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SEEING THE ELEPHANT: Cross-Sectoral Cooperative Awareness and Opportunity

Jan 22, 2025 | 2:00 PM ET

COOPERATIVE LEARNING NETWORK



**Cathy Statz, CUDE
Cooperative Educator**

Ralph K. Morris Foundation,
International Centre for
Cooperative Management,
NCBA CLUSA/Cooperative
Development Foundation,
National Farmers Union

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Example

Cathy Statz, Cooperative Educator

3 Easy Steps to CPE

1 Answer any polls.

2 Send chat to host if you have technical issues.

3 CPE Certificates arrive by email within 3 business days.



Moderated by

Wayne Sine
Education Director, NSAC



Use the CHAT BOX to share your ideas and ask questions

BE ENGAGED

ANSWER QUESTIONS
and PROVIDE INPUT



Cathy Statz (she/her) is a cooperative educator with over 30 years of experience educating young people and emerging leaders about the cooperative business model.

She is a part-time outreach specialist for the International Centre for Co-operative Management at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada, and also supports the Cooperative Development Foundation and NCBA CLUSA International on projects including the Cooperative Leaders and Scholars (CLS) program. An advocate for the cooperative education of youth, she spent over twenty-five years as education director and camp director for Wisconsin Farmers Union and continues to co-coordinate the National Farmers Union College Conference on Cooperatives (CCOC).

Cathy serves on the boards of the Ralph K. Morris Foundation (for whom she also supports communications and projects) and the InSPIREation Foundation. She is a member of Cooperative Communicators Association (CCA) and is a member and past president of the Association of Cooperative Educators (ACE). She completed the Credit Union Development Educator (CUDE) program with the National Credit Union Foundation.

A lifelong singer and enthusiastic traveler, Cathy holds a double degree from Lawrence University with a BA in English and BMus in voice performance and is a member and volunteer with Rotary International.



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Seeing the Elephant: Cross-Sectoral Cooperative Awareness & Opportunity

**Cathy Statz
Cooperative Outreach Specialist
NCBA CLUSA International**



Cathy Statz

NCBA CLUSA • Cooperative Development Foundation

International Centre for Co-operative Management, Saint Mary's University

National Farmers Union • Ralph K. Morris Foundation



Cathy, with a door prize mug donated by Cenex (now CHS, Inc., the largest co-op in the USA) at one of the *gazillion* co-op or Farmers Union meetings she attended as a child.

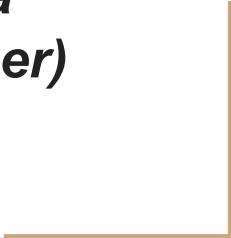


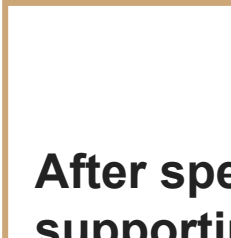
cooperambulation:

cooperatives (co-ops)

+

***perambulating
(to travel in a
leisurely manner)***





After spending 30 years supporting the Farmers Union youth and summer camp programs, I moved abroad with my spouse, who was teaching internationally...

...but I couldn't imagine not educating about cooperatives.





