



SECOND DRAFT

is part of a series of resource and reference booklets
CEMAS to support co-operative education programmes in
countries.

ORGANISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF FIELD EDUCATION

A Manual for Co-operative Field Educators

by Sam Mshiu

Although the manual is primarily intended for co-operative field
education workers, it can - and indeed should - be used by
other field workers even if they are not directly involved in co-
operative education and training. Co-operative leaders, chief
executives, policy makers and heads of training institutions
also be encouraged to participate in the development, planning and
function of the field education programme. The participation of
co-operative leaders such as committee members, managers of secondary
societies, senior co-operative officers, commissioners for co-operative
development, heads of co-operative training and other
senior officers who decide on the influence of co-
operative education and training.

A well organised and well managed field education programme
which would be effective co-operative education can be
developed. Adequate financial, manpower and other resources are
necessary, but without proper planning, organisation and management
of educational programmes will not yield the benefits expected.

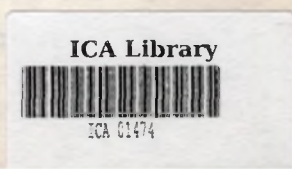
This manual offers advice and suggestions on how to establish and
run a field education department within a co-operative organisation.
It discusses the planning and infrastructure necessary for the imple-
mentation of field education programmes. It also discusses
the type and number of field education workers who are likely to be involved in the
organisation and management of field education, their duties and
responsibilities. Various educational methods and techniques em-
ployed in field co-operative education - including co-operative
information and publicity - are briefly dealt with. Other booklets
in this series develop these aspects of the work in greater detail.

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P R E F A C E

This manual is part of a series of resource and reference booklets published by CEMAS to support co-operative education programmes in developing countries.

Although the manual is primarily intended for co-operative field education workers, it can - and indeed it should - be studied by other field workers even if they are not directly involved in co-operative education and training. Co-operative leaders, chief executives, policy makers and heads of training institutions should also be encouraged to read the manual. The tasks involved in organising and managing co-operative education are not the exclusive function of the field educator; they require the participation of co-operative leaders such as committee members, managers of secondary societies, senior co-operative officers, commissioners for co-operative development, heads of co-operative training institutions and other senior officers who decide on or influence policy relating to co-operative education and training.

A well organised and managed education unit is the foundation upon which sound and effective co-operative education programmes can be developed. Adequate financial, manpower and other resources are necessary, but without proper planning, organisation and management of educational programmes, will not yield the benefits expected.

This manual offers advice and suggestions on how to establish and run a field education department within a co-operative organisation. It discusses the planning and infrastructure necessary to the implementation of educational programmes in the field. It also deals with the type and calibre of people who are likely to be involved in the organisation and implementation of field education, their duties and responsibilities. Various educational methods and techniques employed in field co-operative education - including co-operative information and publicity - are briefly dealt with. Other booklets in this series develop these aspects of the work in greater detail.

Conditions and trends in co-operative development vary from one country to another. It would be naive - if not folly - to even

dare suggest that any training material would find a ready and receptive readership in any part of the world. We believe, however, that the suggestions provided in this manual will prove relevant and applicable to co-operative organisations in many different countries and, in particular, to those wishing to institute a co-operative education system where one does not exist, or those already having an education system lacking in sound organisation and management.

One other point should be made. The manual is directed to the needs of co-operative organisations, as distinct from government departments which accept the direct responsibility for providing education and training programmes. In that sense it is hoped it will help to encourage the trend for co-operatives, as they should, to take over this essential work and organise it for themselves, rather than relying on government provision.

CEMAS does not claim exclusive knowledge and competence on the subject treated in this manual or in any of the publications produced for the field education development programme. Knowledge and experience are never the domain of an individual or a group of individuals, but are tools that should be shared, improved and applied for the good of all. Guided by this conviction, we are constantly revising our educational materials, and are always open to ideas and suggestions that may help enrich and improve these publications. Any suggestions that you may offer to improve this manual will, therefore, be invaluable to us.

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Co-operative activities, like any other human endeavours, thrive on efficient performance and good human interaction. This is best achieved through an inbuilt, well-organised and continuous system of education and training. Education enlightens people, changes their attitudes and brings about awareness for a richer and more meaningful existence. It stimulates the ability to judge, assess, analyse and provoke ideas and positive thought. Training provides skills that enable people to perform with the desired efficiency. Education and training thus give us the ability to cope with life and to counter the hostile forces of nature.

The founders of the co-operative movement saw it as imperative to include education and training in the original co-operative principles. Then, as now, they are essential conditions for successful co-operative performance. There are simply no short cuts to co-operative development, without education and training, however hard-working and dedicated people might be.

The responsibility for education and training in co-operatives does not only rest with the established co-operative training institutions - such as co-operative colleges or co-operative training centres - most of which are run or largely supported by governments. As we shall see later in the manual, the demand for education and training in most countries is such that these institutions could not possibly cope with the demand.

Co-operative organisations such as co-operative federations, co-operative unions and co-operative societies - whether large or small - have the direct responsibility of catering for the education and training needs of their members and employees (albeit on a modest scale) as an integral part of their services, on the same basis as other business activities that are undertaken by them. This is derived from two discernible arguments:

Firstly, co-operatives are economic as well as social institutions; the two aspects must be manifested in all activities of the co-operative. Education and training come within the social aspect, and are a responsibility that must be clearly and effectively projected in the performance of a co-operative. It is not just enough

for a co-operative to provide economic services to their members. There is an equal need for the provision of social services, of which education and training are a prominent part.

