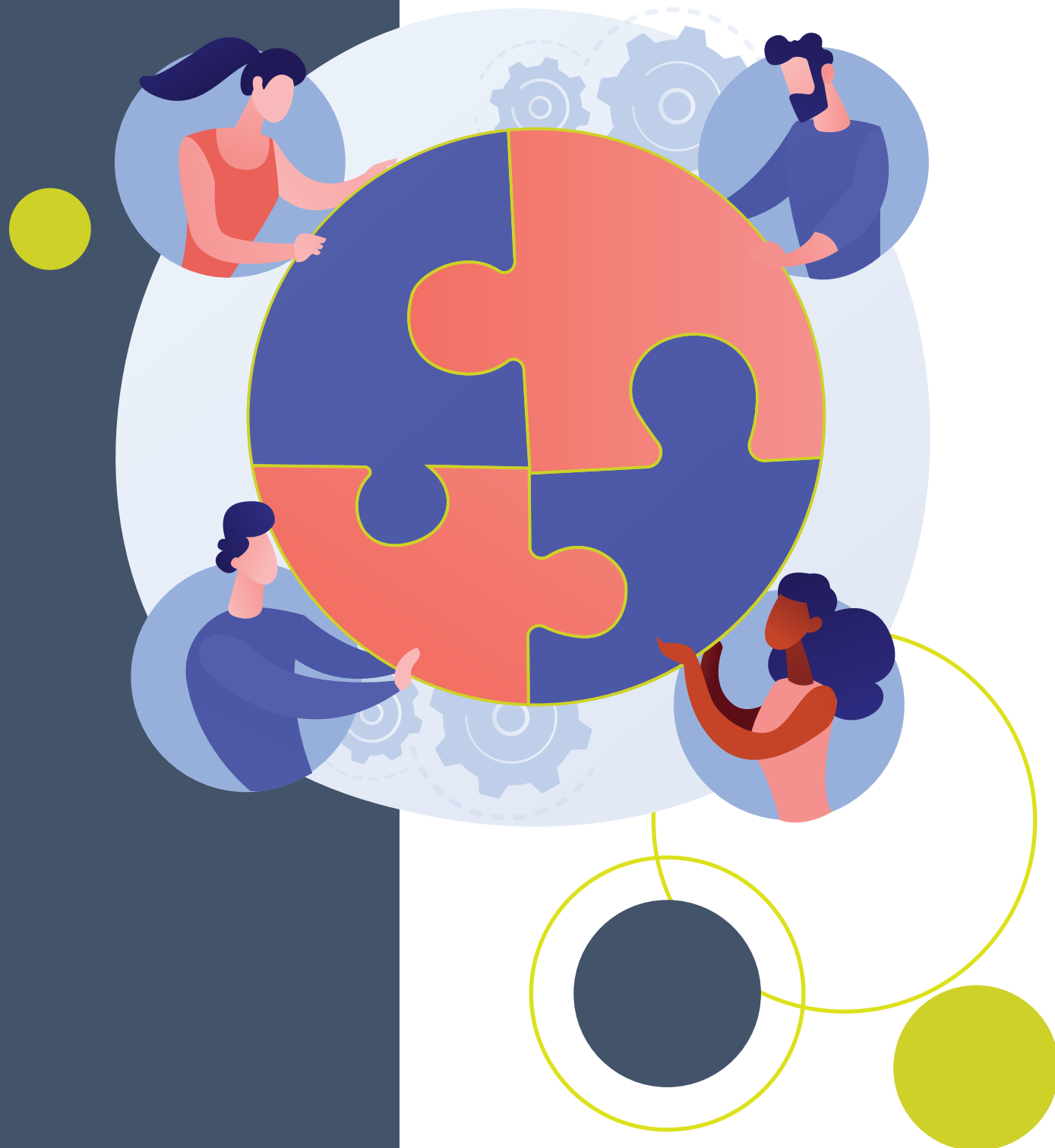


**MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT, SMEs AND  
COOPERATIVES  
(COOPERATIVES DIVISION)**



**NEWSLETTER  
October 2021**

## RE-ENGINEERING OF THE COOPERATIVES DIVISION

With a view to providing appropriate institutional set up to foster growth and modernisation of the Cooperative Sector, while focusing on the promotion and development of new fields of activities, the Cooperatives Division of the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives is being re-engineered. This exercise is based on the recommendations contained in the Report of the Office of the Public Sector Governance.

In this respect, the Cooperatives Division has prepared an Action Plan for Re-engineering of the Cooperatives Division in July 2021, which focuses on the following:

- a) re-organisation of the 12 Regional Cooperative Centres located island wide into five Cooperative Business Centres, which will operate as one stop-shops;
- b) enabling continuous research activities to consolidate cooperatives in existing sectors and encourage them to embark in emerging sectors;
- c) ensuring better compliance to the Cooperatives Act through the establishment of a well-organized Enforcement Unit;
- d) increasing the number of sensitisation campaigns targeting youth and women, and disseminating timely information; and
- e) provision of accessible online services.

Honourable Soomilduth BHOLAH, Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives held a press conference on 13 September 2021, in presence of representatives of Cooperative Federations to apprise them of the first phase of the re-engineering exercise.