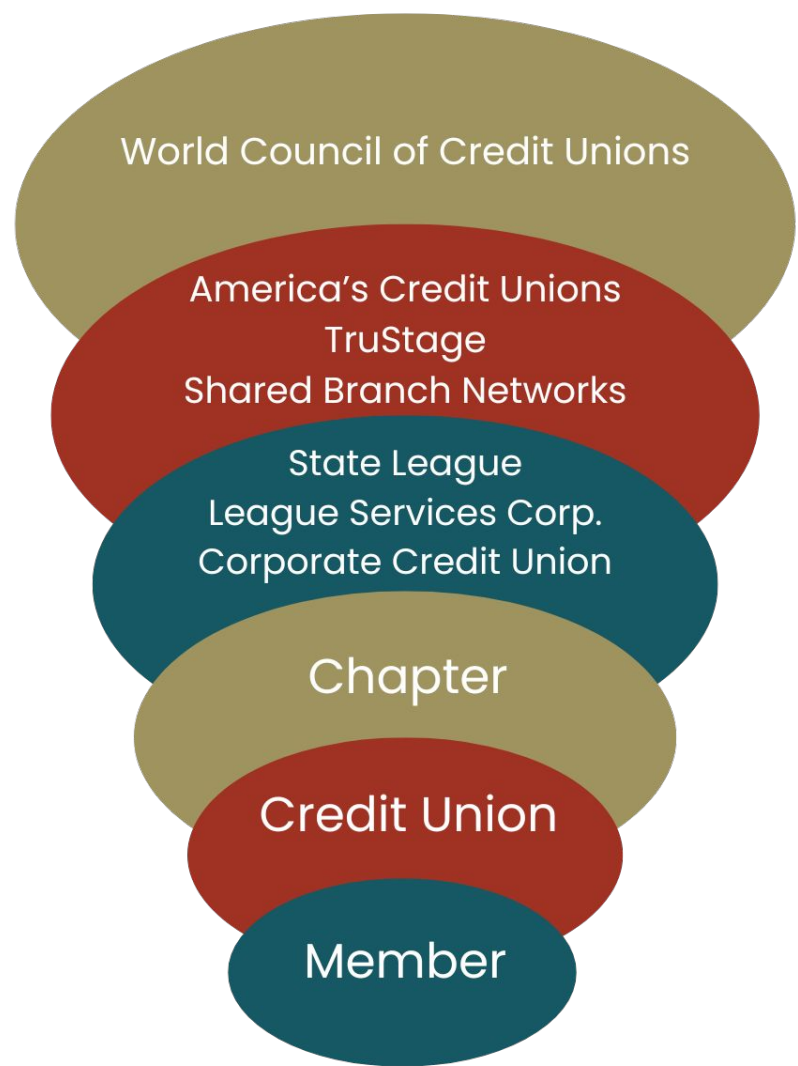
ICA GLOBAL
COOPERATIVE
CONFERENCE

COOPERATIVES BUILD PROSPERITY FOR ALL

25 - 30 November, 2024, Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, India

Cooperative sectors
have structured
systems to:

- advocate
- support
- develop
- fund
- educate





IYC 2025

Year of Cooperatives

THE BACKGROUND

-including the role of education

THE ELEPHANT

THE PILLARS / GOAL(S)

THE ACTION



THE BACKGROUND:

The United Nations has declared
2025
as the
**INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF COOPERATIVES**

The International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) serves as the global coordinator, with the US activities managed by the National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA CLUSA International).





**International
Cooperative
Alliance**

US Members of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) include:

- America's Credit Unions (formerly CUNA)
- National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA CLUSA)
- National Cooperative Grocers Association (NCG)
- National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA)
- Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company
- National Cooperative Bank (NCB)

International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Cooperative Definition

A cooperative is an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly-owned and democratically-controlled enterprise.



coop International
Cooperative
Alliance

International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Cooperative Definition

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an **autonomous association** of **persons**
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coop International
Cooperative
Alliance

International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)

Cooperative Values

Cooperatives are based on the *values* of

self-help,
self-responsibility,
democracy,
equality,
equity, and
solidarity.

In the tradition of their founders, cooperative members believe in the *ethical values* of

honesty,
openness,
social responsibility, and
caring for others.



International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) **Cooperative Principles**

The Cooperative Principles

- Voluntary & Open Membership
- Democratic Member Control
- Members' Economic Participation
- Autonomy & Independence
- Education, Training and Information
- Cooperation among Cooperatives
- Concern for Community



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NB: There is a global review of the cooperative identity underway; this has happened about every 30 years since the “Rochdale Principles” were officially adopted by the ICA in 1937.