Secondly, the effective performance and success of any co-operative require that the members are properly enlightened, and that the elected leaders and employed personnel are educated and trained in order to enable them to discharge their duties with maximum efficiency.

It is thus clear that education and training (which are social functions) support the business activities (the economic functions). In other words, the social aspect (education and training) is a pre-requisite for the economic success of a co-operative. It is for this reason that pre-member education is often stressed as a pre-condition to the formation of a co-operative.

There is another dimension to the need for co-operatives to mount their own education and training programmes in addition to those conducted by national co-operative training institutions. Efficient and useful as the latter might be, it is not always possible to design programmes which could respond directly and effectively to the needs of each individual co-operative within a country. It must be remembered that every co-operative has needs and problems peculiar to itself. National co-operative training institutions can, at best, provide training which is geared towards attaining general standards of performance, but which may or may not respond effectively to the exclusive needs and problems of a particular co-operative. A co-operative is much closer to its members and employees, and thus has an intimate knowledge of their needs and problems. This knowledge enables it to plan and design education and training programmes responding more directly to existing needs.

This is however the ideal situation. In actual practice, involvement of co-operative organisations in education and training is often nominal, disappointing and leaves much to be desired. In many instances, education and training are not accorded the seriousness they deserve and quite often they are regarded with laxity and administered at random if and when it is convenient. In terms of priorities, too often they are at the bottom of the list - if they are there at all.

This observation may appear rather harsh and unfair, particularly from the point of view of those countries where an elaborate and firm system of education and training operated by co-operative organisations has been established as a permanent feature of their work. It must be stressed in no uncertain terms and with a great sense of admiration that there are many co-operative organisations in different parts of the world, which have launched such an effective system of education and training. On the other hand, it is also true that co-operatives in many developing countries have not fully recognised education and training as an important aspect of their functions, and they do not attach much interest or concern to its value.

It is not uncommon in co-operatives, as indeed in many other business organisations, to find that in times of economic hardship necessitating cutbacks in expenditure, education and training programmes are the first to fall victims to such cuts, despite the fact that lack of education may have been the cause of these difficulties. This indicates, sadly, that education does not always enjoy the recognition it deserves.

Perhaps one explanation for this kind of attitude is that the physical, observable results of education and training cannot always be immediately perceived. Education and training aim at changing people's attitudes and behaviour, leading to improved skills and better performance, human interactions, improved production and services. The ultimate results however cannot be immediately seen or measured. Indeed it may take years before a change in behaviour patterns and improvement in performance can be noted.

Another explanation is that, too often, because of poor planning, education and training programmes do not produce the results expected. Much effort and resources are wasted on programmes not properly geared to actual training needs and, consequently, people become disenchanted and cynical.

There is, however, no denying that the success and achievement of a co-operative depend, by and large, on how enlightened and skilled the people are who run them. Co-operatives have the inescapable responsibility of educating their members, leaders and employees. This responsibility transcends the mere imparting of knowledge and skills on matters pertaining to co-operatives. It encompasses the various

educational needs of the individual - economic, social and cultural - so that he is drawn into the mainstream of a meaningful community life as an active participant rather than a passive bystander who is vulnerable to manipulation, exploitation and humiliation.

In short, provision of education and training by co-operative organisations is a matter not of whim or charity but a serious continuing function that must be fully recognised and must enjoy adequate input of resources and support from management. It is a pillar upon which the effective performance of a co-operative rests. To deny education to members is to deny them one of their basic rights.

The existence of co-operative training institutions and colleges does not eliminate the need for local education and training programmes. There are several reasons for this:

- As already mentioned, it is the duty of every co-operative to provide education for its members and employees. This is clearly stressed in the co-operative principles.
- Education and training needs amongst co-operatives are usually so vast that it would be virtually impossible for a national co-operative training institution to cope with them. At best these institutions can cater for the training needs of employees and, occasionally, co-operative leaders (e.g. committee members), but hardly for those of the ordinary members.
- Educational programmes designed and conducted by a co-operative for its members and employees are bound to respond more directly to the immediate and specific needs of that organisation than a general programme initiated by a central co-operative training institution.

We have so far discussed the need for co-operatives to have education and training programmes as a permanent feature of their operational functions.

In the following chapters we shall discuss how education and training programmes should be organised in a co-operative and the various factors that are essential for a sound educational system.

* * *

Although, as already stated, education and training programmes should be carried out by all types of co-operatives and at all levels. (i.e. primary co-operative societies, secondary co-operatives and national co-operative federations), the co-operative union at district or provincial level is our focal point in the context of this manual. The ideas discussed here may, of course, be quite relevant to primary co-operative societies and national co-operative federations. As for primary co-operative societies, however, because of the demand on resources and the magnitude of the work involved, it might be difficult to adhere to all the suggestions put forward in the manual.

Organisation

Success in all forms of human activity presupposes good organisation. From the simplest to the most complex things we do, some form of order or system must be adopted and followed in order to achieve the desired results. There are two aspects of organisation that are necessary for any activity:

- (a) The personal orderliness of the individual or group of individuals who are charged with the duty of carrying out the activity. This relates to the way a person conducts himself; his capacity for organising the environment in which he is carrying out the activity, his personal neatness, the order and meticulous manner in which he systematically plans, arranges and executes his work. When a person applies these qualities in all matters relating to his work we say he is well organised.
- (b) The other aspect relates to the organisation of the work itself. This relates among other things to a precise definition of policy on the activity to be carried out: a clear definition of objectives (i.e. what is to be achieved ultimately); a careful and detailed breakdown of the various components of the activity and how each should be carried out; identification and provision of the necessary resources and all the inputs that have to go into the activity; a systematic implementation of the activity and an inbuilt system of measuring the progress and achievement of the set objectives.

