

Standardized and **collaborative** data management tools like Coop Profiler and the Cooperative Resilience Measurement Index (CRMI), are crucial for cooperatives in Uganda to improve efficiency, measure performance, and build **resilience**



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Implementing the Cooperative Resilience Measurement Index (CRMI) for Cooperatives in Uganda

Background

Over the past two decades, Ugandan cooperatives have faced numerous disruptions, including evolving customer preferences, stricter regulations, technological advancements, natural disasters, financial crises, and conflicts. These challenges threaten their sustainability, making it crucial to study and manage their resilience despite limited opportunities for controlled observation.

To address this gap, the Uhuru Institute for Social Development (TUI), with support from Busara Center for Behavioural Economics and Open Society Foundation London, developed the **Cooperative Resilience Measurement Index (CRMI)** to assess cooperatives' adherence to core values and principles and their community impact. Hosted within the Coop Profiler app, the CRMI facilitates data collection, analysis, and collaboration, creating a standardized framework for building competitive and sustainably resilient cooperatives.

This study sought to engage agribusiness cooperatives in Uganda in the testing of the Cooperative Resilience Measurement Index (CRMI) and the Coop Profiler in order to prioritize resilience measurement, promote ownership, and facilitate skills transfer.

Objective

The study aims to facilitate the **ownership and prioritisation of cooperative resilience measurement** and enable skills transfer by involving cooperatives and related stakeholders in testing the relevance, functionality, user experience, and scalability of the Cooperative Resilience Measurement Index and Coop Profiler for cooperative development in Uganda.

Methods

The study used a **participatory approach**, engaging cooperative leaders as both data subjects and enumerators to foster interactions with the Coop Profiler and CRMI. Training for 62 cooperatives covered research protocols, survey interpretation, and software usage, with 59 consenting to act as data enumerators. Data collection included 161 self-administered surveys and 7 key informant interviews, combining **quantitative and qualitative** methods to assess the tools' functionality, user experience, scalability, and relevance, ultimately fostering **ownership and skill transfer** among cooperatives.

Results

The study revealed that most agribusiness cooperatives in remote areas have limited internet access, lack computer hardware, and possess minimal digital literacy, hindering their use of web and mobile data collection tools for resilience measurement. Additionally, small cooperatives with low turnovers are reluctant to invest in digital tools beyond subsidized solutions, posing a sustainability risk when funding ends, necessitating **a shift towards prioritizing digital investments** and fostering integrity in data governance.

Access to cooperative records and good corporate governance practices were found to facilitate efficient data management and resilience measurement.

End user feedback on Coop Profiler indicated overall satisfaction with Coop Profiler and a desire for further engagement due to its **relevance to cooperative business needs**. However, concerns about adoption inconveniences, maintenance costs, data misuse, and data loss highlight the need to address usability challenges, communicate software benefits, and promote data integrity.

Despite mixed experiences, there was widespread appreciation for the CRMI's holistic assessment approach and its potential to drive improvements. Concerns about the CRMI's precision ranking, particularly for new cooperatives, highlight the need for adjustments, yet its quality **incentivizes business formalization and compliance**, fostering an organized, forward-thinking environment.

21% of the cooperatives were deemed resilient, 62% had moderate resilience, and 17% exhibited low resilience with none falling into the extremes. While cooperatives demonstrated adherence to business-related cooperative values and principles, they **lagged in social and cultural dimensions** crucial for sustainable resilience. Despite high adherence to democracy, neglect of equity and social responsibility highlighted gaps impacting resilience outcomes.

Conclusions

This study underscores the importance of standardized data tools like Coop Profiler & the CRMI for enhancing efficiency, performance measurement, and resilience building in Uganda's cooperatives. Coop Profiler's ability to track cooperative performance based on values, principles, and ethical data governance is crucial in monitoring and communicating impact across the ecosystem. However, achieving effective data management requires a **cultural shift** where cooperative owners recognize the value of data integrity and engage actively in its collection and governance. Affirmative action in digital literacy, internet affordability, and access to computer hardware is essential for **inclusive participation** in the increasingly digital and data-driven agribusiness sector. Additionally, clear data governance frameworks built on **trust and ownership** are necessary.

