Cooperation in a changing world of work

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Co-operatives: Putting People at the Centre Of Development
Outline

• ILO’s future of work initiative
• Drivers of change
  • Economic changes and coop responses
  • Technological changes and coop responses
  • Demographic changes and coop responses
  • Environmental changes and coop responses
• Next steps
Future of work initiative

• In 2015, the ILO Director-General launched a “Future of Work” initiative in the run-up to the ILO Centenary in 2019
• The initiative aims to describe and identify ways to address challenges of a changing world of work
• Trends: demographic, economic, environmental, technological...

Impact on:
  o Jobs, poverty and social protection
  o Production systems (internalization)
  o Quality of work
  o A Global Commission was established, co-chaired by Mauritius and Sweden, and started its work
Four Drivers of Change

• Economic change
• Demographic change
• Technological change
• Environmental change
Economic Changes & Coop Responses

- Persistent low economic growth since 2008
- Growing income inequalities
- Rising populism and political polarization
- Bankruptcies and other enterprise restructuring
- Informalization and flexibilization of labour
- Coop growth in membership and business volume (finance, retail)
- New types of coops emerging (care, renewable energy, platform)
- Informal economy workers establishing worker coops
- Coops in enterprise structuring through worker buy-outs
- Other social and solidarity economy enterprises growing
Technological Changes & Coop Responses

- Job destruction with automatization
- Job creation with innovation and spill-over effects
- Transformation of existing jobs
- Platform economy creates worker insecurity, deteriorating working conditions, and suppressed social protection

- Coops engaging in dialogue on regulating use of technology
- Coops developing, integrating, adapting & using technologies
- Platform coops of workers
  - Freelancer coops
  - Taxi driver coops
  - Care worker coops
- Social model of coops (social protection, social dialogue, etc.)
Demographic Changes & Coop Responses

- Ageing populations in some countries
- Growing youth unemployment
- Women’s growing labour force participation
- Movement of migrants and refugees

- Cooperatives providing care for the elderly, sick & children
- Youth and women participation in cooperatives
- Coop responses to migrants and refugees
  - Social cooperatives
  - Service cooperatives (finance)
  - Producer cooperatives
  - Coop employment
Environmental Changes & Coop Responses

- Global warming & Climate change
- Pollution (air, land, water)
- Water shortages
- Rising sea levels
- Droughts and heatwaves
- Stronger and more intense hurricanes

- Coops emerging in climate change adaptation and mitigation
  - Coops greening their acts (agriculture, construction, energy, retail)
  - Mutual insurance for crops
  - Crop diversification in ag coops
  - Sustainable fishing in fishery coops
  - Renewable energy coops
  - Forestry & agroforestry coops
  - Waste pickers coops
  - Coops in irrigation and WASH
Next steps

Developing the necessary regulatory frameworks
• Regulating the platform economy to protect users & workers
• Regulating platform cooperatives to facilitate start-up, growth & protection

Activating social finance tools for social economy initiatives
• Engaging with existing, well-established tools (e.g. coop banks, SACCOs)
• Reaching out to new tools (e.g. labour solidarity funds, equity debt instruments)

Generating and sharing evidence-based knowledge & data
• Setting up & tracking indicators for evidence on impact – triple bottom line
• Addressing replication & expansion & implications for other parts of the world

Reaching scale and creating partnerships
• Establishing secondary and tertiary level networks, platforms
• Partnering with workers’ movement & others
Thank you