

## Hard Work Ahead

### *You want to form a co-operative*

This means a lot of hard work ahead. But it also means that your problems may be solved in the near future. The important work you are prepared to carry out NOW in planning a co-operative society, may be of the greatest benefit to your people for years to come.

*Normally, the forming of a co-operative involves the following steps:*

1. Identify the NEED you want to satisfy.  
Discuss the problems with your friends and contact a CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER for advice and assistance.
2. Hold a meeting in order to discuss the ideas with all the people in the area.
3. Make a survey in order to find out if it is possible to form a co-operative.
4. REPORT in a meeting with all the people what the result of the survey is.
5. If you are still positive, apply for REGISTRATION of the Co-operative Society.

The success of the co-operative will depend on the members' awareness of what it is all about and it is now in the very beginning that those foundations are laid.

### AN ADVISER

When you talk your problems over informally you may realize that there are many others who have the same problems. Involve them in your discussions, ask about their opinions.

You think that a co-operative may be the solution to the problems. But you need to know more about co-operatives --- what are the requirements, rules and regulations, what are the advantages?

Who can give such information, who can assist in the possible process of forming a co-operative society? Such a person is THE DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER and you should now approach him.

If you prefer you may also contact other sources of help, such as:

- The District Agricultural Officer
  - The District Community Development Officer
  - The district Youth Officer
  - The Regional Minister or Parliamentary Representative
- or
- The Chief Co-operative officer in the Ministry responsible for Co-operatives.

### A MEETING

The Co-operative Officer has the answers to your questions, and if plans seem realistic he will help you to get some more facts and figures together in order to present the idea of the co-operative to other potential members.

So next, you in the 'starting group' call a general meeting with all interested people in the area. With the help of the Co-operative Officer you prepare a programme that may comprise the following points:

- One member of the starting group talks about the problems you have in your area. Another member of the group reports about your discussions and determination to do something about it, and he explains how the proposed co-operative may solve the problem.
- The Co-operative Officer explains what a co-operative society is and how it works.
- The people present are encouraged to ask questions, express their views and discuss their proposals.
- The Chairman of the meeting finds out if the people present are interested enough in a co-operative.
- If so, a 'steering committee' is appointed and given the task to make a survey of all aspects of the proposed co-operative. The committee is asked to report its findings to a general meeting on a fixed day in the near future.

## A SURVEY

A co-operative is a business and for any business to succeed certain favourable conditions must exist. The Co-operative Officer will now assist the Steering Committee in finding out if these conditions exist and if the proposed co-operative will have reasonable possibilities of success. Some of these important matters to be investigated concern:

- The need for the Society  
Is there an economic need for this business? How will the co-operative provide the services needed? What will be the cost of the services?
  
- Membership and Volume of Business  
Will the membership and the volume of business be big enough to carry operating expenses and allow some savings to make the co-operative strong and progressive?
  
- Land, Building, Equipment  
What will be needed? How will it be acquired and at what cost?
  
- Capital  
How much money will be needed to get the business started and keep it operating? Where will it come from? What will be the minimum amount of shares per member? Where can loans be obtained and at what cost?
  
- Management  
If the co-operative is to succeed it needs a trained manager. Is he/she available?

## A REPORT

*The steering Committee sums up its findings and sets down its recommendations in an order and well arranged report.*

The report is prepared at the next meeting with all potential members.

After the report is presented it should be discussed thoroughly point by point. The committee-members with the Co-operative Officer and other technical officers should enter into this discussion, helping the people to understand fully the possibilities for success.

After the discussion of the report the Chairman determines if there are enough persons who want to go ahead with the co-operative. If there are, a preliminary application to form a co-operative society should be completed and forwarded to the Chief Co-operative Officer.

*The pattern for future action is as follows:*

With the help of the Co-operative Officer a training programme for members of the co-operative is now started. Members must learn about principles and practices of co-operation, about their rights and duties. The members who later will serve in the Board of Directors will have to learn about their special duties.

The required capital has to be raised.

The rules of the Society have to be drafted.

## REGISTRATION

By now members will begin to get a clear picture of the business into which they are entering what each one must do to make it succeed. So we can convene the final promotional meeting and do the following.

- Approve the proposed Rules of the Society
- Pass a resolution to have the Society apply for registration.

If all the papers are in order, if the rules are in agreement with the laws and regulations, and if the Chief Co-operatives Officer is satisfied that your society has a chance of success he will register it.

And then your co-operative society is legally entitled to commence its operations. The first General Meeting of the society will take place, a Board of Directors is appointed and you are in Business!