In the absence of proper organisation which takes into account all the above factors, our work would be in shambles and rarely would our goals be realised.

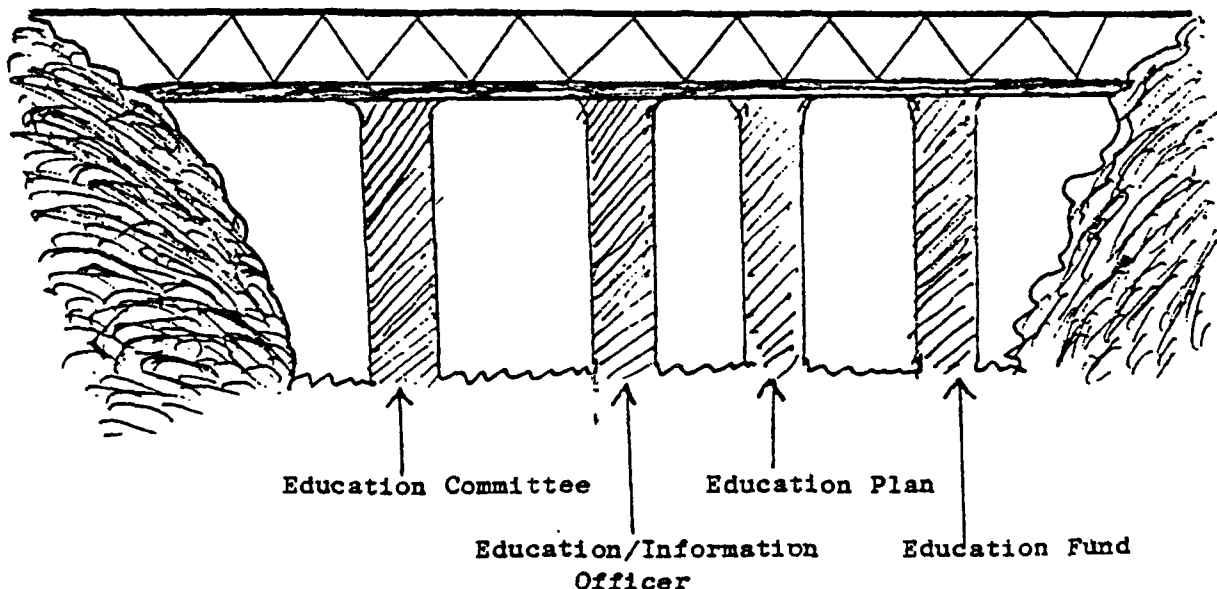
Co-operative education and training, like any other human activity, must follow a proper system of organisation. Those responsible for the programme should themselves be well organised. The programme itself should be developed in a well organised and co-ordinated system. The availability of resources and all the necessary inputs will not, in itself, guarantee an efficient education programme. Equally necessary is a sound organisation and management of the resources and programme.

Infrastructure

Let us now look at the basic infrastructure that is necessary for a well organised and managed education system. Briefly, the ideal infrastructure would have the following features:

- (a) An Education Committee responsible for formulating, planning, supervising and monitoring the education programme of the co-operative.
- (b) An Education/Information Officer employed by the co-operative who under the direction and support of the education committee (or sub-committee) plans, designs and executes education and information programmes.
- (c) An Education Plan setting out objectives and the strategy to be followed in achieving those objectives, the resources required for the programme and the time needed to implement it.
- (d) An Education Fund providing the financial resources to be utilised in carrying out the education/information programme.

Supported by these four components, we now have a solid framework upon which educational programmes can be built. In the next chapter, we shall go into greater details of each of the four pillars.



CHAPTER III THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

All co-operatives should have a special committee responsible for education and training. Usually this will be a sub-committee of the management committee. An active and competent education committee in a co-operative will ensure that:

- The management of the co-operative is involved in the planning and implementation of education programmes.
- Members' interests on matters relating to their educational needs are adequately represented in the co-operative (through their elected leaders).
- Decision-making on matters relating to education and training is not left only to members of the staff, but is also shared by the committee.
- Education and training is taken more seriously, both by management and the policy makers of the co-operative.
- Whenever funds are available, adequate resources are allocated for education, training and information.
- Education plans and programmes reflect existing educational needs formulated by the committee.
- Competent education officers are appointed.
- Education plans are implemented.
- Education programmes are constantly checked (monitored).
- Funds allocated for educational purposes are properly expended.

Qualifications of Education Committee Members

The fact that members of this committee are responsible for education and training does not mean that they themselves have to be highly educated. It is not always possible to have highly educated people serving on a management committee from which members of sub-committees can be nominated.

However, it is important to nominate those who have a better education. School teachers serving on the management committee would be ideally suited for this role.

Briefly, the qualifications required for members of the education committee are the following:

- must be a member of the co-operative or affiliated society;
- must be able to read and write or, better still,
- have a good general educational background;
- should have general co-operative knowledge;
- should have good knowledge of his own co-operative organisation;
- should understand and be sensitive to the problems and needs of members and staff;
- should possess the ability to lead and influence people.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Education Committee

The Education Committee is responsible for all matters concerning education and training, information, publicity and the public relations work of the co-operative. It is the policy-making body of the co-operative on all these matters and should be involved in all stages and aspects of the education and information process. These include identification of needs, planning, implementation of programmes, monitoring and evaluation. Like all other committees, the Education Committee must work in close collaboration and in consultation with the chief executive and the officers responsible for education, training and information.

