



Co-operative Development  
Foundation of Canada

SINCE 1947

# IMPACT UPDATE 2025

**Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada**

*Canada's choice for co-operative solution  
to global challenges*



# Celebrating Global Recognition: Empowering Communities

In 2025, the United Nations is shining a global spotlight on the transformative power of co-operatives as part of International Year of Cooperatives. At CDF Canada, we know this recognition is possible because of you, our donors and partners, who believe in the strength of working together.

For more than 75 years, your generosity has fueled our mission to help communities overcome challenges that no one should face alone. Together, we have empowered women, trained young leaders, and built resilient co-operatives that are changing lives around the world.



## International Year of Cooperatives

Cooperatives Build  
a Better World

Every milestone we celebrate is a shared achievement, a story of partnership and progress. Thank you for making this impact possible. With your continued support, we will keep building a future that is inclusive, sustainable, and full of hope, one community at a time.

## Empowering Communities: Co-operatives Advancing the U.N Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

CDF Canada's co-operative development model is designed to create lasting, locally driven change, not through isolated interventions, but through structural, scalable, and replicable systems. We work across three mutually reinforcing levels to build co-operative systems that communities own, sustain, and grow.

By embedding sustainability, equity, and resilience into every intervention, CDF Canada's co-operative model directly advances core UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This alignment underscores that our work is both locally grounded and globally relevant, contributing to shared international priorities while strengthening communities from within.

These impact areas are not siloed initiatives. They are interconnected levers of change, advancing structural inclusion, sustainability, and local agency in the communities we serve. Together, we are creating solutions that are scalable, inclusive and deeply rooted in community ownership.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS







## Youth & Climate Resilience in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, CDF Canada's co-operative model is equipping young farmers to face the challenges of a changing climate while building stronger futures for their communities. Through targeted training, 15,000 farming households have strengthened their skills in agricultural management and climate-smart techniques.

This investment is already producing results: 86% of farmers are now applying indigenous practices that conserve soil, protect water resources, and safeguard biodiversity.

For youth, these opportunities go beyond farming techniques. They provide pathways into cooperatives where leadership and decision-making are shared, and where young people can see a future rooted in sustainability rather than outmigration.

By combining climate resilience with youth empowerment, together we are helping ensure that new generations have both the skills and the organizational structures they need to sustain their livelihoods. These efforts demonstrate that cooperatives are not only vehicles for immediate adaptation but also long-term systems for resilience, inclusion, and hope.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



13 CLIMATE ACTION



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



## Women's Mentorship Program: Breaking Barriers, Building Bridges



Evelyn Olunja was a seasoned co-operative professional from Kenya, when she joined the Women's Mentorship Program (WMP) in 2019. Like many women leaders, she faced systemic barriers: gender stereotyping, limited opportunities to rise into executive roles, and a lack of support.

Through WMP, she gained confidence in leadership abilities, honed strategic skills, and gained a global support network. These tools empowered her to rise to CEO of Kenya USA Diaspora SACCO in 2022. Evelyn

It didn't stop there, she carried the ethos of WMP forward by co-founding the Women in Co-op Society Kenya, mentoring over 111 women and advocating for inclusive governance across co-operative institutions.

Evelyn's journey exemplifies how mentorship can break down barriers, create space for women's voices, and foster generational change in communities.

1 NO POVERTY



5 GENDER EQUALITY



8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS







## Recovery in Ukraine: Co-operative Solutions for Women

In the wake of ongoing conflict in Ukraine, displacement continues to affect thousands of families. Women face heightened economic and social vulnerability, making targeted support essential.

Through co-operative solutions, we created sustainable pathways for women enter the garment sector through job placements, vocational training and entrepreneurship.

This initiative has also fostered social cohesion by creating opportunities for displaced and local women to work side by side, proving co-operatives also serve as a foundation for recovery resilience and reconciliation.



**2,200 women**  
secured new livelihoods



**5,700** family and  
community members  
positively impacted



**Six garment  
co-operatives**  
successfully registered  
thanks to capacity building  
in strategic planning





## OUR CO-OPERATIVE IMPACT



**289** co-operatives strengthened last year. **638** supported over the past 5 years



**75,000** individuals trained in leadership development



**140,000** men and women received job training (Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Senegal, Ukraine)



35%

**35%** of women training beneficiaries are now on co-operative boards (Colombia)



**44,762** farmers linked to 3 SACCOS in Malawi



## CDF Volunteer Impact: Strengthening Disability Inclusive Co-operative Development

Through her Women's Economic Empowerment (WEE) mandate in northern Ghana, VOICE for Women & Girls volunteer Lisa Vance worked with local credit unions and groups of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) to strengthen business skills, financial literacy, and inclusive leadership. She carried out a needs assessment on the barriers faced by PWDs, delivered disability-inclusive Training-of-Trainers sessions, and helped create accessible learning environments tailored to mobility and literacy needs. Her support enabled PWD groups to develop action plans that reached hundreds of community members and informed new livelihood proposals aimed at expanding income opportunities and reducing stigma.

Lisa's contribution reflects the long-term, skills-based approach that defines VOICE. Rather than providing temporary support, volunteers equip partners with tools and co-operative practices that endure beyond each mandate. Their involvement also strengthens Canadian credit unions, as volunteers return with deeper leadership capacity, global awareness, and a stronger understanding of co-operative impact in practice.





# Building Stronger Futures: IAAM Launches in 2025



After a full year of partnership-building, research, community engagement, and infrastructure development with our partners in Malawi, CDF Canada is moving into the implementation phase of our newest multi-year program: Integrating Aquaculture–Agriculture to Combat Food Insecurity in Malawi (IAAM). With its official launch in December 2025, IAAM brings together co-operatives, government partners, local producers, farmers, and their communities to strengthen climate-resilient food systems and expand sustainable livelihood opportunities in some of Malawi's most food-insecure regions.

At its core, IAAM supports communities to build stronger, more diversified agricultural and aquaculture practices, reinforces local co-operative structures, and ensures that women and youth can fully participate in emerging economic opportunities. The year ahead marks an exciting new chapter in CDF Canada's long-standing work in Malawi and our commitment to strengthening community-led, sustainable, and climate-resilient development. We look forward to sharing more about it with you.



## Looking Ahead: Co-operation as a Catalyst for Change

The world continues to face interconnected crises – **climate stress, financial exclusion, gender inequality, and rising social fragmentation** – that disproportionately affect vulnerable populations. CDF Canada remains committed to the belief that co-operation is not just a model, it is a movement. The stories and statistics in this report are proof that when communities are empowered to lead, they build solutions that last.

**Together with our donors and partners, we will continue to invest in people, strengthen institutions, and champion co-operative values that foster equity, resilience, and sustainable solutions.** The challenges ahead are real, but so is our collective capacity to meet them through co-operation, innovation, and unwavering solidarity.

*Let us continue driving sustainable change, together.*



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