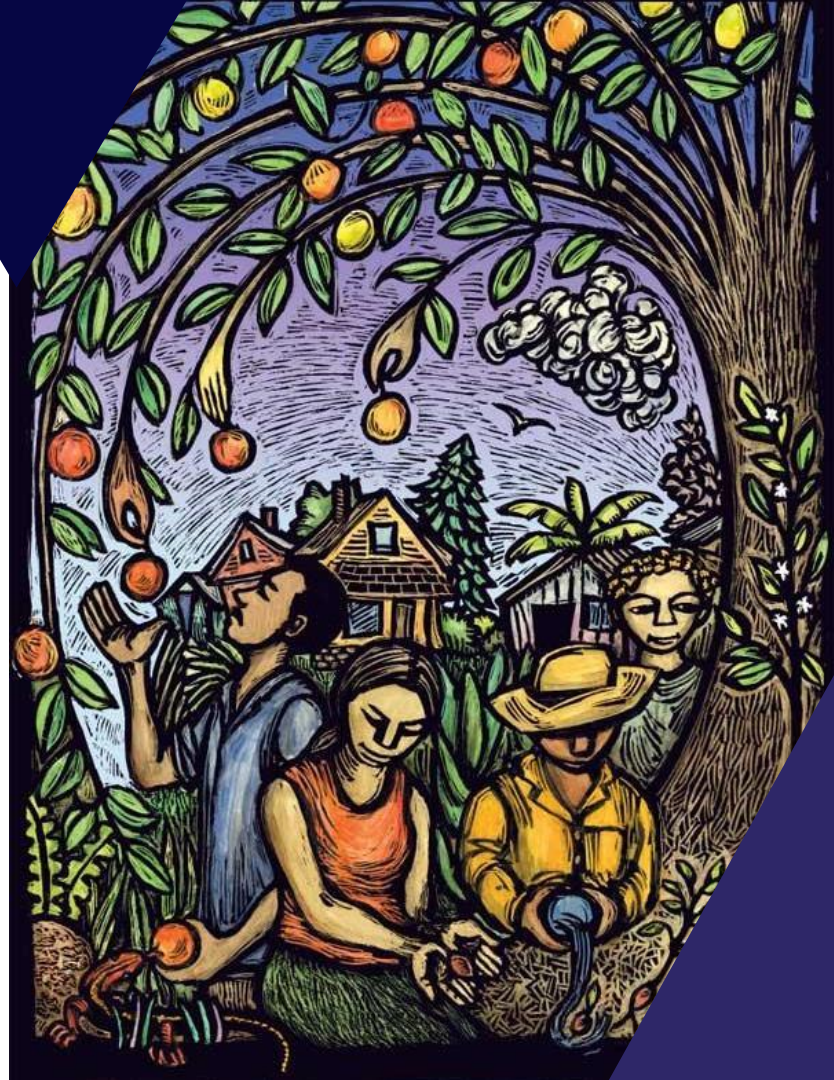


**International
Cooperative
Alliance**

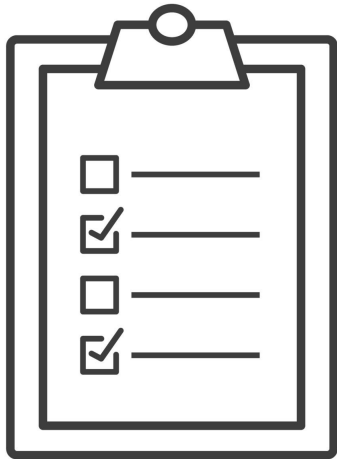
International Cooperative Alliance (ICA)
**Cooperative Principle 5:
Education, Training,
& Information**

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives.

They inform the general public – **particularly young people and opinion leaders** – about the nature and benefits of cooperation.



INFORMATION



From *ICA Guidance Notes on the Cooperative Principles*:

“Information” is a duty to make sure that others who are members of the general public, but *particularly young people and opinion leaders*, **know about** co-operative enterprise.

The knowledge to be imparted by information is not just a marketing exercise about a co-operative or the services it provides, nor is it propaganda.

It is a duty to inform the wider public about the values and principles-based nature of co-operative enterprise and the wider benefits to human society co-operative enterprise brings.

Too many co-operatives in too many countries ignore this responsibility.