In addition, the Education Committee is responsible for -

1. Appointing an Education/Information Officer : With the help and advice of the chief executive (General Manager), the committee should appoint an Education/Information Officer who will carry out the day-to-day educational and information work. When appointing such an Officer the committee must ensure that a person of merit and high competence is recruited, as this is a highly responsible job, which demands wide knowledge and experience. The qualifications, duties and responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer are discussed in greater detail later in this manual. When recruiting an officer, the committee must ensure that he matches up to these qualifications as far as possible.

2. Assessing Educational Needs : As we explain later, one of the duties of the Education/Information Officer is to identify education and training needs before any solutions can be contemplated. This is important! It is based on the premise that education and training programmes should not be conducted for their own sake, but rather as a direct response to felt and identified needs. To provide education and training without being clear about the problems you are trying to solve is the same as taking medicine without knowing what disease you are treating. The Education/Information Officer, through a systematic situation study and analysis, identifies education and training needs existing in the co-operative and its affiliates. These needs, once identified, are then examined and discussed by the Education Committee and the management. The committee may decide to add to, or modify the list of needs presented by the Education/Information Officer. In addition, the committee may demand, whenever a deficiency in knowledge or skills needed for efficient performance is identified, that training be provided or information be given. In exercising this responsibility however, the committee should respect the fact that the Education/Information Officer is a technician in his field and may be more competent in identifying and analysing needs. They should therefore not unduly overrule proposals or suggestions made by the Education/Information Officer simply because they are empowered to decide on matters pertaining to education.

On the other hand the Education/Information Officer should not feel that he is superior to the committee by virtue of his better education and the fact that he is a specialist in his field. The relationship between the Education Committee and the Education/Information Officer should be one of mutual respect. Above all, they should both have a genuine commitment towards providing the best services possible.

3. Examining Solutions and Strategies : Once education and training needs have been identified, discussed and agreed upon, possible solutions are then designed and strategies for implementing them are charted out. These suggested solutions and strategies form an essential feature of the Education Plan (see 4).

It is the duty of the Education Committee to carefully examine and discuss the suggested solutions before it gives approval for their implementation. In discussing the proposed solutions the Committee should be guided by the following questions:

- Are the solutions relevant to identified needs?
- Are the solutions the most effective ones? Can they be modified to be more effective?
- Do the solutions take into account special problems relating to the target group - problems such as illiteracy?
- Are the solutions workable:
 - Are they too costly?
 - Do they demand too many resources?
 - Do they demand too much time (both on the part of the target group and the Education Officer)?
 - Have the solutions been tried out before? If so, did they work?

4. Examining and Discussing the Education Plan : Having examined and discussed the solutions and strategies, the next step will be to incorporate them in the Education Plan. In a later chapter we shall discuss the Education Plan in more detail, but for the moment we shall only discuss it insofar as it concerns the Education Committee. It is the duty of the Education Committee to examine, discuss and approve the Education Plan before it is implemented.

In discussing the Education Plan, the committee should be guided by the following checklist:

- Is the plan linked to the identified needs, proposed solutions and the budget?
- Does the plan respond to identified educational needs? (does it reflect actual problems existing in the co-operative?)
- Is the plan realistic and pragmatic? Is it workable or is it the work of an armchair planner completely divorced from actual realities in the field?
- Is the plan in consonance with clearly defined objectives - i.e. what one seeks to achieve as a result of the education programme?

- Is the plan comprehensive enough? Does it cover all the necessary details that must be followed when implementing the programme?

5. Examining and Discussing the Education Budget : The Education/Information Officer draws up an Education Budget as part of the overall budget of the organisation. It is the duty of the Education Committee to examine and discuss the Education Budget and approve it before it is submitted to the Managing Committee or General Meeting for discussion and approval. As stated earlier, there is a tendency to give low priority to the allocation of money for education and training purposes. Quite often, education budgets submitted to general meetings for final approval are challenged and often drastically reduced. The Education Committee must be firm in persuading and convincing their fellow members of the need for education and training and the need to allocate adequate funds for the purpose.

In addition to approving and defending the Education Budget, the Education Committee must also ensure that money allocated for educational programmes is used for the purpose it was intended. The committee must exercise firm control over the budget, and review it from time to time. Whenever they suspect that there have been some deviations or discrepancies in expenditure, they should demand an immediate explanation and insist that these are put right.

6. Assisting with the Implementation of Educational Programmes : Although the actual task of physically carrying out the education work (implementing the education plan) rests with the Education/Information Officer, the Education Committee also have a role to play when implementing programmes. Despite the fact that the officer may be more qualified and competent in running the day-to-day educational work, occasions could arise when the participation of members of the committee could be desirable in carrying out educational work or assisting the Education/Information Officer in some special efforts. The participation of committee members in the actual work of a co-operative is quite common in many countries. For example, committee members may be called upon to assist with stocktaking, packing or weighing of produce when the co-operative cannot afford or is unable to enlist the services of casual labour. It would therefore be

proper that if and when the need arises for members of the Education Committee to assist with such work, they should be ready to do so without feeling that this is outside their responsibilities. This would be one way in which they can actually participate in implementing the decisions they have made with regard to educational plans and programmes. On the other hand, they should never interfere unduly with the Education Officer's day-to-day work. They should only be involved in it when they are requested to do so.

Some of the situations in which members of the Education Committee should assist are the following:

- Carrying out special campaigns for education programmes.
- Leading discussion groups and study circles.
- Informing members and others about planned education activities.
- Liaising between the Education Officer and members.
- Receiving and guiding groups making study visits to the organisation.
- Informing members and the public about the role and work of the co-operative.
- Whenever convenient, attending important educational functions (e.g. opening or closing of courses, seminars, conferences) conducted within their localities.

