



Summary of the Pilot Project

“A worldwide network to improve international solidarity initiatives through the development of worker, social and artisanal cooperatives”

The main objectives of the “A worldwide network” project, supported by the FAI Foundation and implemented by CICOPA from November 2009 to December 2011, were to:

- 1.** Create a worldwide network CICOPA - development NGOs;
- 2.** Connect the network to other organizations and working groups of the cooperative movement;
- 3.** Develop a shared development strategy;
- 4.** Connect the development strategy to lobby activities, especially at the EU level;
- 5.** Study and develop new development projects.

With regard to the first two objectives of the project, CICOPA proceeded to a mapping of worker, social and handcraft cooperatives all over the world. This mapping is an essential tool for the collaboration between CICOPA and NGOs, in order to define concrete partnership and operational strategies, learn about the development trends among cooperatives active in industry and services, and identify potential experts for future projects. Furthermore, on the basis of collected data, CICOPA could launch "Coospace", a web platform where to build partnerships between cooperatives worldwide.

The document “Cooperative development strategy” (available [here](#)) approved in 2009 by the CICOPA General Assembly, emphasizes the cooperative model based on sustainable employment and social cohesion, in line with the Millennium Development Goals, and Europe Strategy 2020. The text underlines the importance of the cooperative approach through which people can obtain better social, economic and environmental conditions and it is based on concrete cooperatives’ experiences at the micro (way of functioning and measures put in place inside cooperative enterprises), meso (the cooperation among cooperatives) and macro level (the public policies and legislative framework enabling the development of cooperatives).

Lobbying activities at the European level were mostly addressed towards the EC and through the participation of CECOP-CICOPA Europe (the regional organisation of CICOPA at the European level) to the Development Policy Group



di Cooperatives Europe coordinated by Cooperatives Europe which was implemented in the framework of the EU's Structured Dialogue with civil society. On a global level, lobbying activities were carried on also in preparation of the International Year of Cooperatives proclaimed by the United Nations.

The conference "The way forward: Cooperatives and Development" co-organised by CICOPA and IHCO in November 2011 in Cancun was a result of this strategy. It took the form of a roundtable which brought together around 30 key actors in the field of development from the United Nations, UNDP, representatives from Brazilian and Mexican governments, development NGOs, the International Trade Union Confederation, cooperative organisations involved in international development work and several regional and sectoral bodies of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA). It was a dynamic conference debating on how cooperatives have contributed, and can contribute to development at the local, regional, national and international levels. The last act of the participants of the conference was on the formulation of a certain number of key points to focus on, within the framework of development policies at all levels, including the importance of promoting cooperatives through legislation based on the cooperative identity and standards, the importance of fostering strong public policies for the development of cooperatives, etc. You can view the common proposal on development strategy [here](#).

This project allowed a stronger involvement of different organizations in inside and outside the cooperative movement as well as the reinforcement of CICOPA dissemination strategy about the role of worker, social and artisanal cooperatives in development.