



Vaikunth Mehta National Institute of Cooperative Management, Pune 411007
(An Institution of the Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India)

Youth4Cooperatives

Engaging Youth in Cooperative Entrepreneurship

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A cooperative model used as an instrument of change at different points of time and contributed to the success of India's development planning. It has inherent advantages in achieving the poverty alleviation, food & nutritional security, social integration, and employment generation. The cooperative sector is one of the key sectors of the economy having broader reach to rural India through their enormous network of credit and non-credit societies covering approximately ninety percent of villages.

The ICA report on Young People and Cooperatives- A Perfect Match? (2021) highlights that young people bring a much-needed boost of energy and dynamism into cooperative enterprises and conventional businesses, including:

- *New skills*
- *Enhanced creativity, innovation and problem solving*
- *A rise in entrepreneurial thinking*
- *New working patterns*
- *A different attitude to risk*

The changing development challenges and agricultural scenario of the country requires a collaborative and collective action to enhance and expand the sustainable livelihood opportunities. To cater to the needs there is a demand for technically qualified professionals to manage different forms of collectives such as (producers) cooperatives, federations of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), Farmers' Producers' Organizations' (FPOs) (cooperatives and Farmer Producers Company), etc.

The next gen Cooperatives requires Innovation, resilience and opportunity. To create youth employment and engagement in Cooperatives, there is a need to exemplify business models, which imbibe the spirit of participation to solve the local problems. For deeper engagement of youth with Cooperatives there is also need to have enabling policies for youth to become members of Primary Agricultural Cooperative societies and play a catalytic role.

The Cooperative principle 'five' is about Education, Training and Information, which states that cooperatives 'inform the general public - particularly young people and opinion leaders - about the nature and benefits of co-operation".. Many of the students of the institute's flagship courses i.e., Post Graduate - Diploma in Cooperative Business Management (PG-DCBM) and PGDM - ABM are attracted by the idea of entrepreneurship and are looking at the idea of making a foray in the realms of entrepreneurship at an appropriate time in the near future.



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Realizing the importance of trained human resources and engagement of Youth in Cooperative sector, VAMNICOM has established a Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) to bring Youth in Cooperatives for social entrepreneurship, AgriTech and FinTech.

The Centre for Entrepreneurship Development (CED) through partnerships and collaboration is promoting entrepreneurship development through nurturing the ideas of budding entrepreneurs and small enterprises through training and mentoring. The thrust areas are enterprise development, post harvest management – grading, market intelligence packaging, improved storage, transportation, warehousing, retailing, waste management through in food and agricultural (products such as bio-fuels, manures, vermin-compost and value-added food products), ICT related innovations required for Agri/ food business (apps as a platform of technical information required to farmers for production/marketing/selling of their produce).


