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Brazilian cooperatives and the 2030 Agenda

(Cooperativas brasileiras y Agenda 2030)

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Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. The role of cooperatives in sustainable development. 3. Methodological procedures. 4. Results analysis. 5. Concluding remarks. 6. Acknowledgments. 7. Bibliography.

Sumario: 1. Introducción. 2. El papel de las cooperativas en el desarrollo sostenible. 3. Procedimientos metodológicos. 4. Análisis de resultados. 5. Consideraciones finales. 6. Agradecimientos. 7. Bibliografía.

Abstract: This study aims to analyze the initiatives taken during the Cooperation Day («C Day»), of Brazilian cooperatives and their contributions to the fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda. To this end, actions developed by Brazilian cooperatives in reference to the C Day related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), made available by the National Cooperative Learning Service (SESCOOP), were analyzed. Activities performed during the 2017 to 2020 period were analyzed. Results show the contributions of Brazilian cooperatives to the fulfillment of the SDGs. under analysis increased over time, although it is possible to observe disparities in the execution of the program in regional terms, in terms of the branches of activities involved, the impacted SDGs, and the dimensions met (economic, social, environmental or institutional).

Key words: cooperativism; SDGs; Sustainable Development; C Day.

Resumen: El objetivo de este estudio es analizar las acciones de las cooperativas brasileñas en el Día de Cooperar (Día C) y sus contribuciones al cumplimiento de la Agenda 2030. Para ello, se analizaron las acciones desarro-

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lladas por las cooperativas brasileñas en relación con el Día C, y se relacionaron con los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) puestos a disposición por el Servicio Nacional de Aprendizaje Cooperativo (SESCOOP). El período analizado fue de 2017 a 2020. Los resultados muestran que las cooperativas se han comprometido cada vez más en el cumplimiento de los ODS, aunque es posible observar disparidades en la implementación del programa en términos regionales, en términos de las ramas de actividad involucradas, los ODS impactados y las dimensiones cumplidas (económica, social, ambiental o institucional).

Palabras clave: cooperativismo; ODS; desarrollo sostenible; Día C.

1. Introduction

According to Begnis, Arend, and Estivaleta (2014), humanity recognized the significance of cooperation to fulfill its needs from early times. In this context, a set of organizations known as cooperatives emerged over time as an alternative to the traditional capitalist entrepreneurial model, which primarily pursues profit. Cooperatives are characterized as organizations that place people at their core, practice joint ownership of assets, and operate democratically for and by their associated members, with the aim of addressing common economic, social, and cultural needs (ICA, 1995; OCB, 2017; DALLE MOLLE, 2014; BARBA BAYAS and MORALES NORIEGA, 2019; GOUVEIA, 2016). "Cooperatives do not have an autonomous and independent existence apart from their members" (BEGNIS; AREND and ESTIVALETE, 2014; p. 102), distinguishing them from other business organizations.

Cooperativism aims at cooperation and mutual assistance through a democratic and participative model of management, fostering the development of the regions in which they are involved (DALLE MOLLE, 2014). Development can be said to be ingrained in the DNA of cooperatives (BARBA BAYAS and MORALES NORIEGA, 2019), as they carry out their activities based on universal values and principles of equality, solidarity, and reciprocity (HOCAYEN-DA-SILVA and HOCAYEN DA SILVA, 2021).

In Brazil, as of 2020, there were 4,868 active registered cooperatives distributed across seven different sectors (agricultural, consumer, credit, infrastructure, health, labor, transportation, manufacture, and goods and services), with 17.1 million members and 455 thousand employees. Brazilian cooperatives are well-established organizations: 12% have existed for over 40 years, and another 50% have been around for more than 20 years. This contrasts with the reality of other Brazilian companies, as 47% do not survive beyond their fifth year of activity. This data represents an important indicator, reflecting the resilience of this sector. Their total assets amount to approximately 655 billion Brazilian reais, with 23 billion reais distributed as surplus in 2020 (OCB, 2021).

