomes and the government has fiscal pressures. We're also paying attention to Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVETs), which have significant potential. **Q.Some teachers should be able to save a substantial portion of their salaries. Those who live in boarding schools could eat with the students and save considerable amounts. Do any do this?**

A. It's a mixed bag regarding our members' savings culture. Based on demographics, we've observed that those aged between



35 and 45 are more focused on saving, while the younger group, aged between 25 and 35, tends to prioritise credit over savings. This is concerning because they should ideally be saving more.

This trend forces us to rethink our sustainability initiatives, especially as older members exit the workforce and their savings decrease.

We must rethink our onboarding strategy to make the Sacco more attractive to the younger generation.

This group, particularly Gen Z, prefers digital interactions, such as applying for loans and managing accounts through their phones, without physical contact. We are reshaping our services to align with these preferences while balancing the needs of different age groups, including those nearing retirement.

Q. Would you say that there is a saving culture among Kenyan teachers? For Kenya as a whole, the gross savings rate was 12.1 per cent of a person's income in December 2022, which is the highest it has ever been. Singapore's savings rate was 48.6 per cent in both 2020 and 2023.

A. Yes and no. If we look at our current portfolio in terms of deposits, we are currently seeing higher deposits than loans—about KSh51 billion in deposits versus a loan book of KSh46 billion. That extra KSh5 billion tells you people are saving more than we're lending. This shows a strong savings culture within this group. But on a national level, we still need a solid framework to boost savings across Kenya.

If you look at places like Singapore and the Caribbean, they're doing a great job attracting the youth, with much higher participation than here in Africa or even in Europe and America. So, the question is: What are they getting right that we're missing? Policymakers need to rethink this to drive a stronger saving culture.

Q. Do teachers transmit a saving culture to their students?

A. We've tried to introduce financial literacy to our members, hoping they will pass it on to their students. But this is still in its early stages as many teachers struggle with saving. The question is how to integrate

this for students, especially when managing pocket money. We're exploring a platform where students can deposit their pocket money with us, withdrawing it in bits as needed. This would help instil a savings culture early on.

However, this requires a collective effort. Younger generations, such as Gen Z, often question why they should save instead of spending their money now, which disrupts the savings flow. Attracting deposits from the next generation will be tough unless we nurture them early. Each institution must take the initiative and collaboration is critical to driving this agenda.

Q. Do you have any personal advice that you can give them?

A. We're now opening engagement platforms—social media, digital platforms, and the like—where we can build conversations around the savings culture. We focus on showing them the benefits they'll get because that's the language they understand. You have to show them the value before bringing up the idea of saving.

Q. MNDTS is a big organisation. Does it have the necessary controls in place to prevent the thievery that occurs in many government and private institutions?

A. As our IT systems advance and we move into digital spaces, new risks, particularly cyber-related, emerge and they are widespread in the financial services sector. To counter this, we focus on resilience—ensuring our cyber preparedness and controls are robust in order to protect what our members entrust to us.

We continuously work on improving our systems, conducting regular internal audits—financial and IT—and receiving governance recommendations each year. However, complete elimination of fraud isn't possible. The key is continuous improvement, ensuring controls and risk mitigation are in place to reduce vulnerabilities.

Q. When teachers take out loans, what do they mostly use the money for?

A. Looking at our data, we see a lot of our funds going towards construction and housing. There's also a significant focus on

farming and agriculture, while some SMEs direct their loans to business ventures. Smaller amounts are used for social needs such as school fees and medical expenses. Interestingly, many members borrow large amounts and considerable savings are also happening.

Q. Banks in Kenya enable their customers to use their phones as their bank accounts. Does MNDTS do the same?

A. Absolutely. Our mobile banking app offers a wide range of features. Members can check balances, deposit, withdraw and transfer funds, make payments and even apply for loans—all through the app. We've made it easy so you no longer need to fill in physical forms for credit.

For instance, if I'm in Malindi and need a guarantor in Busia, I just input my details on the app, and they can log in remotely to guarantee me. This has reduced turnaround time significantly. The app functions much like a bank.

You can withdraw money, buy airtime, make utility payments (to Kenya Power), apply for loans and have guarantors sign up remotely.

Q. Is the interest rate on loans borrowed by teachers from MNDTS lower than that charged by banks?

A. When banks raised their rates above 20 per cent, our weighted average cost of capital remained around 12.8 per cent, meaning we were significantly lower. One key advantage for Sacco members is that we don't change interest rates when running loan contracts.

Unlike banks, which often adjust rates, if we sign at 12 per cent, it stays the same until the loan is fully repaid. Secondly, unlike banks, Saccos don't have multiple charges such as application or processing fees.

Q. What is your biggest challenge in running such a huge and successful Sacco?

A. It's quite a mixed bag. One major challenge is balancing the ever-changing demands of our members—particularly their expectations for year-end returns, which translate into dividends—against the financial stability of the institution. It's a delicate balancing act requiring some tough decisions.