TRAINING

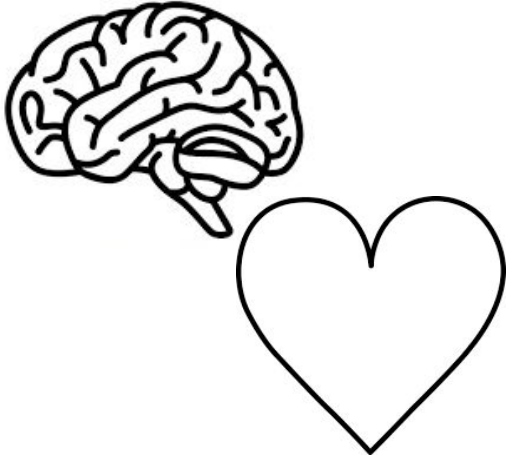


From *ICA Guidance Notes on the Cooperative Principles*:

“Training” is about developing the **practical skills** members and employees need to run a co-operative in accordance with efficient and ethical business practices and to democratically control their co-operative business responsibly and transparently.

In all co-operatives there is also a need for training of employees and elected officers **in order to run the business** of a co-operative efficiently in a competitive economy.

EDUCATION



From *ICA Guidance Notes on the Cooperative Principles*:

“Education” is about **understanding** the Co-operative Principles and Values and **knowing how to apply** them in the day-to-day operations of a co-operative business.

It is also concerned with the wider education offered to members for their **social development**.

Co-operative education involves **engaging the minds** of members, elected leaders, managers and employees so that they comprehend fully the complexity and richness of co-operative thought and action and its social impact.

A LITTLE LATIN VOCABULARY...

Educare: "to train or mold"

Educere: "to lead out"

Both senses are included in our
(just one) English word:

Education



Another way of looking at these three words...



Information

The "What"

Facts, data, statistics...
knowing the principles,
definitions, basic
knowledge of the
difference from IOCs, etc.

TRAINING OR MOLDING



Training

The "How"

Member participation,
board governance, staff
awareness of legal &
accounting,
communications skills, etc.

TRAINING OR MOLDING



Education

The "Why"

Transformation, changing
of hearts and minds; true
understanding of the goals
of cooperation, serving as
an ambassador to others,
community impact, etc.

THE LEADING OUT



“This educational relationship of
educare | educere

*leads everyone to participate in the great
democratic conversation of the world...*

*...In fact, education only has meaning in
terms of an active and democratic
participation in the human condition.”*

~André Martin
L'Université de Sherbrooke

How do we connect
Principle 5
(Education, Training, &
Information)...

...with Principle 6
(Cooperation Among
Cooperatives)?

Cooperatives help their members...

EARN more (PRODUCER.)

SAVE more

&

SERVE more (CONSUMER)

CONTROL more (WORKER)

SHARE MORE (PURCHASING)

INCLUDE MORE (MULTI-STAKEHOLDER)

Cooperatives help their members...

EARN more

Producer-based co-ops: ag marketing, processing, etc.



Cooperatives help their members...

SAVE more

Retail-based co-ops:
ag supply, fuel, food, consumer goods, etc.



SERVE more

Service-based co-ops:
energy, telephone, housing, financial services, etc.



Cooperatives help their members...

SHARE more

Purchasing and shared services co-ops:
wholesale purchasing, benefits & branding



Cooperatives help their members...

CONTROL more

Worker co-ops: employee ownership



Cooperatives help their members...