On the other hand, in September 2015, member countries of the United Nations (UN) committed to promoting sustainable development. This commitment is encapsulated in the 2030 Agenda, which acknowledges the escalating environmental crisis, rising global inequalities, and the need to achieve balanced and integrated development conditions.

The 2030 Agenda builds upon discussions kick-started by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and sets forth an action plan for people, the planet, prosperity, and peace through global partnership. To this end, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets were established to be achieved over 15 years through collaborative efforts involving governments, businesses, organizations, and society. According to the ONU (2015), the SDGs are characterized as universal and transformative, making it a societal commitment to adopt initiatives that contribute to achieving the goals established by the Agenda.

As noted by Llamas and Jomo (2018), the UN recognizes that cooperatives can be key actors in implementing actions to attain the SDGs. Over time, experiences have shown that cooperatives have the potential to build a solidarity-based economy for a better world. Additionally, cooperatives are social institutions that convey the necessary social values to construct a fairer and more prosperous world, given their simultaneous pursuit of economic viability and social responsibility. Cooperativism seeks to improve local communities, promote financial inclusion, eradicate poverty, ensure responsible use of natural resources, among other agendas that align with the SDGs. In essence, cooperatives offer an alternative business model with contributions extending far beyond job creation (WANYAMA, 2014; OCB, 2018; MARTINEZ-LEON *et al.*, 2020; FERNANDEZ-GUADAÑO; LOPEZ-MILLAN and SARRIA-PEDROZA, 2020).

Despite the significance of Brazilian cooperative organizations, few studies have addressed the relationship between cooperativism and sustainable development. Given the importance of the cooperative model in the socio-economic landscape of Brazil and the presented theme, this study aims to analyze the actions taken during the Cooperation Day ("C Day"), carried out by Brazilian cooperatives and their contributions regarding the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

The present study is organized into four sections beyond this introduction. The next section provides a brief reflection on cooperatives and sustainable development. Following that, the adopted methodological procedures are described, and the fourth section contains the analyses and discussions. Finally, concluding remarks are presented.

2. The role of cooperatives in sustainable development

The fulfillment of the 2030 Agenda is a commitment taken by the whole of society, encompassing cooperatives as well due to their con-

cern for transforming the environment in which they operate. Given the nature of their organizations, cooperatives can contribute to combating poverty, reducing unemployment, improving quality of life, achieving more sustainable ways of living especially at the local/regional levels, and pursuing socially responsible management (SCHNEIDER, 2001; BARBA BAYAS and MORALES NORIEGA, 2019; FERNANDEZ-GUADAÑO; LOPEZ-MILLAN and SARRIA-PEDROZA, 2020; IMAZ and EIZAGIRRE, 2020). Beyond the local community, cooperatives act as facilitators in alliances involving local, national, and international actors, encompassing both public entities and private sector organizations, possessing the organizational capacity to provide training, education, and communication, thus contributing to a global movement for sustainable development (WANYAMA, 2014).

According to Fernandez-Guadaño, Lopez-Millan, and Sarria-Pedroza (2020), the tradition business model, which aims to maximize profit and generate value for shareholders, is being replaced by a socio-economic model where the goal is to create value for all stakeholders. In this sense, the cooperative model becomes pivotal for sustainable development because, through its values and principles, it serves as a reference for social innovation and contributes to income generation, democratization of ownership, efficient utilization of resources through economies of scale, and the survival of local territories. In short, it empowers the population to manage their own progress and development. Bastida, Vaquero, and Cancelo (2020), León *et al.* (2021), and Arana-Landin (2020) present evidence affirming the contribution of cooperatives to sustainable development in different regions, such as Galicia/Spain, Mexico, and the United States of America.

From a similar perspective, other studies (ALTMAN, 2015; GRASHUIS, 2018) and reports (ICA, 2016; UNIC RJ, 2017) suggest and argue about the direct relationship between the cooperative model and the establishment of sustainable development, especially in underdeveloped and developing countries, particularly within the agricultural sector.