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Nyati Sacco the Giant of Financial Empowerment

48 years history of the society makes it stand out with its Mission to improve socio- economic well-being of their stakeholders by providing diverse and cost-efficient financial services



Dr. Julius Bett, CEO Nyati Sacco

G4S Kenya Limited registered the Nyati Savings and Credit Cooperative Society under the Cooperative Societies Act in 1977. The impressive 48 years history of the society makes it stand out with its mission as a financial empowerment powerhouse that aims to improve the socio-economic well-being of stakeholders.

Established under the core values of Member Centricity, integrity, innovation and inclusivity the society leads others in performance, technology adoption and innovation. The Nyati Sacco mantra is to Empower members Financially which is seen in the diverse products and services offered.

From Cradle to Glory

Recently, Nyati Sacco unveiled its latest investment—the Nyati Sacco Plaza, in Nairobi West and its headquarters. The Eleven Storey building is set to boost the society's standing through income and cementing its identity. Dr Bett says, "We were able to construct this development valued at KSh1.1 billion from our resources.

That means we stand well in solid reserves. The office block will offer new income for members and give us identity through the landmark building." Last year, Nyati Sacco amazed with its remarkable dividend

rates of 21 per cent on share capital and 11.35 per cent interest on deposits. That makes it one of Kenya's top dividend-paying Saccos. Nyati Sacco's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Julius Bett, says the performance reflects its people-centric culture adopted to transform the lives of its members economically.

He says, "We want our members to benefit from their investments. We have invested in treasury bonds and money markets to ensure members get the best returns on investment."

"We have leveraged technology to grow business and our membership. This has helped us manage our costs hence earning our members dividends of 21 per cent and growing our deposits to 11.5 per cent," said Dr Bett. Financial statements for the year ending 31st December 2024 show that Nyati Sacco's loan portfolio grew by 5.4 per cent to KSh3.79 billion.

Currently, Nyati Sacco has a countrywide membership of over 35,000 and total assets of KSh5.3 billion.

The membership growth realised a 4.88 per cent increase in member deposits to the Sacco to KSh2.91 billion up from KSh2.78 billion. Nyati Sacco's share capital also increased by 13.65 per cent in 2023 to KSh317.8 million compared to KSh267.3 million.

That is up from KSh3.70 billion reported in a similar period in 2023. BOSA loans accounted 63% while FOSA loans accounted 37%. The KSh3.79 billion loan disbursed during the year scaled up the society's revenue to KSh832.5 million that comprises interest from loans of up to KSh744.6 million.

The tremendous growth in the loan portfolio coupled with an increase in revenue saw the society record 7.3 per cent growth in asset base.

The membership growth realised a 4.88 per cent increase in member deposits to the Sacco to KSh3.0 billion up from KSh2.9 billion. Nyati Sacco's share capital also increased by 13.65 per cent in 2024 to KSh366 million compared to KSh317.7 million.

The Sacco largely not only draws its membership from across private security companies but also the diaspora, individuals, business people, spouses of members, registered groups and corporates on a non-check-off arrangement. Currently, Nyati Sacco has a countrywide membership of over 35,000 and total assets of KSh5.3 billion.

Dr Bett says that the society's check-off system comprises members from companies like G4s Kenya, Tandu Alarms, Fargo Courier, Wells Fargo, WeCan Security Limited, Buffalo Bicycles Ltd, Clovers Managements and Consultants Ltd, Estec Kenya Ltd, Absolute Security Ltd, Cobra Security Ltd, Top Flight Security, Absolute Security, Secure Contractors, Car & General Ltd, Salaam Ltd, Turtle Bay Resort, Hemmingway's Hotel & Charlie Motors Ltd among others.

Touch of Partnering and ICT

CIC Insurance has partnered with the Sacco to launch insurance products that cater to members' insurance needs. These products include general insurance, motor insurance, micro-insurance, pensions, medical insurance policies, and life insurance products for groups.

The sale of these policies will enable the

Sacco to earn commissions that will strengthen its balance sheet and allow it to fulfil its core mandates including issuing loans promptly. Within the year Nyati Sacco received two awards from CIC -Best Insured Private Sector and Bronze Co-operative Award.

To drive growth and be at the forefront of financial inclusion, Nyati Sacco is embracing ICT and innovation. It is keeping a close eye on emerging technologies that could improve efficiency in its operations and position it as a key player in the country's efforts to improve financial inclusion.

It is also continuously enlightening its members on Sacco investment, financial literacy and capacity building. This is in addition to keeping a keen eye on emerging economic and governance trends by benchmarking with peers to understand the industry and continually combat emerging threats.



PS, Ministry of Cooperatives and Sacco officials cutting a cake during opening of Nyati Plaza



Dr Bett notes, "Our economy is facing shocks. That leads to members dropping because challenges like competition and technological advancements require us to be at par with modern trends in the industry."

