

# Poverty Alleviation for Unprotected Informal Economy Workers through Trade Union/Cooperative Joint Action

## Brief Background

The ILO views cooperatives as important in improving the living and working conditions of women and men globally as well as making essential infrastructure and services available in areas neglected by the state and investor-driven enterprises. Moreover, cooperatives have the potential to advance the concept of decent work. This is because they:

1. Promote fundamental principles and rights at work by encouraging freedom of association and work-place democracy.
2. Create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income by enabling their members to combine resources, skills and talents.
3. Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection by providing the socially excluded with basic social services.
4. Strengthen tripartism and social dialogue by defending the interests of the rural poor and unprotected workers.

The work of the Cooperative Branch, based on the New ILO Recommendation No. 193, (2002), includes: providing policy advice to ILO Member States; technical cooperation; organizing international meetings; producing documentation and information to increase public awareness of cooperatives; and promoting cooperative values and principles. The technical cooperation activities cover a wide range of themes from cooperative legislation and human resource development to job creation, poverty alleviation and local economic development.

## Strategy and Objectives

The project is aimed at improving the working and living conditions of unprotected economy workers through pilot programmes aimed at creating decent employment and incomes. This is achieved through strengthening the capacity of national and local level trade union and cooperative organizations to work together constructively. In the project's second phase, more focused activities will be carried out to integrate the cooperative experience into poverty reduction frameworks.

## Geographical scope

The ILO project, "Poverty Alleviation for Unprotected Informal Economy Workers through Trade Union/Cooperative Joint Action" is being implemented in Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda with funding from the Government of the Netherlands.

## Target Group

Beneficiaries include trade union and cooperative organizations, and informal sector workers.