INCLUDE more

Hybrid or Multi-Stakeholder co-ops

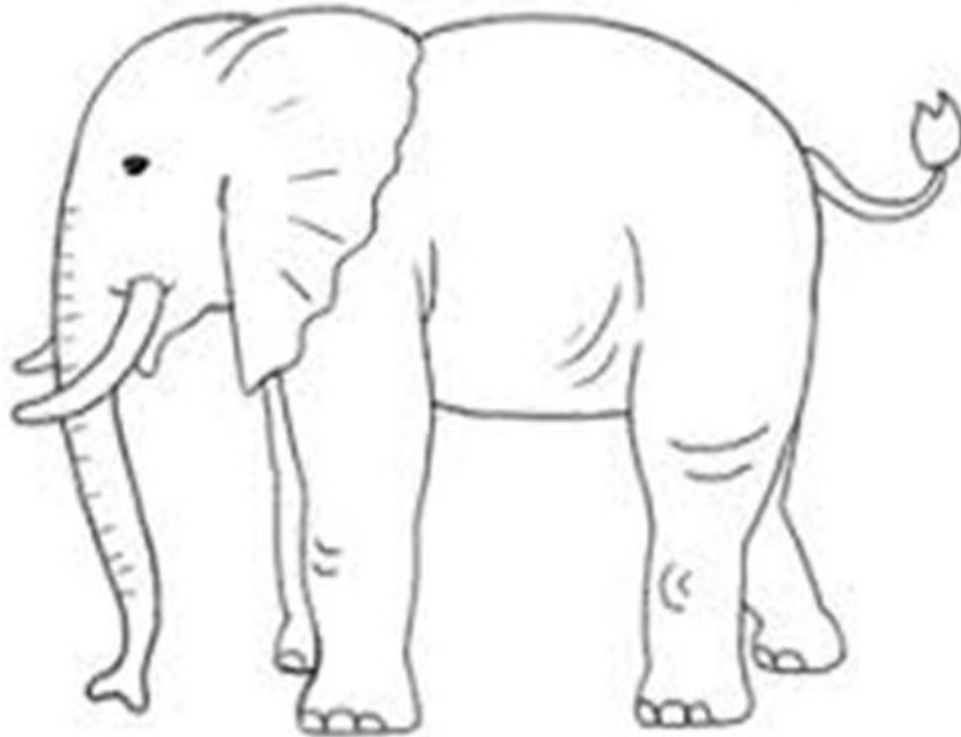


All of the above can participate in the Year of Cooperatives, either singly, with their sectors, and/or with the larger co-op ecosystem.

What might that look like?

But first—what is a barrier to this, and to general understanding & awareness of cooperatives?

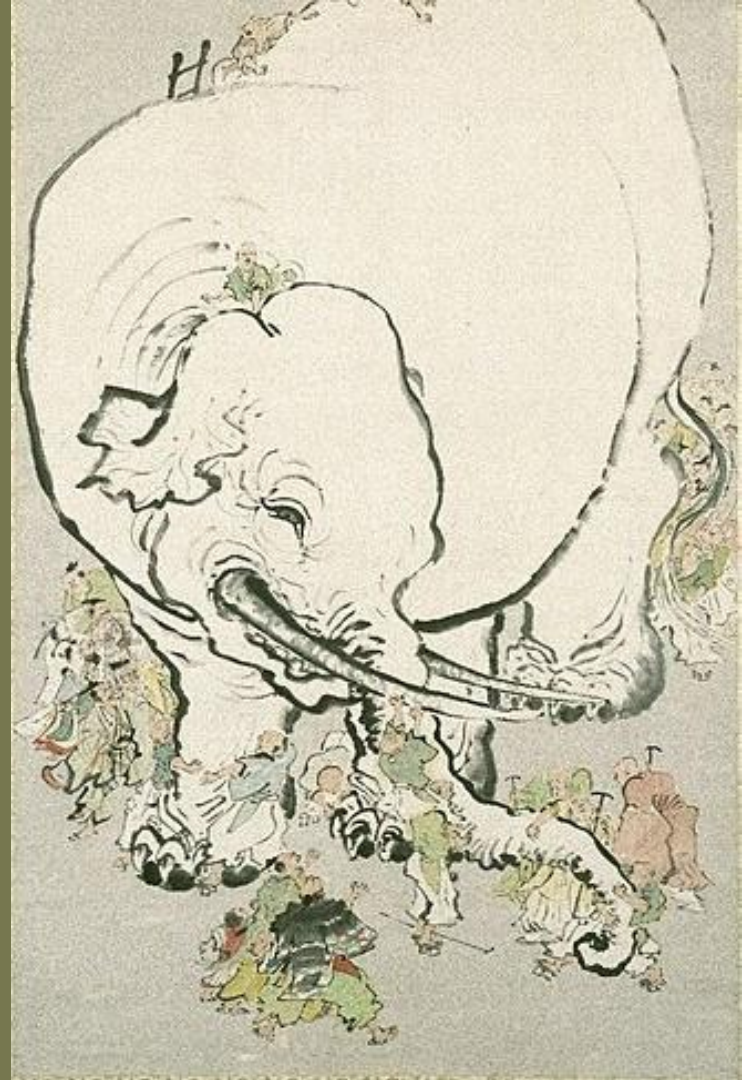
Let's talk about the elephant in the room.