Nyati Sacco leverages mobile banking as an alternative banking channel to enhance service delivery and efficiency. The Sacco also has member portal to ease member service delivery.

As a result, the Sacco bagged top awards during the 2023 International Day of Cooperatives. It was crowned the best in capitalization and technology optimization.

In its plans, Nyati Sacco looks to attract new generations by investing more in technology and growth and expansion in membership, loans, revenue and returns on investments, product innovation to meet growing member financial needs and reduction of risks and strategies.



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BINGWA SACCO LTD

(Former Kirinyaga Tea Growers Sacco Ltd) was registered in 1984 under the Cooperative Act Cap 490 of the Republic of Kenya. Initially, it started its operations with BOSA Services but introduced FOSA services in 1993 to meet the increasing demand by the growing membership. The Sacco was first licensed by SASRA (Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority) for deposit taking in 2011 being among the first SACCOs in the country. Currently, the Sacco has **over 200,000 members** from all sectors of the economy with an **asset base of over Ksh. 9 Billion**. Guided by our vision and mission, the Sacco has embraced innovation and technology to differentiate itself and satisfy its diverse member's needs by offering tailor-made products and services. Our member's investments comes with high value returns in form of dividends and interest.

The Sacco has its touchpoints through 20 physical branches within Kirinyaga, Nairobi, Kiambu and Kajiado counties, reliable USSD services, Mobile App and internet banking, over 30 authorized agents and VISA branded ATMs to ensure efficient services. At Bingwa Sacco we have also aligned our products, services and programs with the principle of Environmental, Social and Governance by emphasizing sustainable benefits and growth for the community that we serve.

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Mount Kenya milk: A story of Growth and Empowerment



Some of the best Farmers Cows Producing 45litres and above - 9th Dairy Farmer Field day on 13/06/2024.



The High Commissioner of Ghana to Kenya, His Excellency Dampety B. Asare during his visit to our factory

Mount Kenya Milk, a product of Meru Central Dairy Co-operative Union Ltd, occupies pride of place as one of Kenya's most trusted dairy brands, delivering fresh and nutritious milk to households nationwide.

Our success is rooted in commitment to quality, sustainability, and ethical sourcing—values that are upheld by hardworking dairy farmers who supply us with high-standard milk.

The rich volcanic soils, ample rainfall, and crisp mountain air provide the perfect conditions for dairy farming, ensuring that our cows produce wholesome, nutrient-rich milk. Whether enjoyed as a morning beverage, a vital ingredient in Kenyan tea, or the foundation of yogurt and cheese, Mount Kenya Milk continues to be a staple in many homes.

At Meru Central Dairy Co-operative Union Ltd, we are dedicated to supporting local farmers by providing training, resources, and market access. We prioritise ethical sourcing and modern processing techniques that preserve the freshness and purity of our milk.

Our state-of-the-art facilities ensure every drop of milk is pasteurised and packaged

under rigorous quality control measures, meeting food safety standards. Our consumers appreciate the consistently rich taste and nutritional benefits of our milk, packed with essential vitamins, protein and calcium.

Beyond quality, we remain deeply committed to uplifting our farmers. Through various initiatives, we help dairy producers improve yields, access better veterinary services, and receive just rewards for their efforts. By investing in education and sustainability, we are paving the way for a

brighter future for Kenya's dairy industry, ensuring small-scale farmers thrive in a competitive market.

As Kenya continues to embrace agricultural innovation, Mount Kenya Milk stands as a shining example of how tradition and modern advancements can work together to create a thriving and sustainable dairy sector. We are proud to be part of your journey, and together, we will continue to strengthen the dairy industry and empower farming communities.



Farmers following proceedings during 10th Annual Dairy Farmers field day on 21/06/2025.



Creamy, Tasty, Goodness



Products of;

MERU CENTRAL DAIRY CO-OPERATIVE UNION LIMITED

P.O. BOX 2919 MERU - 60200

TELEPHONE 0710 901 376

Email: maziwa@merudairy.co.ke or sales@merudairy.co.ke

website: www.merudairy.co.ke

Diversified and Versatile

Fresha remains fresh and leads in processing milk and milk products

BACKGROUND / HISTORY

From humble beginnings in 1961, Githunguri Dairy Farmers Co-op Society was founded by 31 small scale farmers and continues to grow from strength to strength. Our membership has increased to 28, 000. Our rich heritage is embodied in the splendid quality of our products.

Our supply of fresh cow milk is solely from Githunguri. Our daily milk intake averages 250,000 kgs, translating to a monthly collection of 7,750,00 kgs.

Through our Quality Assurance and Extension Department we also offer the following:

- i. A1 services
- ii. Feeds and foodstuffs
- iii. SHIF services through check off system
- iv. Extension services
- v. Training
- vi Credit through GDC Sacco

All Fresha Dairy products are made from 100 percent fresh milk, hence the promise to our consumers that we deliver Real Farm Freshness. The highest standards of hygiene are observed. We are ISO certified, KEBS and Halal compliant.