In various aspects, the existing relationship between the cooperative model and the establishment of a sustainable development horizon becomes evident based on the proximity between these organizations and the communities they serve, their constitution, consolidation as a model of social organization, collaborative problem-solving efforts, and their characteristic socialization of goods and services through collective work and engagement. It is understood that cooperatives can contribute to the 2030 Agenda, both individually and collectively interlinked, owing to the diversified nature of the sectors of operations

of the cooperative system. This is based on its fundamental purpose of improving local communities, whose agendas align directly with the themes addressed in the SDGs (OCB, 2018).

In this context, an opportunity is provided to comprehend and observe the initiatives undertaken by cooperative organizations within the communities where they operate, with a view towards economic development, social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and good governance, among which are the actions carried out on the Cooperation Day, the focus of this study.

3. Methodological procedures

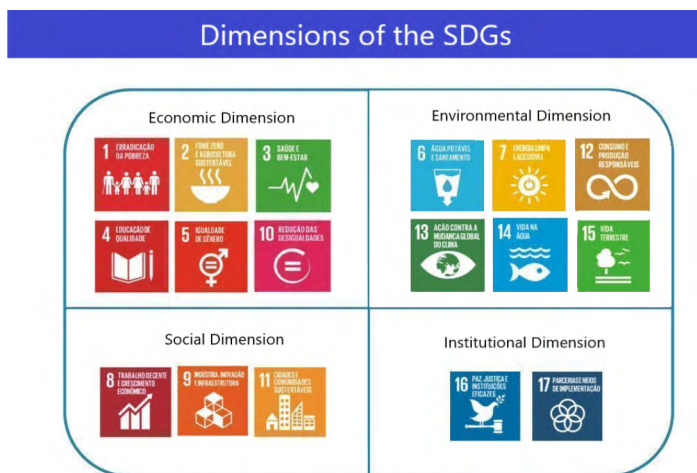
The study is characterized as exploratory research, developed with a basis on secondary data obtained from databases and reports. The exploratory nature aims to enhance familiarity with the problem to better expound and elucidate it (GIL, 2002), as well as to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge around the theme (MALHOTRA, 2011).

The research employs a quantitative-qualitative approach and analyzes the actions related to the Cooperation Day (C Day), sourced from the SIS Dia C database of the National Cooperative Learning Service (SESCOOP), covering the period from 2017 to 2020. The "C Day" is a Brazilian cooperative movement that originated in 2009, initiated by the Organization of Cooperatives of the State of Minas Gerais (OCEMG), extending nationwide from 2014 onward, when it became a National Program for the entire cooperative system. The objective of the program is to "carry out social responsibility initiatives in the communities where cooperatives are present through voluntary actions, thus assisting people in transforming their lives" (SESCOOP, 2021, p. 4).

In 2015, the Brazilian Cooperative Organization (OCB) linked C Day activities to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and, in 2016, after the definitive preposition of the objectives and respective targets constituting the 2030 Agenda, the OCB system opted to directly align the initiatives performed under the C Day program with the guidelines of the Agenda, which directly correlate with the objectives and goals set forth by the UN and delineated in the SDGs. As such, the cooperatives carrying out a specific social responsibility initiative towards their communities must connect and relate them to the relevant targets and respective SDGs (DIA C, 2019). The actions undertaken often align with more than one SDG each, leading to a disparity between the number of SDGs covered by the program and the total number of actions carried out.

The SIS Dia C database encompasses a range of information on all actions conducted by cooperatives according to municipality and state across the country. These actions are further categorized based on the market sector in which the cooperatives operate, the benefiting audience, involved volunteers, as well as detailed descriptions and observations on the initiatives. The actions are also classified according to the addressed SDG and the associated dimension, based on reports from the cooperatives themselves.