7. Monitoring and Evaluating : The work process involved in the organisation and management of field education does not end with the implementation of the Education Plan. It is also necessary to monitor constantly ongoing educational programmes to see whether the plans and budgets are being adhered to, whether the proposed solutions are being implemented and whether they are working or are likely to work. Of equal, if not greater importance, is the evaluation of programmes that have been carried out over a period of time (say six months or one year). The main purpose of an evaluation is to check and find out whether the objectives set have been achieved and if not, the causes that have brought about this failure. On the basis of such an enquiry, appropriate measures or remedial action can be taken when implementing future programmes.

In a later chapter we shall discuss monitoring and evaluation in greater detail. For the moment we shall limit ourselves to the role of the Education Committee in monitoring and evaluating. The Committee has an important role in these two activities. While its members may not be sufficiently qualified to carry out a meaningful monitoring and evaluation exercise on their own, they can at least insist that such work is carried out, and whenever possible, team up with and assist those carrying out monitoring and evaluation work.

The committee should insist on getting clearly written reports on any monitoring or evaluation work that has been carried out. They should study the reports carefully and discuss any observations, conclusions or recommendations made. The committee should then take a decision as to what appropriate action should be taken on the problems that have been identified or recommendations that have been made in the report.

8. Deciding on Scholarships and Study Grants : Occasionally a co-operative may be offered scholarships or study grants to enable its staff or committee members to undergo training or undertake study tours within or outside the country. On its own initiative, the co-operative may also wish to sponsor people for courses at the local or national co-operative training institution. In both cases it is the duty of the Education Committee to decide on the person to be selected. This should, of course, be done after consultation with the management and the Education Officer.

The committee must always ensure that the right calibre of people - be they committee members or members of the staff - are selected. Members of the committee should refrain from the temptation to select themselves, their friends or relatives for training or for study tours. Their judgment should always be guided by merit rather than personal favour, and only those genuinely deserving should be selected. With absolute fairness and impartiality, the committee should consider whether:

- (a) the candidate really needs the kind of training he is being selected for (i.e. whether he has undergone similar training before, whether the training is relevant to his usual work and whether the training does come up to his abilities and qualifications);

- (b) the candidate will cope with the level or standards of the training being offered (i.e. whether the training is too advanced for the candidate to follow it and benefit from it);
- (c) the training will contribute significantly to increased efficiency in the performance of the candidate;
- (d) the investment in time and money justifies the training, or whether there is a cheaper way of providing the same kind of training (for example, it would be cheaper and more effective to send committee members on a study tour of a neighbouring village where success in certain aspects of management has been noted, rather than sending them on a study tour of highly sophisticated co-operatives abroad).

If the answer to any of the four questions is in the negative, the committee should not approve the selection of the candidate even where scholarships or study grants are offered free of charge by external bodies.

9. Reporting : Whenever meetings of the Managing Committee are held, the Education Committee should report on all education plans and programmes conducted since the last meeting of the Managing Committee and on future plans. The committee should also prepare a report for inclusion in the annual report of the co-operative to be presented to the annual general meeting. This task should be carried out in close collaboration with the Education/Information Officer.
10. Self-Development : As education leaders and policy makers within their own co-operative, members of the committee should set a good example as people seriously committed to self-development. They must constantly strive to develop their own knowledge and skills by attending relevant courses conducted at co-operative training institutions, by studying through correspondence courses (if such courses are offered), by participating in study tours and by taking an active part in study groups. This will not only help them to improve their performance as co-operative leaders, but will also place them in a better position to make rational and sound decisions on matters relating to education and training programmes for members and employed staff.

Members of the Education Committee should, in addition, urge and persuade other members of other committees (those not serving on the Education Committee) also to attend courses and participate actively in other study activities designed to improve their own knowledge and performance.

On the other hand, they should not spend too much time just attending courses while their work at the co-operative might suffer or selfishly allocate the bulk of the available resources for their own training and neglect members and staff training needs. There must be a fair distribution of resources according to training needs and priorities.

Furthermore, members of the Education Committee should bear in mind that attending courses - and more especially study tours - should never be regarded as a holiday. On the contrary they should be considered as important activities that must be taken very seriously. Those involved must apply themselves wholeheartedly to studying. Time and money are invested in such programmes; positive results in the form of improved performance by those lucky enough to be offered training opportunities will be demonstrated. Too often people are sponsored for courses or study tours without the knowledge they have acquired ever being put to any use. Ideas, knowledge and skills gained from any educational activity should be applied immediately and properly used. It is only then that training can become meaningful and the money and time invested for the purpose be justified.

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The setting up of an Education Committee which we discussed in the preceding chapter is only one feature in the process of building a solid foundation upon which a sound co-operative education system can be developed. There are other elements that are necessary before that foundation is completed. One of these is the appointment of an Education/Information Officer.

You may ask here: "Why should we appoint an 'Education/Information Officer' and not simply an 'Education Officer'?" Firstly, we think that an Education Officer should also be responsible for information, publicity and public relations as these fields are closely linked and vital for co-operative development. Secondly, despite education and information, publicity and public relations being, in the conventional sense, different professions - each with its own characteristic features - they all involve the task of dealing with people and, even more important, enlightening and changing people's attitudes and behaviour. Thirdly, because of limited resources, most co-operative organisations are financially incapable of maintaining separate education and information departments, each with its own specialised officer.