## COOPERATIVE COMMON FACILITY CENTRE

A Cooperative Common Facility Centre is being set up at St Pierre. It will accommodate the following:

- The Mauritius Cooperative Alliance Ltd (MCA) – already operational.
- A branch of the National Cooperative College (NCC).
- A Model Organic Farm to be used by the NCC to carry out practical training sessions for its bio/organic courses.
- Meeting room for Cooperatives, waiting lounge and new office for the MCA
- Mini food processing plant for processing of dehydrated herbs and fruits.
- Cooperative Market.

## GARMENT MAKING AND TAILORING COURSE

As the economic downturn due to COVID-19 pandemic is persisting in Mauritius, it has to protect its basic economic infrastructure. In this context, various measures are being implemented to ensure that goods and services are produced locally and made available to the citizens at competitive prices. In this endeavour, the cooperative sector has an important role to play. Various projects are in the pipeline.

One of the projects identified is garment making/tailoring. It has been noted that, in Mauritius, there is a dearth of skills in this particular sector. The Cooperatives Division is providing a series of measures to help and empower cooperatives to set up their garment making/tailoring shops.

The launching ceremony of the Garment Making/Tailoring Programme was held on 19 August 2021 by Honourable Soomilduth Bholah, Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives. This programme was carried out with the collaboration of the Fashion & Design Institute. About 30 cooperators attended the training sessions.



## COMBATING MONEY LAUNDERING AND TERRORISM FINANCING

According to the National Risk Assessment, the Co-operative Credit Union (CCU) sector represents a MEDIUM-LOW risk of Money Laundering (ML) to Mauritius.

The identified priorities for the CCU sector to mitigate the level of ML risk include outreach and training to the CCUs and staff of the Co-operatives Division and the implementation of an effective AML/CFT risk-based supervisory framework.

Measures implemented by the Co-operatives Division for countering Money Laundering, Terrorist financing and PF:

### A. Awareness Raising and Interventions

Various workshops/webinars have been co-organised on AML/CFT framework with the assistance of authorities such as the Bank of Mauritius, the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Attorney General's Office, the Mauritius Institute of Professional Accountants and the National Institutional set-ups- the Financial Intelligence Unit and the Financial Services Commission. The working session was targeted for technical staff of the Co-operatives Division and internal controllers/President/Secretary/Board of Directors of CCUs.

Webinars and webcasts conducted on PF and understanding salient features of the United Nations Sanctions Act 2019 and Proliferation Financing Sanctions.

International On-line training and on-going webinar on Countering Proliferation Financing organised by Kharon CRDF Global and RUSI- Royal United Services Institute.

B. The website of the Co-operatives Division has been updated by inserting an additional menu for AML/CFT. The following documents have been uploaded:

The FATF Recommendation

The Mutual Evaluation Report of Mauritius

The National Risk Assessment Report of Mauritius

Statutory requirements and general guidance

Legislations (FIAMLA, FIAML Regulations, AML/CFT Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2020, Co-operatives Act 2016, among others).

C. Strengthening the regulatory framework:

Section 57 of the Co-operatives Act was repealed and replaced by Section 5 of the AML/CFT Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2020;

FIAMLA was amended with regards to CCU under Section 7 of the AML/CFT Miscellaneous Provisions Act 2020.



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COOPERATIVES 2021

The International Day of Cooperatives is an annual celebration of the cooperative movement observed on the first Saturday of July. The aim of this celebration is to increase awareness on cooperatives. The event underlines the contribution of the cooperative movement to resolving the major problems addressed by the United Nations and to strengthening as well as extending the partnerships between the cooperative movement and other actors.

The theme of the International Day of Cooperatives 2021 as proclaimed by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is "REBUILD BETTER TOGETHER". The theme was chosen to support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 on Good Health and Wellbeing. Cooperatives were provided with an opportunity to showcase how they were contributing to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting crisis through enforced cooperation and collaboration.

To mark the International Day of Cooperatives 2021, the Ministry organised a gathering of co-operators at the National Cooperative College, Terre Rouge on 3rd July 2021.



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## INAUGURATION OF L'ESCALIER CCS COMPLEX

L'Escalier Co-operative Credit Society (CCS) was registered on 29 December 1940. The society is fairtrade certified since 2011 and comprises around 240 members.

In 2016 the society acquired a plot of land at L'Escalier, on which the Complex has been built.

The inauguration of L'Escalier Co-operative Credit Society's Complex and the official launching of the Solar Photovoltaic System by the L'Escalier Co-operative Credit Society was held on Saturday 18 September 2021 in presence of Honourable Soomilduth BHOLAH, Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives



## COOPERATIVE MARKET FAIRS

Following the third de-confinement phase whereby all market fairs became operational as from 01 July 2021, the Cooperatives Division resumed the organisation of cooperative market fairs.

Cooperative market fairs are now being held at the Quatre Bornes market on the first Monday of each month. Some 150 cooperators from 100 cooperative societies are participating in the cooperative market fair at Quatre Bornes. Products that are sold at the cooperative market fairs are groceries, flowers, garments, food items, agro-processed items, fancy jewellery, fruits and vegetables, handicrafts, shoes, textile products amongst others.

## CENTURY CCS AND MAURITIUS FAIRTRADE COOPERATIVE FEDERATION LTD

The Honourable Soomilduth BHOLAH, Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives effected a site visit in sugarcane field of a fairtrade certified society, Century CCS, at Triolet on 30 October 2021.

The Minister then proceeded to Calodyne to visit a greenhouse project which is being managed by the Mauritius Fairtrade Cooperative Federation Ltd.

