

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE COOPERATIVES DIVISION FOR 2018/2019

The Cooperatives Division has initiated and implemented the following activities, projects and programmes aimed at promoting the development of cooperatives in financial year 2018/2019:

I. ACCESS TO FINANCE

- **ASSISTANCE TO COOPERATIVES UNDER THE COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT FUND'S SCHEMES (CDF)** - A sum of Rs1,007,258 has been disbursed to 68 Cooperatives and the Ministry under the five schemes operated by the CDF.
- **ANNUAL GRANTS TO COOPERATIVES-** The Mauritius Cooperative Alliance Ltd and 3 cooperative federations benefited from annual grants of Rs4,410,000

II. ACCESS TO MARKET TO COOPERATIVES

- **COOPERATIVE FAIRS-** 62 Cooperative Fairs were organised to provide free marketing outlets to cooperators for sale of their produce.
- **SUPPORT FOR THE MARKETING OF PRODUCTS OF WOMEN COOPERATIVES-**Financial assistance was provided to the Mauritius Women Entrepreneurs Co-operative Federation Ltd for operating a Cooperative Shop – the Elle Co-op Shop and a tailor shop at Port Louis and a shop in the Craft Market at Flacq to provide a permanent place for women cooperators to sell their products.

III. GREEN PROJECTS

- **FAIRTRADE CERTIFICATION IN THE SUGAR SECTOR-** Meetings have been held with cooperative credit societies which are engaged in the sugar-cane production to encourage them to be fairtrade certified. Presently, there are 27 Fairtrade certified cooperative credit societies which regroup some 5,000 small cane planters, producing an average of 18,631 metric tons of sugar in year 2018. In year 2018, cooperatives have benefitted from a total premium of USD 285,213.69.
- **PRODUCTION OF GREEN ENERGY BY COOPERATIVES-** To encourage cooperatives to produce green energy, the Ministry operated a Solar Photovoltaic Rebate Scheme whereby financial incentives were provided to cooperatives for installation of solar photovoltaic panels. Three cooperative societies have benefited from a grant of Rs235,000 under the scheme.

IV. ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO COOPERATIVES

- **REGISTRATION OF NEW COOPERATIVES-** 60 new Cooperatives have been registered.
- **AUDIT OF SOCIETIES-** 604 societies have been audited during the reporting year.
- **CAPACITY BUILDING OF COOPERATIVES-** Some 10 cooperatives benefitted from technical support and assistance for project write-up in connection with applications for loans and state land.
- **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRUTH AND JUSTICE COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION, REGARDING THE PROMOTION OF COOPERATIVE CREDIT UNION(CCU) IN POVERTY REGIONS-** Sensitization programmes for the setting up of CCUs in poverty regions were held and one CCU has been registered in poverty region.
- **REFRIGERATED VEHICLE TO MAURITIUS FISHERMEN CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION LTD-** A refrigerated vehicle has been purchased by the Ministry and handed over to the Mauritius Fishermen Co-operative Federation Ltd on 24 October 2018 for the Maison des Pêcheurs Project.
- **LAND AND INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES TO COOPERATIVE FEDERATIONS-** Land and infrastructural facilities have been provided to the Mauritius Co-operative Agricultural Federation Ltd, the Mauritius Agricultural Marketing Co-operative Federation Ltd and the Mauritius Livestock Marketing Co-operative Federation Ltd for a seedling production unit, an organic/bio farming project and for the setting up a retail outlet for the sale of agricultural products and pasteurised milk respectively.

V. BILATERAL COOPERATION AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE SOUGHT FOR PROJECTS

- **CONSULTANCY FROM AARDO FOR ORNAMENTAL FISH PROJECT FOR COOPERATIVES-**AARDO had deputed Dr Chih-Yang Huang from Taiwan to Mauritius from 15 to 29 September 2018 for an assignment on Ornamental Fish Farming. Dr Huang conducted a six-day training in Ornamental Fish Farming at the Albion Fisheries Research Centre for 29 cooperators and 8 officers.

VI. AWARD FOR COOPERATIVES

- **NATIONAL AWARD FOR COOPERATIVES-** The Ministry organised the National Awards for Cooperatives which aimed at gearing cooperatives to business excellence while adhering to cooperative principles and values.

VII. ENGENDERING THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT

- **SPECIAL SUPPORT TO WOMEN COOPERATIVES-** Special support is provided to women cooperatives in terms of financial and technical assistance, training, market access, development projects. Today, there are some 65 active Women Cooperatives and a Women Cooperative Federation namely the Mauritius Women Entrepreneurs Cooperative Federation Ltd (MWECF).
- **FORUM FOR WOMEN COOPERATORS-** Financial and technical assistance was provided to the MWECF for organising a ‘Forum for Women Cooperators’ in November 2018 which aimed at assisting in the capacity building of the MWECF Ltd and providing the women cooperators with a platform to *inter-alia* brainstorm, discuss business opportunities, network, and introspect on the roles and activities of the MWECF Ltd. Some 110 women cooperators attended the Forum.
- **WORKSHOP ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN COOPERATIVES-** A Workshop on ‘Gender Mainstreaming: Empowering Women through Cooperatives’ was organised by the MWECF Ltd with the collaboration of the Ministry on 01 April 2019 to mark the celebration of the International Women’s Day 2019.

VIII. MAINTAINING ISO STANDARDS

- **ISO CERTIFICATION OF THE COOPERATIVES DIVISION-** The Cooperatives Division has been certified MS ISO 9001:2008 since 2010 and went for recertification in 2016 for the MS ISO 9001:2015. The Cooperatives Division has been MS ISO 9001:2015 certified since November 2017. The Cooperatives Division has aligned itself to the new standard and upgraded its quality system.

IX. PUBLICATIONS

- ‘Top Hundred Cooperatives’ 2018
- Pamphlets on Cooperatives

X. SENSITISATION PROGRAMMES

- 66 sensitization programmes have been carried out at various community centres of the Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund throughout the island targeting some 2000 people.