We believe that, given proper training and support, one officer could play both roles quite effectively. This series of resource and reference materials developed by CEMAS is our contribution towards such training and support.

The Role of the Education/Information Officer

The Education/Information Officer plays a central role in the organisation and management of co-operative education. He is the professional, the technician who assesses, designs, plans, implements and monitors programmes. His position and status in the hierarchy of the co-operative is that of a senior officer, directly answerable to the Chief Executive (General Manager) of the co-operative and to the Education Committee. His position and responsibilities place him on the same level as any other head of department of the co-operative. He not only works closely with the Education Committee, but he also serves as its secretary. His is an exalted position indeed, and his qualifications must match this position. The Education Committee and, for that matter, the management should clearly bear this in mind.

Qualifications of the Education/Information Officer

The position and responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer demand that he has qualities and qualifications commensurate with the tasks required of him. This must be stressed sufficiently to the Education Committee and management who are responsible for his/her appointment. They should never be content with a second-rate officer because he might demand only a low salary. A second-rate officer could produce third-rate work. If a co-operative is serious about its education programmes, then it must be prepared to spend the amount of money which will make it possible to recruit an officer of a calibre that will ensure satisfactory performance. Some of the qualifications required of the Education/Information Officer are:

- A good general educational background.
- Proper training in co-operative theory and practice.
- Experience in working with co-operatives.
- Training in educational theory, methods and techniques.
- Training in communication theory and practice.
- Experience in communication, leadership and group dynamics.
- An ability to influence and get along well with people.
- A sense of public relations.
- Fluency in the common language used as a medium of communication in the co-operative's area of operation.
- Be a good co-operator.
- Be hardworking, energetic, responsible, with a sense of initiative and drive.
- Be conscientious, imaginative and innovative.
- Be well read and informed.
- Be a good listener who is sympathetic, understanding and always ready to help.

In addition to these qualifications, the Education/Information Officer should, in his conduct and behaviour, set a good example to others.

Granted, people with all these qualifications are hard to find, but the management should make every endeavour to look round for a

person whose qualifications at least approach those listed above. Too often, those responsible for such appointments engage people with academic and theoretical knowledge without giving due consideration to practical experience. There is a gulf between theory and practice; the nature of the work demands that both theoretical knowledge and practical experience should be essential attributes of the Education/Information Officer.

Duties and Responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer

Just to emphasise, the responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer are vast and so vital that much of the success of the co-operative which employs him will be determined by his performance. But what is this officer supposed to do in order to achieve complete or at least partial success? To answer this, we must describe the duties and responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer.

1. A Management Tool : The Education/Information Officer is potentially a management tool. This means that in addition to planning and conducting education/training programmes, he also has the responsibility of monitoring performance, opinions, needs and problems encountered by staff, members and the public at large. He must constantly provide feedback to the management so that it can evaluate and regulate its activities with a view to providing better services and maintaining a positive image in the community in which it operates. He should also relay relevant information from his organisation to members so that they are kept aware of what is going on within the co-operative organisation.

In this role the Education/Information Officer must be sufficiently familiar with the operations of his organisation, its policies, projections and problems. He should also be well informed about the various people directly and indirectly involved with the internal and external organisation of the co-operative. He must keep track of all decisions made by his co-operative, the systems in operation and all important events originating from, or affecting, the organisation. He should have unrestrained access to all records, minutes and other relevant information relating to decisions and policies of the organisation. In this respect, he must enjoy the full confidence of the management.

2. Serving the Education Committee : As mentioned earlier, the Education/Information Officer is directly responsible to the Chief Executive (General Manager) and the Education Committee of his co-operative. While the former guides and oversees his day-to-day work, the latter is responsible for all policy matters concerning education, information and publicity. The Education Committee is also to some extent involved with the implementation of some of the educational programmes when the need arises (see duties and responsibilities of the Education Committee).

His relationship with the Education Committee is therefore a very close one. He should however never feel that he has two masters (i.e. getting instructions from the Chief Executive on the one hand, and from the Education Committee on the other). On the contrary, he should feel privileged to serve directly under the Chief Executive and also serve those who are charged with the formulation of policy. There should be mutual respect between the Education/Information Officer and the Education Committee, and an atmosphere of harmony and dedication to the development of the co-operative should exist. The committee makes decisions on the basis of technical information provided, and suggestions made by the Education/Information Officer. The officer should however not feel piqued when some of his suggestions are not accepted by the committee - particularly when good reasons for the rejection are provided. Nevertheless, if he feels strongly that his suggestions are valid and that harm could be done to the organisation or to the education programme if they are not endorsed, he should patiently and painstakingly explain and substantiate his views. He should, however, avoid imposing his views on the committee.

The Education/Information Officer also serves as Secretary to the Education Committee. In this capacity, his tasks include:

- Convening meetings of the Education Committee. (The frequency of such meetings should be determined by need and must be approved by the Chief Executive.)
- Preparing notices of meetings, the agenda, agenda notes, reports and all relevant information for Education Committee meetings. This should be done after discussing these with the Chief Executive and obtaining his approval.

- Presenting all the necessary reports, plans and suggestions as may be relevant to the particular meeting.
- Recording all proceedings of the Education Committee meetings and all decisions taken.
- Implementing all decisions made by the Education Committee.
- Any other functions he may be called upon to perform by the Education Committee.

During meetings, the fact that the Education/Information Officer is likely to be better educated and more experienced in his field should never tempt him to usurp the powers of the Education Committee or look down on its members. He should regard the members with the respect deserving of one's employer charged with powers of decision-making. His role is that of a servant, never of a master. Harmony, mutual respect and amiable collaboration should be the order of their relationship, bearing in mind that they are all working for the good of the co-operative and its members.