The 2030 Agenda comprised 17 SDGs, functionally linked to four integrated and indivisible dimensions: economic, social, environmental, and institutional (Figure 1). For data organization, Microsoft Excel was utilized and data was tabulated within a spreadsheet, as well as plotted as graphs and maps. These efforts aimed to consolidate information about several variables available in the database according to the macro-regions of Brazil (North, Northeast, Center-West, Southeast, and South). Subsequent information analysis and interpretation were carried out based on the presented theoretical framework. Furthermore, maps depicting the quantity of actions conducted per macro-region were created for the years between 2017 and 2020 using the geo-processing software QGIS, utilizing the following intervals: 100 to 399; 400 to 699; 700 to 999; 1000 to 1299; and 1300 to 1599.



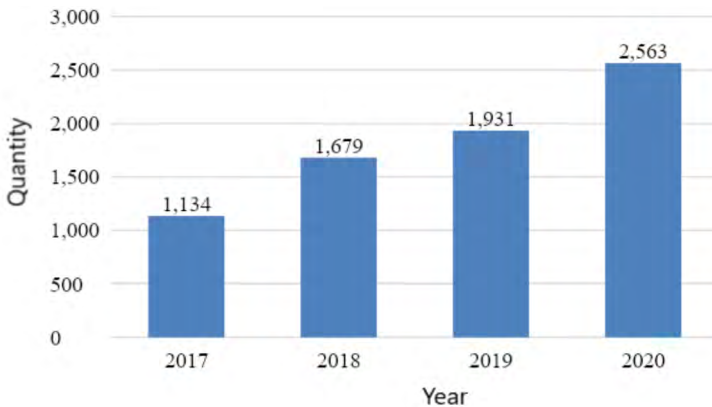
Source: ONU (2015).

Figure 1
Sustainable Development Goals by dimension

Another source of data was the annual publication named Dia C. However, it is worth noting that the aggregated data presented in the publication differ from the data in the SIS Dia C database. Moreover, the consulted database does not present information about actions conducted in certain states during specific periods, such as Minas Gerais (where the initiative originated), where no actions are listed for the years 2017, 2018, and 2019. Additionally, the classification of actions according to the SDGs was performed by the cooperatives themselves, and this method of classification does not always align optimally with the intended SDG, configuring limitations of the current study.

4. Results analysis

The analysis of actions carried out by Brazilian cooperatives on C Day over the years 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 indicates a progressive trend. In 2017, 1,134 actions were undertaken, rising to 2,563 in 2020, or a growth of 226% (Graph 1). This trend illustrates increased engagement from the side of cooperatives in the initiative and the growing promotion of activities associated with the C Day. It is noteworthy that these actions are taken through voluntary participation by cooperatives, underscoring a mounting concern and corresponding sense of social responsibility towards the regions in which they operate. This aligns with the seventh cooperative principle: "Concern for Community" (OCB, 2018; SESCOOP RS, 2022).