We cater for the needs of all households and demographics in domestic and export markets, aided by a robust distribution

network. Consumers are assured that our products are within reach in retail stores and local kiosks.

Fresha Milk is available in 500ml fresh pouch and Fresha Long Life. Our Fresha Long Life range is ultra-heat treated and aseptically packaged, guaranteeing freshness for up to 180 days. Thus, one does not need a refrigerator or cooling system.

Our smoother, thicker, tastier and nourishing Fresha Yoghurt is available in 150ml, 250ml, 500ml, 1 litre and 5 litres, in all your favourite flavours to excite your taste buds. The promise to our consumers is that Fresha Yoghurt is nourishing and healthy. It is 'all in one' and can be enjoyed as a healthy snack, meal or dessert.

The 1-litre and 5-litre packs are especially popular with families, large households and parties.

Our So Smooth, So Natural Fermented milk, popularly known as Fresha Maziwa Lala, is just as described – smooth and natural. Consumers have the choice of our Fresha Lala on the go in a bottle and gable top, besides pouch packs.

Yuppi with Real Fruit Yoghurt is available in peach, tropical, apricot and strawberry flavours made from actual fruits harvested

Fresha

Dairy Brands
Real Farm Freshness

**GITHUNGURI DAIRY FARMERS
CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY
LTD**

from our local fertile farms. Consumers enjoy real fruit flavours from natural fruit pulp.

Meals have never been tastier. Our Superfine, Super Fresh Ghee, Salted, Unsalted Fresha Butter and 100 percent Pure Pasteurised Fresha Cream is your perfect partner for all your cooking and baking needs.

FRESHA FLAVOURED MILK

More Play, More Fun and Improved Health for your children when they enjoy our nutritious and delightful Fresha Flavoured milk. Packed in 200ml easy to drink TCA pack, Fresha Flavoured milk is available in Strawberry and Vanilla.

GABLE TOP

The Fresha Gable Top pack was introduced in 2019 for Fresha Lala, Fresha Milk and Fresha Yoghurt. This is an easy to open pack in a box, hence its slogan of Fungua, Refresh, Funga, offering consumers choice to enjoy the contents on the move with no spill and zero wastage.

The gable top packs are available in 500ml and 1-litre packs.

FRESHA PURIFIED DRINKING WATER

No Other Water Refreshes Better like our Purified Fresha Drinking Water, available in 500ml, 1 litre, 1.5 litres, 10 litres and 18.9 litres.

We recently refreshed the 500ml and 1-litre bottles, and introduced the 1.5 litres. The new look bottle is easy on the grip and has an aesthetic appeal. We considered pricing for our consumers, making the products easily accessible to all demographics.

ZITO

Zito, the Creamiest milk in Kenya, is the only milk with 3.6 percent butter fat content. Available in Fresh and Long Life, Zito milk is known for its extra creaminess so beloved of part of our market.

Fresha

Dairy Brands
Real Farm Freshness!



GITHUNGURI DAIRY FARMERS COOPERATIVE SOCIETY

✉ P.O BOX 3 Githunguri, Kenya ☎ 020 6752989 • Customer Service Hotline: 020 2130887 / 0706 626262 / 0705 787878
✉ freshadairy@fresha.co.ke 🌐 www.fresha.co.ke 📍 Fresha Dairy Brands 📍 @freshakenya 📍 @Freshabrands





Stima DT Sacco Society Ltd.

Empowering Lives Through Financial Inclusion



Stima DT Sacco Society Ltd. is a Deposit Taking Savings and Credit Cooperative Society headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. Established in 1974, the Sacco has grown over the past five decades into one of the largest and most respected financial cooperatives in the country and region. Its core mandate remains centred on financial empowerment and improving the socio-economic welfare of its members through prudent savings mobilisation and innovative credit solutions.

Now marking over 50 years of service under the banner “Empowering Members for Life,” Stima DT Sacco commands a national footprint with 12 fully operational branches across Kenya and a robust digital banking platform that serves more than 220,000 members, including diaspora members in over 20 countries. Its open bond allows it to serve not only employees in the energy sector, but also members from all walks of life—public and private sector employees, SMEs, institutions, groups, and individuals.

Licensed and regulated by the Sacco Societies Regulatory Authority (SASRA) as a deposit-taking Sacco, Stima DT Sacco is a tier-one institution by asset base and membership. As of 2024, the Sacco had an asset base exceeding KSh 60 billion, member deposits of over KSh 40 billion, and a loan book surpassing KSh 45 billion. Through sound governance, member-centric services, and a strong digital transformation agenda, the Sacco continues to deliver consistent growth and high returns to its members, including annual Dividends and Interest Rebates.