3. Identifying Education and Training Needs : Another duty of the Education/Information Officer is to identify education and training needs. Let it be clear that any education/training programmes must be designed to solve genuine and actually felt needs. It is meaningless to formulate and carry out education/training programmes if there are no specific problems to solve. Even where problems exist, one should be convinced that their solutions definitely lie with education and training.

Before launching an education programme, the Education/Information Officer should carry out a thorough situation study to determine the actual conditions prevailing in the co-operative. A situation study is a fact-finding exercise which will provide the officer with basic facts and data about the co-operative, its business, its employees, members, etc., and the way they are performing. On the basis of this study, he will be able to identify any problems related to the co-operative. Since co-operatives are made up of people, most of the problems affecting co-operatives are those related to people - or rather, the way people involved with the co-operative are performing.

Having listed all the problems of performance (performance problems) in the co-operative, the officer then goes through the process of analysing the performance problems. This is done first of all by comparing the way people are performing now (actual performance) and the ideal way people are supposed or expected to perform (desired performance). The difference between actual performance and desired performance is known as performance discrepancy. A performance problem is thus the nature and size of the performance discrepancy and the factors that are causing the discrepancy.

A proper analysis will therefore provide both the size, nature and causes of the discrepancy. Further analysis will help the officer to determine whether the nature of the problem is one that can be solved through education and training, or not.

It is the duty of the Education/Information Officer to carry out this analysis, and on the basis of the analysis, design appropriate instructional solutions.

CEMAS offers a comprehensive training pack on the subject of performance problem analysis which we highly recommend to all those involved in co-operative education and training.

4. Designing Education and Training Solutions : Having analysed the performance problems, and having identified training needs, the officer's next task is to design appropriate solutions.

Education and training needs in co-operatives are many and varied, involving different categories of people: members, committee members, staff and, to some degree, the general public. Solutions developed should respond effectively to each specific need, under each specific situation and for each category of people. Naturally, as experience is bound to prove, there will be some overlapping of the proposed solutions for the various situations and the various categories of people.

We are obliged to remind the reader that what we are discussing here are suggested solutions to education-related problems and not co-operative problems generally. For, as we have repeated earlier, not all problems affecting co-operative performance can be eliminated through education and training. Some problems will require non-instructional solutions such as:

- removing a physical obstacle that prevents a person from performing as required, or
- providing practice and feedback where performance is poor because one lacks practice and feedback.

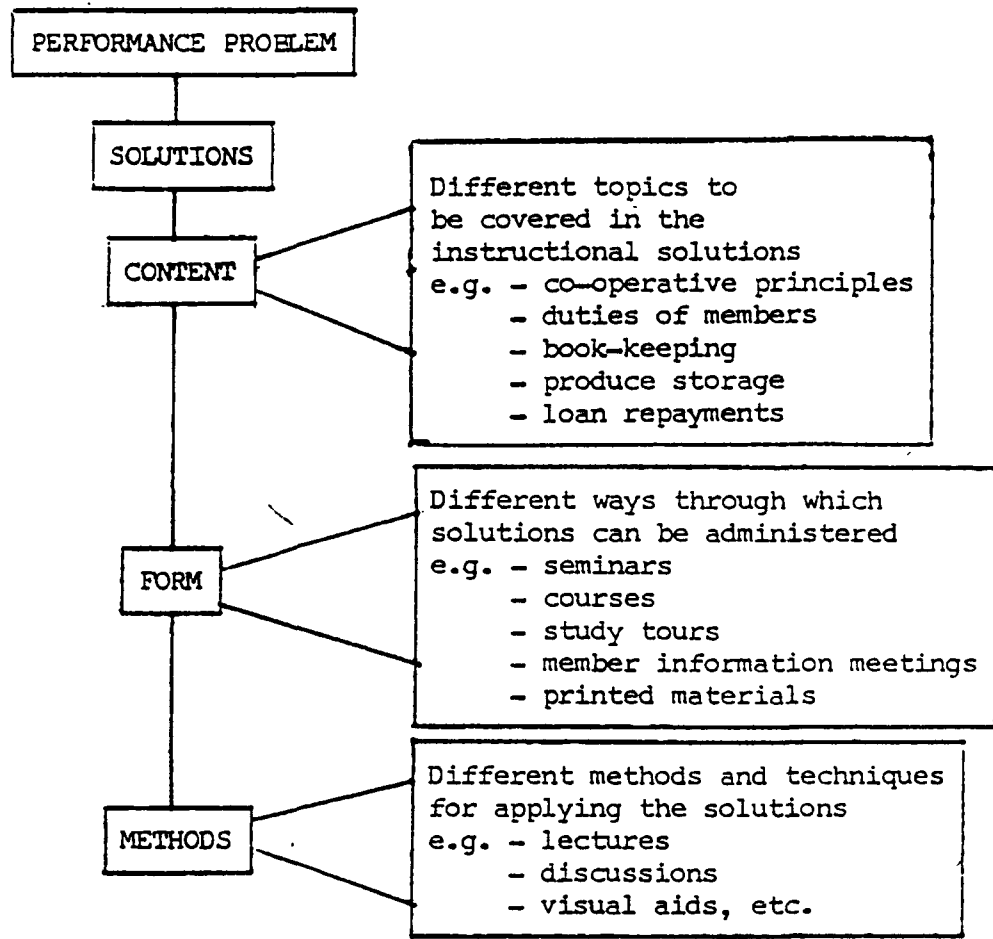
None of these performance problems would require an instructional solution.