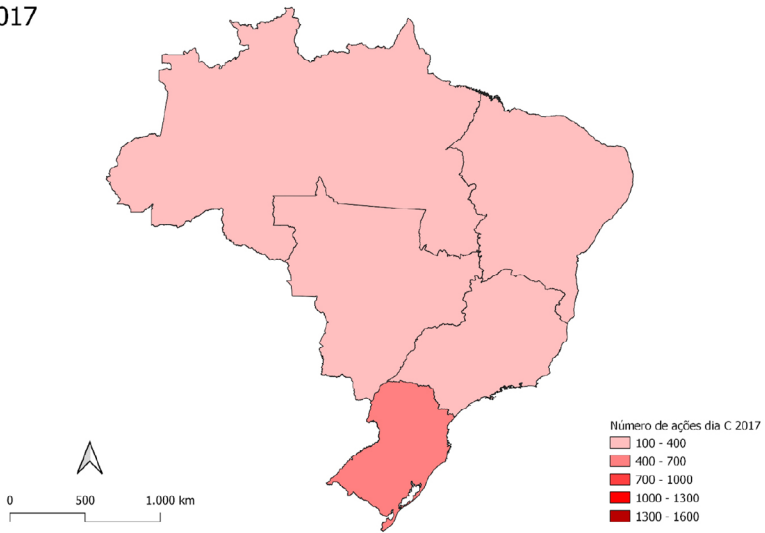


Source: Banco SIS Dia C - SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

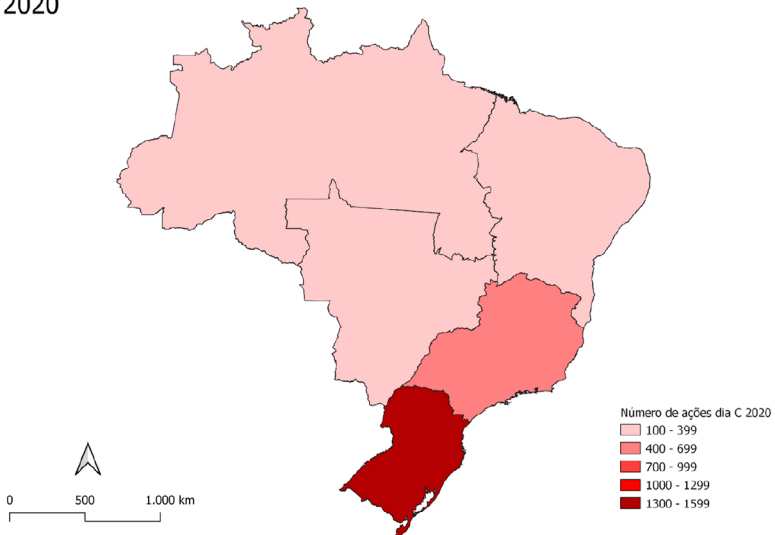
Graph 1

Number of actions carried out on C Day, 2017 to 2020

2017



2020



Source: Banco SIS Dia C – SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

Figure 2

Number of actions carried out on C Day by macro-regions of Brazil, 2017 to 2020

However, the development of initiatives is not evenly distributed across the national territory, with a noticeable concentration of actions in the Southern region (Figure 2). In 2017, the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná accounted for 39.7% of said actions. In 2020, these three states were jointly responsible for 53.4%. Conversely, in all other regions, although a growth in terms of the number of actions can be observed in absolute terms, these growths were still less pronounced than in the Southern region when analyzed in aggregate terms. Consequently, the relative participation of all other regions decreased between 2017 and 2020. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that the states in the Southern region, while ranking third in the number of cooperatives (18.7%), represent 51.3% of the total cooperative members in the country (OCB, 2021), which could explain the higher number of actions undertaken in favor of their communities.

Table 1
Public involved in C Day actions by macro-region, 2017 to 2020

Region	Involved audience	2017	2018	2019	2020
North	Beneficiaries	72,423	100,600	110,057	196,313
	Volunteers	7,494	7,082	5,384	4,246
Northeast	Beneficiaries	70,474	189,921	152,806	454,079
	Volunteers	8,814	11,745	23,052	6,453
Center-West	Beneficiaries	79,375	158,068	188,076	802,106
	Volunteers	7,475	11,867	15,492	10,374
Southeast	Beneficiaries	181,869	228,720	180,258	448,551
	Volunteers	8,185	12,525	12,704	8,515
South	Beneficiaries	359,170	485,214	600,780	2,240,902
	Volunteers	20,959	22,254	32,333	75,427
Total	Beneficiaries	763,311	1,162,523	1,231,977	4,141,951
	Volunteers	52,927	65,473	88,965	105,015

Source: Banco SIS - SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

In addition to the quantitative increase in actions undertaken, there was also a significant rise in the size of the involved audience, both in terms of beneficiaries and participating volunteers (Table 1).