In pursuit of inclusive finance, Stima DT Sacco has introduced tailored products such as Shariah-compliant financing (Yasar), affordable housing finance in partnership with the Kenya Mortgage Refinance Company (KMRC), a growing micro-credit segment for small traders and informal businesses, agency banking via “Stima Mlangoni,” and insurance services through its licensed subsidiary, Mpawa Insurance Agency. The Sacco also places strong emphasis on financial literacy and



Stima Sacco Chairman Dr. Eng. Joseph Siror and Board Members during the launch of the Strategic Plan 2025-2029 pose for a photo.

KEY POINTS

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responsible borrowing, providing members with tools for wealth creation and financial planning. Stima DT Sacco is a champion of cooperative principles, transparency, and sustainable development. It actively participates in national policy development through engagements with the Ministry of Cooperatives and SACCO sector stakeholders and is a strong advocate for youth and women empowerment through cooperatives.

In 2024, it celebrated its Golden Jubilee, highlighting five decades of transforming lives and reinforcing its vision for the next 50 years—anchored in resilience, digital innovation, environmental sustainability, and member-driven solutions.

As a member of the Kenya Union of Savings and Credit Cooperatives (KUSCCO), the African Confederation of Cooperative Savings and Credit Associations (ACCOSCA), and with close ties to the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU), Stima DT Sacco continues to benchmark itself against global best practices in cooperative financial services.

Stima DT Sacco is not just a financial institution. It is a community built on trust, integrity, and shared prosperity.



Over **5** Decades Of Empowering Lives

At Stima DT Sacco, we invest in people, helping members build better lives, stronger families, and thriving communities.

Join us today and let your journey to financial freedom begin.

For enquiries on how to become a member, please visit your nearest Stima Sacco branch or contact our Customer Care on +254 703 024 000 | +254 703 024 024 or WhatsApp +254 703 024 851 customercare@stima-sacco.com | diasporabanking@stima-sacco.com



We have reimagined it. Refined it.
Rebranded it. Welcome to Qona.

Short. Crisp. Unmistakable.



From our roots as Safaricom Sacco to our evolution as Qona Sacco, we've evolved beyond boundaries while staying true to our mission.

Growth. Evolution. Expansion.

This fresh identity represents agility and modern financial empowerment—fitting the future we're building together. Where inclusion isn't a buzzword, but our foundation. Every member feels seen and supported. Progress is personal and communal. Your financial journey strengthens our collective growth. We serve visionaries, dreamers, and doers nationwide and worldwide. Our doors have opened from one corridor to multiple pathways, our heartbeat pulsing to a bigger rhythm.

Qona Sacco isn't just where your money sleeps safe—it's where it wakes up, stretches, and gets to work.

Our loans are tailored. Human loans for human needs. School fees. Startups. Side hustles turning into main gigs. While others are charging you rates that make you break into a sweat, Qona is serving up kindness in percentages.

Heard of 1% interest rate? It is almost suspiciously good. You might think, "Surely there is a catch?" But Qona says, "No catch. Just commitment." Because if money must grow, then let it grow where it is needed most. Mortgages! You know how mortgages



Former Chairperson - George Hunja, Mr. David Obonyo, Commissioner for Co-operative Development, Dolphin Aremo, County Director of Co-operatives and CEO - Joseph Njoroge at the Qona SACCO launch ceremony.

usually sound like a lifelong punishment? Not here. 8% interest, and suddenly the dream of home ownership stops being a bedtime story and starts being a plan. A real one.

Why join Qona Sacco?

This is not a bank. This is a people's place. A safety net woven from trust, shared goals, and the collective desire to do better.

Joining Qona Sacco is not just a financial decision; it is a declaration. That you are done living paycheck to paycheck. You are building a future that does not involve waiting for "next year" to do the things you want to do this year. Here your voice matters, your goals are prioritised, and your financial journey is a shared mission. Together, we break barriers, unlock potential, and write success stories, one member at a time.

Where are we going? Forward. We are setting a pace. A Qona pace. Measured. Mindful. Meaningful. This is not just a journey of numbers and profits; it is a movement of hearts and hands united in building a future where prosperity is shared, growth is collective, and success is redefined for the next generation.

So, here is to Qona. A movement of quiet ambition. A story still being written in the ledgers of people's lives. And like all good stories, this one promises more chapters, filled with vision, value, and just the right amount of magic.

Qona Sacco.

Where money gets a purpose.
And you? You get peace.
Life. Aspire. Destiny



Be Part of Kenya's Fastest Growing Digital SACCO
Join Today!

- Loan - up to 10x your Savings
- Low interest Rate - as little as 8%
- Quick Loan Processing
- Fully Digital Platform (Anytime, Anywhere)
- Tailored Financial Products (Lifestyle, Education, Business, Home & Health)

More information call us **+254 111 222 226**

@qonasacco @qonasacco @qonasacco info@qonasacco.com | www.qonasacco.com

Turning Keys, Not Breaking Banks
Start your homeownership journey today!