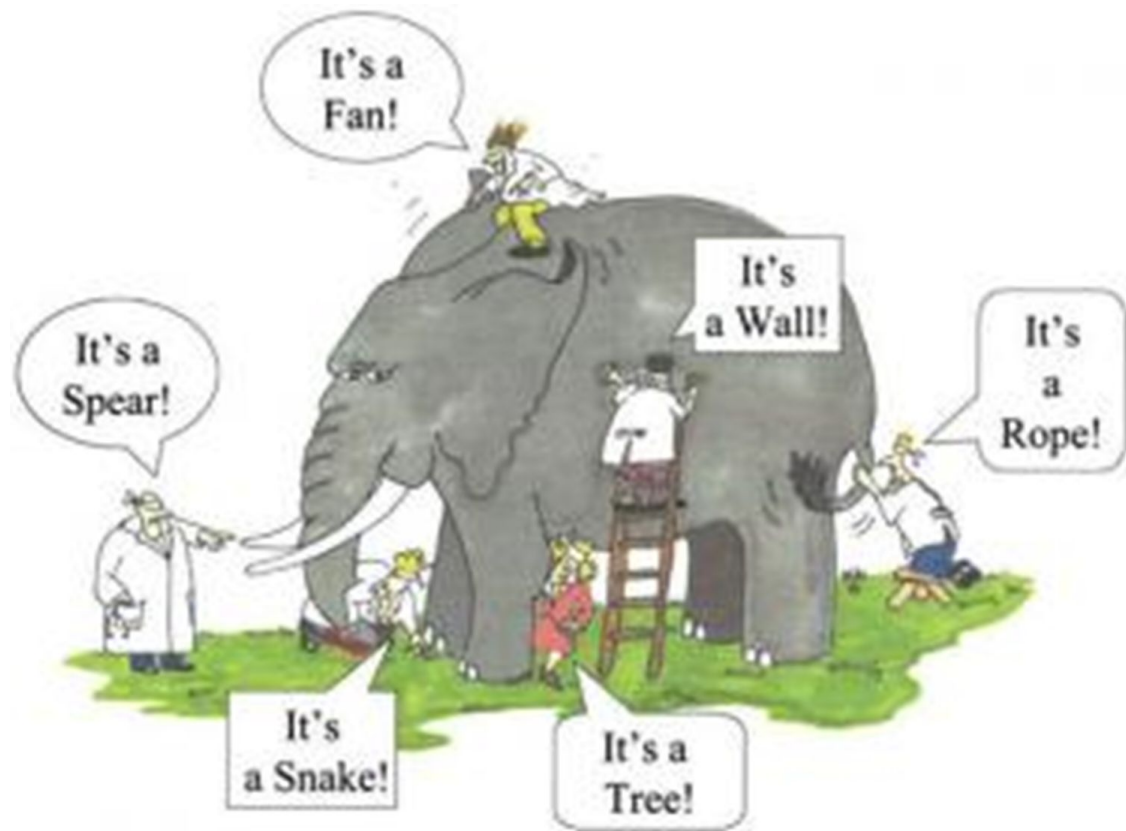


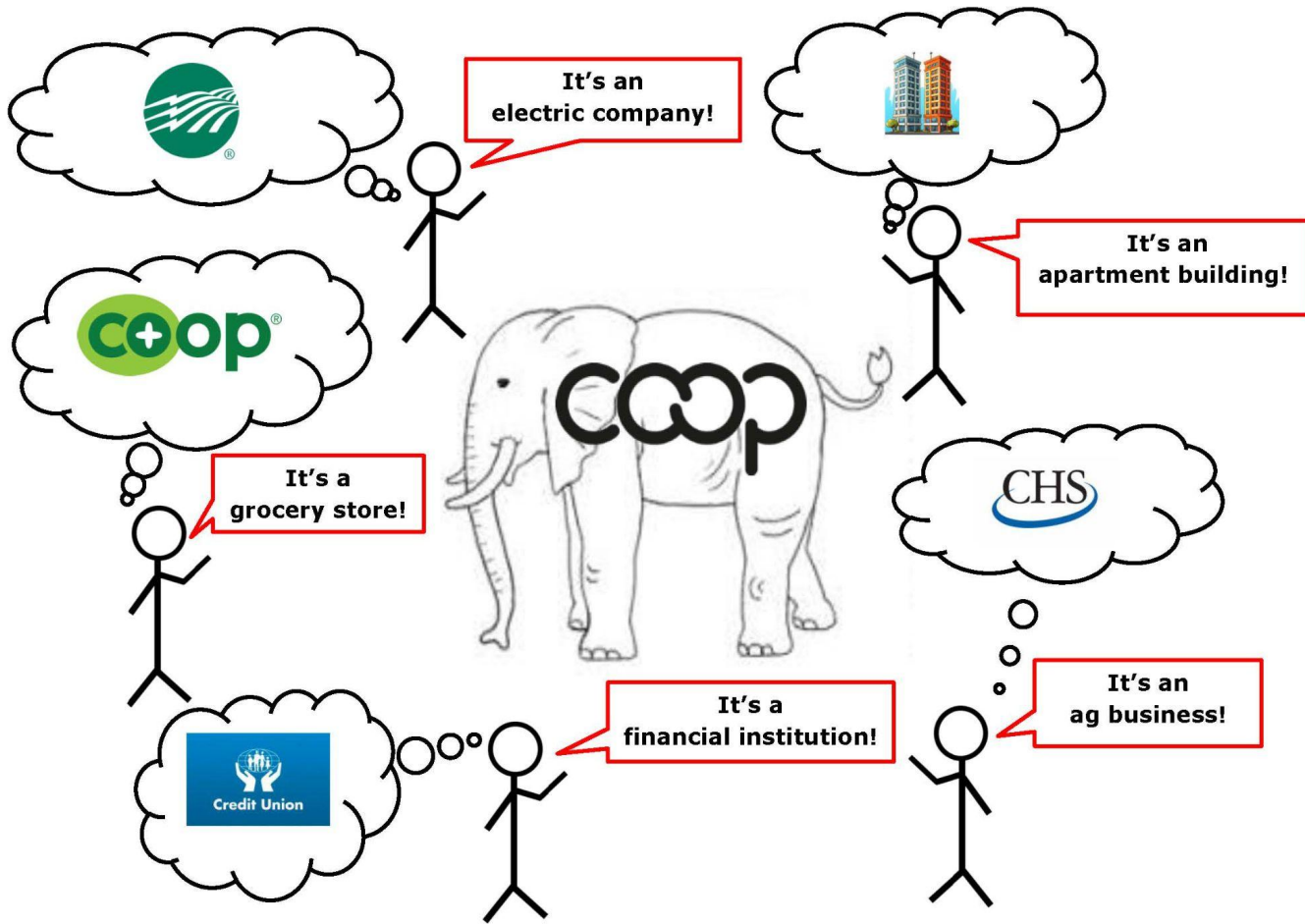
THE BLIND FOLK & THE ELEPHANT: *AN ANCIENT PARABLE*

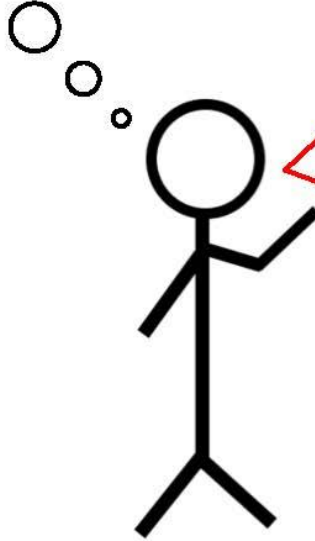
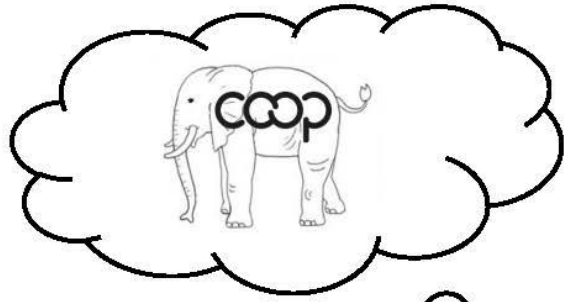
Reimagined by John Godfrey Saxe in the 19th
century

(And modified a little bit by *me* in the 21st.)