The number of beneficiaries increased from 763,311 individuals in 2017 to 4,141,951 in 2020, representing a 542.6% growth. Upon analyzing the description of the actions being carried out, it is evident that these endeavors aimed to address general needs of the communities, such as through charitable institutions, schools, hospitals, and in favor of vulnerable groups (including youth, women, and the elderly). Moreover, there were also initiatives with an even more collective character, reaching thousands of people, especially in 2020, with efforts related to Covid-19 prevention, including campaigns to raise awareness about the disease, and donation of masks and hand sanitizers. These results align with the findings of Silva, Búrigo, and Cazella (2021), who analyzed actions conducted by a credit cooperative linked to the seventh cooperative principle (Concern for Community). Many of these actions were also of a punctual and welfare-oriented nature, thus not effectively contributing to a broader process of transformation towards sustainable territorial development.

On the other hand, it was also possible to identify a few specific actions benefiting individuals. For instance, fundraising campaigns for the purchase of health equipment (such as ventilators) or blood donation campaigns for individual members of the community.

Regarding volunteers, a growth of 198.4% was observed, with the number of participants increasing from 42,927 in 2017 to 105,015 in 2020. These figures demonstrate the commitment of stakeholders associated with cooperatives (employees, cooperative members, partners, etc.) to seek solutions for community issues (OCB, 2018), thereby assuming roles as local progress and development managers (FERNANDEZ-GUADAÑO; LOPEZ-MILLAN and SARRIA-PEDROZA, 2020).

In terms of spatial distribution, particular attention is drawn to the Southern region (states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, and Paraná), which consistently had the largest number of beneficiaries every year. In 2020, this region accounted for 54.1% of beneficiaries in the country and the largest contingent of volunteers. This can be attributed to the significant presence of cooperative members in this region.

When analyzing according to cooperativism sector (TABLE 02), the highest engagement occurred within credit cooperatives, followed by those in agricultural and healthcare sectors, albeit to a lesser extent. Although credit cooperatives do not represent the largest proportion of cooperatives, they have the highest number of associated members and generally conduct the highest number of community-oriented actions. For example, in 2020, credit cooperatives were responsible for 74.4% of all actions carried out on C Day,

showcasing considerable prominence compared to other cooperatives. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that these actions were diverse, extending beyond their operational sector (financial), reflecting a care for the communities which they serve and addressing all dimensions of sustainable development. Examples include initiatives involving donations (of clothing, food, cleaning and hygiene supplies, etc.), recreational workshops for children, health care, tree planting, waste collection, and more.


















Table 2
Number of C Day actions by activity sector, 2017 to 2020

Cooperativism Sector	No of cooperatives (2020)	No of members (millions)	C Day Actions			
			2017	2018	2019	2020
Agriculture	1,173	1,001	148	188	155.000	222.000
Consumer	247	2,109	29	27	23.000	32.000
Credit	775	11,967	655	995	1.232	1.907
Infrastructure	246	1,481	10	25	35.000	30.000
Health	758	0,293	121	129	163.000	183.000
Labor, manufacture of goods, and services	685	0,180	102	171	157.000	76.000
Transport	984	0,090	36	52	51.000	51.000
None/Not Informed			33	92	115.000	62.000
Total	4,868	17,121	1,134	1,679	1,931.000	2,563.000

Note: In 2017, 2018, and 2019, cooperativism was divided into 13 activity sectors, but these were reduced to 7 in 2020. Therefore, the education, special, housing, mineral, production, labor, and tourism were aggregated into the labor, manufacture of goods, and services sector.

Source: OCB (2021) and Banco SIS - SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

According to the ONU (2015), the SDGs and their targets are integrated and indivisible, a crucial characteristic in the context of sustainable development. Therefore, when cooperatives report and describe their activities during the C Day program, these actions are linked to relevant SDGs and, at times, a single activity may align with and contribute towards more than one SDG (as observed in the years of 2017 and 2018). Figure 3 depicts the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and the corresponding number of actions attributed to each of them during the analyzed period.

