

How many people world-wide are members of co-operatives? The answer is a stunning One Billion. One out of every 7.5 people belong to an organization whose values focus explicitly on democracy, equality, sustainability and cooperation. \* Their annual revenue is a whopping \$3 Trillion! **That's roughly** equivalent to the annual budget of the US Government (\$3.25 T,) and nearly twice the annual global military budget. (\$1.6T) Despite thinking of ourselves as a **“private sector society,” many banks,** businesses, housing options, lots of **NGO's** bring the added value of cooperative principles to their products and services:

- voluntary and open membership
- democratic participation & control
- equitable **contributions & allocations**
- **education and training**
- **assured autonomy & independence**
- **partnering with other cooperatives,**
- **concern for sustainable community.**

<http://ica.coop/en/whats-co-op/co-operative-identity-values-principles>

An International Summit of Cooperatives was held in October, 2016 in Quebec City. Speakers Joseph Steiglitz, Jeremy Rifkin, and Robert Reich,\* noted the current global context in which cooperatives operate: Globalization has been mismanaged. Trust has plummeted and inequality has increased. Along with a growing economic crisis, real time climate change is underway.

Co-operatives offer hope and solutions. Co-ops have a map, a compass, and a philosophy of organization that can integrate social, environmental, and economic goals. The cooperative principles articulate a vision of a genuine sharing and sustainable economy. The digital revolution and internet of things enables distributed/localized, low cost and low capital intensive shifts in communication, energy, and transport. Co-ops offer an economic vision that is compelling and a game plan that can move quickly. It is time to raise the profile, promote the brand, and increase the footprint of cooperatives across sectors. It is time to commit to grow the co-op movement and use our power for good.

\*Joseph Steiglitz, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph\\_Stiglitz](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Stiglitz)  
Jeremy Rifkin, [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeremy\\_Rifkin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeremy_Rifkin)  
Robert Reich. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Reich](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Reich)

### Resources:

Cooperatives for a Better World <http://cooperativesforabetterworld.coop/learn-about-co-ops/>  
What is a cooperative? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49fo8DONSvl&feature=youtu.be>  
Building a better world.... The co-operative way <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJG9rWy6sEs>

Promote the co-op brand: [www.identity.coop](http://www.identity.coop) The International Co-operative Alliance has developed a global co-operative identity that all co-operatives can align with and

which differentiates us from other forms of business.

Opportunity of the new cooperative / collaborative economy:

The unstoppable rise of a collaborative economy: Shane Hughes at TEDxLausanne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ya6zndBObHY>

To See the Overview of the Summit from the ICA website:

<http://cooperativesforabetterworld.coop/news/international-summit-of-cooperatives-the-power-to-act/>

SPEC member Val Embree attended the International Summit of Cooperatives in Quebec in October as the delegate for Glen Valley Organic Farm Co-op, Abbotsford, BC. <http://www.glenvalleyorganicfarm.org/gvwp/>