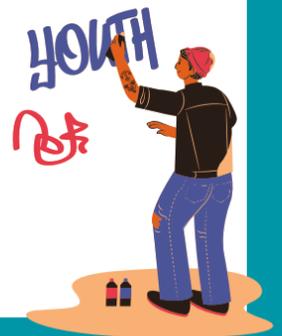


TOP 10 STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING YOUTH IN YOUR CO-OPERATIVE

1

Create space at the table for young people's concerns, skills and ideas.

Include youth in governance. Young people bring a much-needed boost of energy and dynamism into co-operative enterprises and conventional businesses; including new skills, creativity, innovation and problem solving, diverse perspectives, technological savvy and influence within peer groups.



2

Offer paths to leadership.

Focus on longer term strategic capacity building and leadership development of young people. Create opportunities for youth through education, skills development, volunteerism, employment, career path development and board participation. Facilitating meaningful routes into leadership supports succession planning for the co-operative and gives young people a stronger sense of ownership of their co-operatives.



Embrace technology.

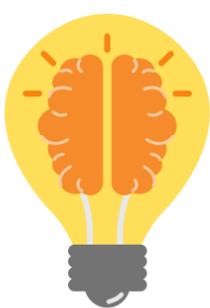
Leverage the knowledge, experience and technological skills of youth in product development and delivery, operationally and administratively and to increase digital presence through digital marketing and e-commerce.



3

4

Improve knowledge and increase awareness of co-operatives.



Young people are more likely to become engaged and involved with the co-operative sector if they have knowledge of co-operatives. For this reason, education on cooperatives should start from childhood, and be part of lifelong learning.

Build knowledge within your organization.

Recognize that if the staff, board, leaders and members of your organization do not have an understanding and awareness of co-operatives, it's difficult to effectively support education initiatives among youth and within communities. Transform young employees into ambassadors and encourage staff to develop elevator pitches on the co-operative difference.



5



Boost image.



To encourage more young people, the benefits of co-operatives need to be more effectively communicated using accessible and engaging language, with youth-focused messaging that reflects young people's interests and priorities in a way that makes them relevant and appealing. Share your commitment to social responsibility inherent in your co-operative structure.



Develop structure.

Build genuine youth-orientated co-operative structure. Leaders and decision-makers within the co-operative sector should embrace diversity and be aware and proactive towards youth participation and inclusion. This means a genuine commitment to including young people's ideas both at operational and strategic level.



Build culture.

The building of strong co-operative structures must be paired with a strong culture of co-operation, linked to a commitment to the co-operative values, including equity and member participation, and the co-operative principles. Young people care deeply about making a positive change in society and multiple values (social, economic, political, environmental) are strongly valued.

Strengthen partnerships.



Work constructively with other organizations to achieve common objectives. In the fields of employment, education and entrepreneurship, co-operatives will need to build strong relationships with relevant stakeholders. Building mutually beneficial partnerships with educators, small business leaders, government agencies and with other co-operatives across diverse sectors is key.



Promote decent work and employment.

Create progressive visions for youth employment, define clear and accessible career paths, and offer opportunities for growth and leadership development. Co-operatives can provide a potential solution to the problems of youth employment; providing support for entrepreneurial ventures that address social and economic challenges and providing career paths for youth seeking meaningful work that aligns with their values and ambitions.