SDG	2017	2018	2019	2020	Σ	SDG	2017	2018	2019	2020	Σ
	212	248	103	313	876		263	427	126	128	944
	120	186	102	418	826		181	238	89	46	554
	770	1,132	926	1,333	4,161		96	125	41	14	276
	332	515	344	186	1,377		93	72	36	10	211
	69	106	10	6	191		42	41	9	1	93
	31	34	3	1	69		121	133	61	18	333
	15	16	5	3	39		77	117	14	11	219
	63	144	26	50	283		94	137	23	23	277
	4	19	14	2	39	Σ	2,583	3,690	1,932	2,563	-

Source: Banco SIS Dia C - SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

Figure 3

Number of C Day actions reported to be linked with each SDG, 2017 to 2020

Thus, 1,134 C Day actions were carried out in 2017, as shown in Graph 1, which represent 2,583 total “links” to the SDGs. In 2018, the number of actions that aligned with the SDGs increased to 3,690; in 2019 and 2020, these were 1,932 and 2,563, respectively.

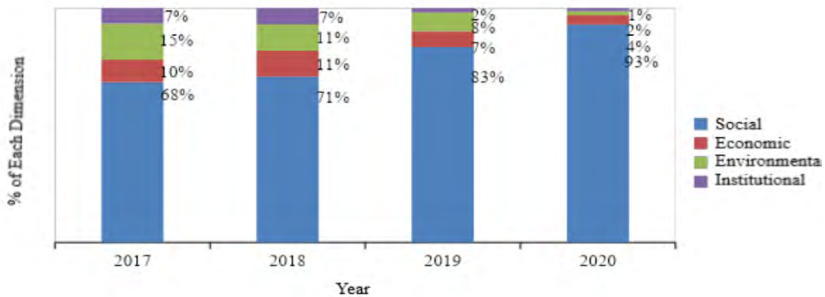
Regarding the distribution of actions per SDG, SDG 3 (“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”) was the most represented throughout the analyzed period, totaling 4,161 actions. Among these initiatives were disease prevention campaigns, diagnostic screenings, vaccination campaigns, health care workshops, distribution of medicines and preventive materials, medical and ophthalmic services, and more. It is worth mentioning that, in 2020, many actions linked to this particular SDG aimed to contribute to the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic through the donation of masks, hand sanitizers, hygiene or cleaning kits/products, and by providing guidance to prevent contagion.

The second most addressed goal was SDG 4 (“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”). A total of 1,377 initiatives sought to contribute to this goal between 2017 and 2020. These actions encompassed environmental education, financial literacy, specialized training workshops, storytelling, donation of books and school supplies, and others.

It is also noticeable that a single initiative can be geared towards contributing to more than one SDG, such as in the case of food collection for charitable institutions. In multiple instances, the cooperative responsible for organizing an action reported that it contributed to both SDG 3 and SDG 2 (“End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”). Another example is the development of workshops aimed at female cooperative associates to promote integration, improve work conditions, and boost women’s self-esteem. This kind of initiative was also associated with promoting both SDG 3 as well as SDG 5 (“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”).

However, an analysis of the data also revealed that some SDGs still lack sufficient engagement. For instance, SDG7 (“Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all”) and SDG 9 (“Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation”) were among the least addressed goals, covered by only 39 actions during the analyzed period.

Considering the four dimensions presented in Figure 1 (economic, social, environmental, and institutional), Graph 2 illustrates the proportion in which each dimension has been addressed by initiatives carried out during C Day. As depicted, actions primarily focus on the social dimension, accounting for 68% of all actions in 2017 and increasing to 93% in 2020. The most frequently addressed SDGs within the social dimensions were SDGs SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, and SDG 10, with SDG5, related to gender equality and female empowerment, being the least referenced. Conversely, in Graph 2, it can be observed that the remaining dimensions gradually decreased in their relative inclusion throughout the period, indicating an imbalance in achieving sustainable development.



Source: Banco SIS Dia C - SESCOOP (2017 to 2020).