- Loan - up to 10x your Savings
- Low interest Rate 8% p.a.
- Loan Limit - upto KSh 10.5M
- Ready Home/Home Construction

More Information Call Us **+254 111 222 226**

www.qonasacco.com VISIT OUR WEBSITE

info@qonasacco.com

Stima Investment Co-operative Society Ltd.

- Empowering members through strategic investments

About Us

Established in 2005, Stima Investment Co-operative Society Ltd. is a member-led organization dedicated to enhancing the financial well-being of its members through prudent investments. Initially drawing membership from the energy sector, including companies like Kenya Power, KenGen, REREC, GDC, KETRACO, and ERC, the society has grown to encompass over 16,000 members from diverse backgrounds who are represented through a delegate model.

Mission

To invest members' funds in viable and secure ventures through prudent management, ensuring maximum returns, growth, and sustainability.

Vision

To be innovative in wealth creation for our members.

Core Values

Integrity, Professionalism, Innovation, Customer Focus, and Teamwork.

Membership

Requirements

- A non-refundable registration fee of **KES 5,000**.
- Purchase a minimum of **300** shares at KES 200 each (totaling KES 60,000) within 15 months.
- Monthly contributions of KES 1,000 or an annual lump sum of **KES 12,000**.

Benefits

- Subsidized prices on land and housing projects.
- Priority access to investment opportunities.
- Annual dividends.
- Access to a range of insurance products through Stima Investment Insurance Agency Ltd.

Investment Opportunities



1. Stima Heights Ngara, Nairobi

Studios: 214 units, each with a plinth area of **18 sqm**, starting at **KES 2.4 million**.

One-Bedroom Apartments: 234 units, each with a plinth area of **32.5 sqm**, starting at **KES 4.6 million**.

Amenities: High-speed lifts, CCTV surveillance, borehole water supply, backup generator, rooftop terrace, and internet-ready apartments.

Location: Strategically situated along Mushembi Road, offering easy access to Nairobi's Central Business District

2. Land Projects

Neema Gardens Joska (Kangundo Road)
Strategically located **7km** off Kangundo Road, this project offers **50x100** plots ideal for residential development.
Price: KES 780,000

Konza Prime Rose Konza Technopolis, Machakos
Located **4km** from Konza SGR station and adjacent to the upcoming smart city. Excellent for investment.
Price: KES 550,000

Kathwana Gardens Kathwana Town, Tharaka Nithi
Situated within the county headquarters of Tharaka Nithi, ideal for mixed-use development.
Price: KES 600,000

Fahari Gardens Kitengela, Kajiaado County
Located off Namanga Road, this project features prime plots with ready title deeds in a fast-developing neighborhood.
Price: KES 1,500,000

Daystar Park Athi River (Near Daystar University)
Fully demarcated plots with permanent beacons, easily accessible via Mombasa Road and located near universities and residential areas.
Price: KES 1,500,000

Stima Sunshine PI Mitunguu, Meru County:
Offers plots suitable for residential, commercial, or agricultural development with serene surroundings and accessible roads.
Price: KES 550,000

3. Insurance Services

Through its subsidiary, Stima Investment Insurance Agency Ltd., the society offers a diverse range of insurance products, including life, non-life, and medical insurance, as well as claim and risk management services.

4. Financial Investments

The society invests in the Kenyan money market through the Nairobi Stock Exchange, holding shares in companies like Safaricom, KCB, and KenGen, among others

Achievements

Stima Investment has demonstrated significant growth since its inception

- Assets have grown from **KES 290 million** in 2005 to **KES 3.409 billion** as per the 2024 audited accounts.
- Share capital increased from **KES 190 million** in 2005 to **KES 2.24 billion** in 2024.
- Stima Heights**, our flagship residential housing project, has all studios sold out with limited one-bedrooms remaining.



Contact Information

- Head Office: Stima Investment Plaza 1, 5th Floor, Mushembi Road, Parklands, Nairobi.
- (+254) 709 495 100 / (+254) 709 495 114
- customercare@stimainvestment.co.ke
- www.stimainvestment.co.ke
- For more detailed information, including downloadable resources and membership applications, please visit our official website.

Governance & Legal Compliance



Guided by Law & Values

Stima Investment Co-operative Society Ltd is registered under the Co-operative Societies Act, Cap 490 and is regulated by the Commissioner for Co-operatives. We are committed to legal compliance, financial discipline, and ethical operations.



Leadership You Can Trust

Our Board of Directors and Supervisory Committee are democratically elected by members to oversee strategy, risk, delegates performance.

All board actions are guided by our core values: integrity, professionalism, innovation, teamwork, and customer focus.