A co-op is a **type of business** where a user who needs a product or service actually **owns** the business with other users; these users have **democratic control**, and **equitable benefit** based on their individual participation in using the business.

In MY co-op, what that looks like is...



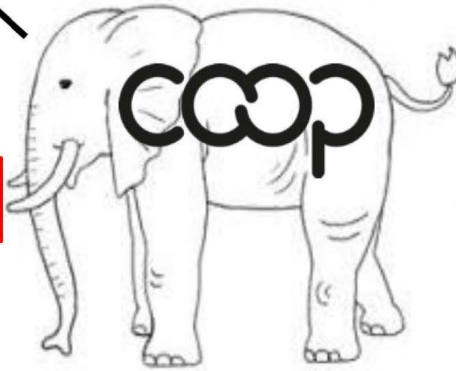
It's one type of cooperative business, helping rural folks buy power.



It's one type of cooperative business, helping folks access affordable housing.



It's one type of cooperative business, helping folks buy food.



It's one type of cooperative business, helping farmers market products & purchase supplies & services.



It's one type of co-op business, helping folks get better rates on savings & loans.

THE PILLARS / GOALS:

International objectives of the IYC 2025 are to:



Raise Public Awareness

Highlight the contributions of cooperatives to sustainable development.



Promote Growth and Development

Strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem and establishments for cooperatives.



Advocate for Supportive Frameworks

Encourage the creation of enabling legal and policy environments for cooperatives globally.



Inspire Leadership

Foster purposeful leadership and engage youth in the cooperative movement.

THE PILLARS / GOALS:

NCBA goals for IYC 2025

As we enter the Year of Cooperatives, NCBA invites you to join in advancing **three key goals**:

- 1) **raising public awareness** of how co-ops impact the economy and society,
- 2) **advocating** for legal and policy frameworks that support co-op **development** and enable co-op **entrepreneurship**, and
- 3) **inspiring** the next generation of cooperators.

THE PILLARS / GOALS:

NCBA goals for IYC 2025

Raising public awareness of how co-ops impact the economy and society:

- **Co-op Impact Report** - a quantitative and qualitative footprint of cooperatives in the U.S. - *in February*
- **Year of Cooperatives Toolkit** - a roadmap to raise awareness of your local co-op and how it fits into the global cooperative economy - *later this spring*

THE PILLARS / GOALS:

NCBA goals for IYC 2025

Advocating for legal and policy frameworks that support co-op **development** and enable co-op **entrepreneurship**:

- **Protect fair tax treatment** for cooperatives including working to extend the 199A deduction in the 2025 tax package;
- **Level the playing field** within the U.S. Small Business Administration's lending programs to support co-op conversions;
- **Preserve key investments** to create a resilient and robust economy through cooperatives in housing, the care economy, food systems and rural America; and
- **Empower communities around the world** through locally-led cooperative development.

THE PILLARS / GOALS:

NCBA goals for IYC 2025

Inspiring the next generation of cooperators:

- Engage the 2025 **Cooperative Leaders and Scholars** cohort in lifting up co-ops as people-centered businesses that build a better world
- Work alongside the **International Cooperative Alliance's Youth Network** to ensure youth are included and integrated into our work during the Year of Cooperatives—and that young people in the U.S. can connect with their global counterparts

THE ACTION:

What can we do—and what are we already doing—to work toward these goals?

YOUR CO-OP  YOUR SECTOR  YOUR STATE

- 1) **raising public awareness** of how co-ops impact the economy and society,
- 2) **advocating** for legal and policy frameworks that support co-op **development** and enable co-op **entrepreneurship**, and
- 3) **inspiring the next generation** of cooperators.

Public Awareness:

- 1) Chambers of Commerce**
- 2) Rotary (and other service) clubs**

Advocacy:

Two upcoming advocacy events from NCBA CLUSA:

- January 23 from 10 am-1 pm EST: **Advocacy Ask Me
Anything on Co-op Circle**

- January 30 from 1-2 pm EST: **Government Relations Co-op
Circle Town Hall**

Inspiring the Next Generation:

Cooperative Leaders & Scholars

(application deadline is Feb. 3)





**LET'S GO CO-OP
IN 2025!**

Thank you.