Graph 2

Relative share of each dimension across all actions, 2017 to 2020

As social institutions (LLAMAS; JOMO, 2018; FERNANDEZ-GUADAÑO; LOPEZ-MILLAN and SARRIA-PEDROZA, 2020), the justification for the prevalence of actions within the social dimension can be associated with the principles and values that guide cooperativism, with include commitment to community, solidarity, freedom, equity, equality, social responsibility, and more (ICA, 1995; DALLE MOLLE; 2014). Corroborating this, León *et al.* (2021) also mentioned that the major contributions of Mexican cooperatives were associated with SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 12, which is indicative of a stronger (or over-) representation of the social dimension. Castilla-Pollo and Sánchez-Hernández (2020) highlighted the significance of the cooperative model for its ability to foster and establish strong bonds between its associated members and the communities they are a part of.

It is important to remember that the C Day initiatives, given their foundational purpose, are mostly one-time activities with a limited local scope. These activities are carried out on a specific date or over a short period of time, with only a few actions registered as ongoing efforts. They typically target specific audiences or communities (schools, hospitals, vulnerable groups, etc.). Nonetheless, considering the nationwide reach of this movement, C Day becomes an important initiative to mitigate regional disparities and, in the long run, can contribute to achieving conditions befitting sustainable development.

5. Concluding remarks

Cooperatives, guided by their principles and values, play an important role in promoting the conditions for sustainable development described by the 2030 Agenda. This study analyzed the contributions of Brazilian cooperatives in relation to this theme, based on data and information regarding the actions carried out during the national "C Day" program.

The analysis and reflection on the activities carried out by cooperatives offer valuable insights. Over the analyzed period, the engagement of cooperatives with the C Day program has been increasing, illustrating their growing concern and the inclination to participate in sustainable development as per the cooperative model of business. However, regional disparities in execution of the program can be observed, as well as variations in the involved branches or sectors and in the alignment with SDGs and dimensions. Despite the fact that the Southern region of Brazil does not have the highest number of cooperatives, it stands out in terms of initiatives or actions, with higher voluntary par-

ticipation and impacting a larger number of beneficiaries. This could be attributed to the fact that this region has the highest number of cooperative members in the country. Therefore, the number of associates might be an important indicator of the dissemination of the principles and values of cooperativism.

The actions undertaken by Brazilian cooperatives are predominantly linked to the social dimension, which can be justified by their concern for the development of the communities they are located in. On the other hand, there is a shortage of actions addressing the economic, environmental, and institutional dimensions. Given the complexity of regional realities and the need for balance among dimensions in order to achieve sustainable development, it is recommended that, in future instances of the C Day program, cooperatives should focus on developing a higher number of actions related to the economic, environmental, and institutional dimensions. For instance, agricultural cooperatives require significant water resources for their activities, but the C Day program does not currently include actions related to the topic.

Cooperative engagement varies across sectors, with the majority of actions (90%) being developed by credit, agricultural, and healthcare cooperatives, with credit cooperatives alone being responsible for most of these actions (75%). Therefore, encouraging greater engagement from cooperatives in other sectors is valuable, as community concern and care are fundamental principles of cooperativism.

This study exclusively focused on analyzing actions carried out during the C Day program, which does not mean that cooperatives do not undertake other ongoing initiatives for community development. However, although most actions were related to the social dimension, and given the relevance of the obtained information, it is still possible to conclude that cooperatives significantly contribute to both the economic and social aspects of the 2030 Agenda. Economic growth and, to a great extent, environmental gains can be both a cause and a consequence of greater social well-being. On the other hand, the initiative shown by cooperatives can serve as an example for other social actors to mobilize in support of the 2030 Agenda. It is essential for all social actors to recognize their responsibility in environmental preservation and reducing inequalities, considering that the 20th century reinforced the exploitation of nature to meet human needs, reflecting the triumph of anthropocentrism.

By carrying out these actions through their members and volunteers, cooperatives contribute to the awareness that it is necessary to find a way to make progress in a sustainable and sustained way, ensuring that meeting human needs does not lead to the exhaustion of na-

ture and the exclusion of people. The activities of cooperatives enable the development of a sense of co-responsibility, abandoning the selfish individualism potentially present in business initiatives. It is suggested that future studies be carried out to analyze other initiatives developed by cooperatives, seeking to measure their regional impacts.

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7. Bibliography

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