Board Members



Member-Driven Decisions

Through our Annual General Meetings (AGMs), delegates review audited reports, vote on key matters, and shape the Society's future. Every voice counts — that's the power of co-operative democracy.



Built for Sustainable Growth

Our governance framework ensures that every shilling invested by our members is managed with prudence and foresight. From land and housing to insurance and stock markets, our decisions prioritize long-term value and security.



Transparency in Action

- 01 Regular independent audits
- 02 Clear reporting & documentation
- 03 Open member engagement
- 04 Strong internal control systems



We lead with trust, serve with integrity, and grow together with our members.



FOSA SERVICES NOW AVAILABLE

MHASIBU DT SACCO SOCIETY LIMITED — EMPOWERING ALL PROFESSIONALS

Mhasibu DT Sacco is more than just a Sacco for accountants we proudly serve all professionals, along with their spouses and children. Our inclusive membership reflects our commitment to financial growth for every professional. As a Deposit-Taking (DT) regulated Sacco, we operate under strict compliance standards, ensuring safety, transparency, and trust in all our services. Our FOSA platform offers flexibility, convenience, and financial empowerment, allowing members to save, withdraw, and manage funds instantly.

ACCESS TO MHASIBU'S SERVICES IS 24/7 THROUGH OUR SECURE PLATFORMS:

M-Mhasibu Pro App, USSD *657#, and the Member Portal. We believe in banking that is seamless, secure, and effortless. Our advanced security measures protect every transaction, giving members confidence and peace of mind.

OUR ALTERNATIVE BANKING CHANNELS

 **M-HASIBU PRO APP:**  **USSD: DIAL *657#**  **MEMBER PORTAL:**

Transact today and experience service excellence



Together we make the difference!



MHASIBU REGULATED DT SACCO SOCIETY LIMITED

THE SACCO FOR PROFESSIONALS

Are you ready to secure your financial future?

Experience unparalleled financial growth with the SACCO that ranks among the Best Managed in the Country.



Membership + 26,000



Asset Base + 10B



Innovative Savings & Investment Plans



Affordable & Flexible Credit Options

OUR SAVINGS AND INVESTMENT PRODUCTS

FOSA SERVICES AVAILABLE



Current Account



Holiday Savings Account



Fixed Deposit Account



Call Deposit Account



Mhasibu Junior Account

We are dedicated to empowering All Professionals. Don't wait! **Sign up today** and start building a brighter future with Mhasibu DT SACCO where Excellence has been our hallmark **Since 1986!**

**BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US VIA**

 020 5141900  0772141900/0202141900  info@mhasibusacco.com

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Scan here for more.



GUSII MWALIMU DT SACCO LTD

"We Empower Financially"

WHY JOIN US:

- ✓ Competitive dividend rate and interest on share capital and deposits.
- ✓ low interest rates on loans as low as 1% p.m reducing balance.
- ✓ Real time loan processing.
- ✓ Access to loans **5 times a member's share deposits.**
- ✓ Seamless Banking experience on mobile app & USSD *879#

ALTERNATE TRANSACTION CHANNELS

- M-BANKING
- SACCO LINK
- VERVE CARD
- MEMBERS PORTAL

SAVINGS

- FIXED DEPOSIT ACCOUNTS
- JUNIOR ACCOUNTS
- HOLIDAY ACCOUNTS

SALARY/INCOME BASED

- E-LOAN
- SALARY ADVANCES
- FOSA LOANS
- MSTAAFU LOAN

CHECK-OFF LOANS

- DEVELOPMENT LOAN
- REFINANCING LOAN
- EMERGENCY LOAN
- SELF-GUARANTEE LOAN



BRANCH NETWORKS

- KISII,
- NYAMIRA,
- KEROKA,
- OGEMBO.

SATELLITE BRANCHES:

- RONGO,
- MIGORI,
- HOMABAY,
- KILGORIS,
- NAROK.

REGULATED BY SASRA



GUSII MWALIMU DT SACCO LTD

"We Empower Financially"

**PATA
SELF GUARANTEE
LOAN PAP!! 😎**

**Loan bila
Stress ya
Guarantors**



info@gusiimwalimusacco.co.ke

0797906715

GUSII MWALIMU DT SACCO LTD





K-unity is now a Superbrand

K-unity has achieved Superbrands status following a strict selection process by the Superbrands Council and Consumers from across East Africa. We are the first deposit taking Sacco to achieve this status in East Africa. Achieving this status means we are trusted, consistent, and exceptional. K-Unity Sacco now joins a league of top international brands.

Thank you for making us a brand you believe in.