Figure 1: The Coop profiler Dashboard

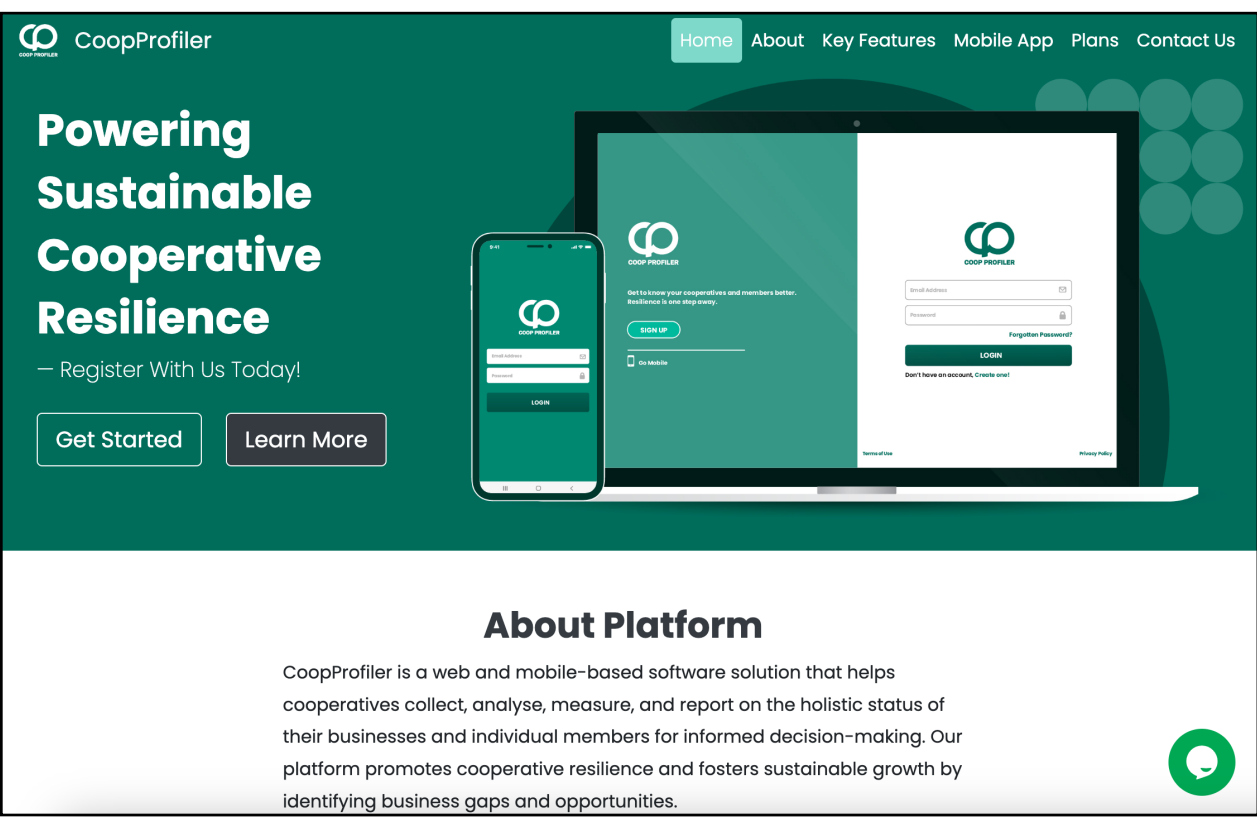


Figure 2: The Coop Profiler displaying a Measurement Index for a Cooperative

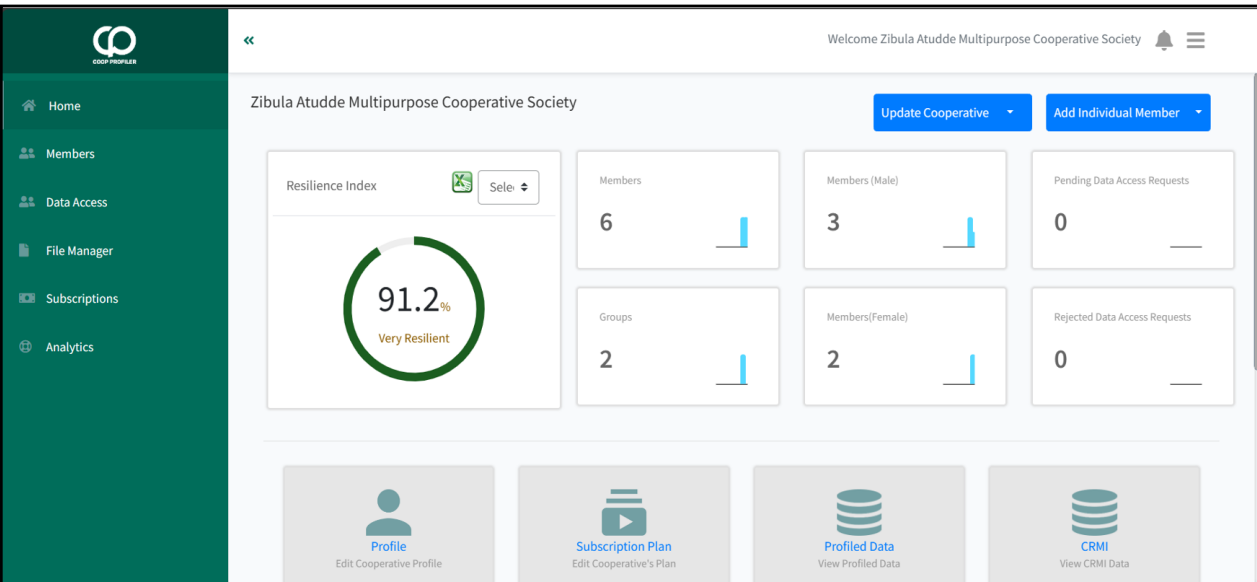


Figure 3: The Cooperative Core Values and Principles

Traditional Values	Ethical Values	Principles
0.5 (50%)	0.2 (20%)	0.3 (30%)
Self-responsibility 0.1 (10%)	Openness 0.04 (4%)	Open and Voluntary Membership 0.042 (4.2%)
Self-help 0.1 (10%)	Honesty 0.07 (6%)	Member Democratic Control 0.054 (5.4%)
Equity 0.07 (7%)	Social responsibility 0.06 (7%)	Member Economic Participation 0.042 (4.2%)
Equality 0.07 (7%)	Caring for others 0.03 (3%)	Autonomy and Independence 0.036 (3.6%)
Solidarity 0.09 (9%)		Training, Education and Information 0.054 (5.4%)
Democracy 0.07 (7%)		Cooperation among Cooperatives 0.036 (3.6%)
		Concern for Community 0.036 (3.6%)

Figure 4: The Cooperative Resilience Ranking Scores

Score	Magnitude of Resilience
≤ 20	Very Low resilience
21-40	Low Resilience
41-60	Moderately Resilient
61-80	Resilient
81-100	Very Resilient

Figure 5: The Cooperatives that Participated in the study

Business type	# of Coops by business type
Agricultural production & Marketing	42
Savings & Credit/ Financial Services	11
Multipurpose	4
Housing	1
Transport	1



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