Unicash App

Easy Access,
Anytime Anywhere

Transact . Save . Borrow



Award-Winning Innovation



CIO100
Award Winner 2024

K-Unity Sacco is proud to be the **Plus One Sacco Sector Award Winner** at the **2024 #CIO100 Awards** for our groundbreaking **use of technology in driving financial inclusion.** We also scooped the **Gold Mark of Quality.**

K-Unity Sacco: Over 50 Years of Community-Centered Finance



K-Unity Sacco Society Ltd is a Deposit taking Sacco established under Ministry of Co-operatives and Marketing, registered under the Co-operative Society's Act Cap 490 of the Laws of Kenya. It was established in 1974 as a result of the amalgamation of the then Limuru Marketing Co-operative Union and Kiambu Dairy Marketing Union (21 Affiliates) to act as a means of facilitating savings and credit facilities for Dairy & Pyrethrum societies within Kiambu County.

- Our asset base is over 7.2 billion
- We have a membership of over 100,000 Active accounts
- we have 16 branches distributed in five counties, namely Kiambu, Nairobi, Nakuru, Narok, and Nyandarua
- We own and manage properties in Kiambu, Githunguri, Kiriita, Limuru, Wangige and Kikuyu
- We also have Mapa Insurance Agency which has been operational for over 20 years.



Jijenge Loans

Get loans of upto 5x your savings



Youth Biz Loans

Get Youth biz loans of upto Kes 500,000



BANDARI DT SACCO

Join us Today

The **CHAMA** Account

OPEN TO ALL

YOUTH GROUPS | RELIGIOUS GROUPS | WOMEN GROUPS | INVESTMENTS GROUPS | WELFARE GROUPS

0714 834 870, 0720 019 742, 0714 824 356



The Pay-Slip Manager

OTHER PRODUCTS



MORTGAGE LOAN

The Nyumba Solution



ASSET FINANCE LOAN

Property Ownership Solution



The Savings Planner



The Totos Account



The Rent Manager



The Business Enabler



The Business Enabler



The Safari Planner

Power to Succeed!

MOMBASA | NAIROBI | KISUMU | LAMU



Jamii DT Sacco Achieves Prestigious Superbrands Status

We are proud to announce that Jamii DT SACCO has been officially recognized as a Superbrand, becoming the first Deposit- Taking SACCO in East Africa to receive this distinguished recognition.

This milestone follows a rigorous selection process by the Superbrands Council, in collaboration with consumers across East Africa. It affirms our reputation for trust, consistency, and exceptional service.

Featured: CEO CPA Daniel Achieng & National Chairman Mr. Harrison Katoni during Launch of New Nakuru Office

ASSET FINANCE PROPERTY LOAN



Use your asset to unlock the cash you need Today!

CONTACT US

020 790 3200 :info@jamiisacco.com

info@jamiisacco.com

www.jamiisacco.com

Jamii Sacco Court, South 'B' Next to Mater Hospital | Nakuru Office-Jennifer Riria Mall Ground Floor

KENYA NATIONAL POLICE DT SACCO

EMPOWERING YOUR FINANCIAL GROWTH

WHY US

- ✓ Reduced minimum share capital of KES 500
- ✓ High annual dividends and interest on deposits
- ✓ Fixed deposit account with returns of up to 12%
- ✓ Low interest rates on loans; as low as 1%
- ✓ Loan processing in less than 24hrs
- ✓ Instant mobile loans on M-Tawi
- ✓ Sharia compliant products and services
- ✓ Affordable property with Kenya Police Investment Co-operative

FOSA ACCOUNTS

- Salary Account
- Junior Account
- Holiday Account
- Business Account
- Group/Corporate Account
- Fixed Deposit/Call Account

FOSA LOANS

- Q-Cash (2 Months)
- M-Sasa (3 Months)
- FOSA Flex (6 Months)
- FOSA Golden (9 Months)
- FOSA Ultra (12 Months)
- Dividend Advance

BUSINESS LOANS

- Enterprise/Business Loan (36 months)
- Commercial Houses Loans/Land Purchase (60 months)
- Transport Business/Commercial Vehicles (48 months)
- Purchase of Land (Group Loans) (48 months)
- Agriculture Loans (12 Months)

BOSA LOANS

- Jumbo Loan (108 Months)
 - Premier Loan (96 Months)
 - Mega Loan (84 Months)
 - Super Loan (72 Months)
 - Refinancing Loan (60 Months)
 - Normal Loan (48 Months)
 - Asset Financing Loan (24 Months)
 - Emergency Loan (24 Months)
 - School Fees Loan (12 Months)
 - Bima Loan (12 Months)
 - Home Loan (25 years)
- 4X LOAN MULTIPLIER**
- Muslim Loan (60 Months)
 - Muslim Emergency Loan (24 Months)

10X
LOAN MULTIPLIER
ON YOUR BUSINESS
ACCOUNT DEPOSITS

5X
LOAN MULTIPLIER ON
YOUR BOSA DEPOSITS



OUR MEMBERSHIP IS
OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

JOIN NOW

M-TAWI

- ✓ Apply for Loans
- ✓ Make Various Service requests ... and so much more!

DIAL *653#

to access and download the mobile app from  Google Play  App Store