In this chapter we are however only discussing instructional solutions.

Now, back to designing instructional solutions. When designing solutions, the Education/Information Officer should be guided by the following requirements.

Instructional solutions should:

- be capable of effectively eliminating or minimising the performance problem
- match the performance objectives set out (e.g. "after completing this set of instructions he will be able to do").
- facilitate easy learning and not be a constraint on learning
- take into account the type and circumstances of the target group (e.g. literacy; social, economic, cultural factors; available facilities, etc.)
- be cost effective
- not be too rigid, but flexible to a degree that they can accommodate new and more efficient ideas. On the other hand they should not be too flexible.
- be measurable
- have an inbuilt mechanism for feedback
- first be tested and their validity proven before they are finally adopted.



5. Planning : Having identified education/training needs, the Education/Information Officer's next task is to draw up a comprehensive plan for his education programmes. In a later chapter we shall discuss education plans in more detail; for now it will suffice to stress that this is a very important aspect of the officer's work.

Since plans are projections of all activities to be carried out by the Education/Information Officer over a period of time, the success or failure of these activities will depend, to a large extent, on how well the plans are prepared and formulated.

A good plan must take into account the education/training needs that have been identified. It should also take into account the objectives that have been set to be achieved by the education/training programme - and the resources that will be required. A plan should be realistic, pragmatic and comprehensive enough to cover all the important aspects of an education programme to be conducted over a given period of time.

As in all other stages of the officer's work, education plans should be discussed thoroughly with management, approved by the Education Committee and incorporated in the overall plans of the organisation.

A specimen Education Plan appears in Appendix I.

6. Budgeting : The planning of education programmes goes alongside with budgeting. A plan would seem incomplete without:
- (a) having financial provisions for education/information programmes, and
 - (b) a detailed budget of all items that are covered in the education plan.

These two items are complementary to each other. The Education Budget will be discussed in more detail under "Financing of Education Programmes" in a later chapter.

The Education/Information Officer is responsible for drawing up an Education Budget which, along with the Education Plan, should be thoroughly discussed with the management, approved by the Education Committee (and the Finance Committee, if there is one) and incorporated in the overall budget of the organisation.

A specimen Education Budget appears in Appendix II.

7. Implementing the Education Programmes : The core feature of the work of the Education/Information Officer is to implement education/training information programmes. All the other duties that we mentioned as being his responsibilities are only ingredients that are necessary for the effective performance in implementing his work.

The implementation of education/training information programmes comprises many features and it is here that the technical and managerial competence of the Education/Information Officer is being tested. Let us now examine some of these features.

- 7.1 Initiating Activities: The whole essence of implementation involves initiating actions - i.e. putting things in motion. Things will not just happen unless they are caused to happen and steered towards the desired course, regulated and monitored. The Education/Information Officer initiates

activities and brings about change (positive change) in people's behaviour and attitudes towards desired performance.

7.2 Facilitating Learning: The officer also acts as a resource person who provides knowledge and skills, applying suitable and up-to-date educational methods and techniques. This involves his personal, physical involvement as a facilitator of learning. He is also responsible for identifying and enlisting the services of other technicians, experts and specialists in subjects outside his own realm of knowledge and experience. Let us mention in passing that however competent and knowledgeable an Education/Information Officer may be, the range of subjects and topics designed to respond to co-operators' educational needs is too broad for one person. It would therefore be impossible for one person to competently and adequately provide learning in the whole range of subjects. His ability to identify and enlist subject specialists is therefore necessary so as to dispense with the need to rely on one person only. The selection of resource personnel (subject specialists) will be influenced by the topic or area of knowledge being dealt with. They may include agricultural officers, accountants, auditors, co-operative managers and other specialists. In whatever circumstances, it should be a golden rule that whoever is enlisted to assist in an education activity should be properly briefed about:

- the type of audience he will deal with (whether members, committee members, employees of various categories, etc.)
- the number of people, their general educational background and experience (pre-requisite entry skills), language, age group, relevant information pertaining to the audience in question
- details of the topic or topics to be covered, their objectives and areas where special emphasis should be placed

- venue, date and time
- physical facilities available (e.g. classrooms, chalkboard, flip charts, projectors and other audio-visual aids)

Procurement of educational facilities and aids also fall under the heading of "Facilitating Learning".

7.3 Co-ordinating Education Programmes: The officer should co-ordinate his work with that of his colleagues both within his organisation and outside. Within his organisation he should keep himself well informed of what is going on and he should provide information both to his superiors and colleagues about his plans and programmes. He should make an assessment of the people within his organisation and discuss with management their needs and how such needs can be met through education programmes. He will also constantly need to collaborate and liaise with other institutions engaged in promotional work - whether directly or indirectly related to his organisation's objectives. These may include co-operative training institutions (e.g. co-operative colleges), government departments responsible for co-operative development, agricultural departments, community development departments, adult education institutions, etc. The officer should cultivate close and friendly working relations with these institutions so that the co-ordination of work can be maintained.

In rural communities where the bulk of the work of the Education Officer is undertaken, there will often be conditions which make the officer's job a rather difficult one. There might be sparse and scattered populations, poor access routes - often aggravated by harsh geographical conditions. Alternative means of communication may be lacking or be unreliable. There may be no electricity, board or lodging and the financial resources available to the officer may not even give room for the acquisition of a motor vehicle to facilitate easy movement.

The need for collaboration and sharing the available resources and facilities amongst those engaged in the field

of rural development becomes increasingly apparent when one bears in mind that there are many other institutions engaged in rural development in one form or another - some with more resources and facilities than others - and considering that the ultimate beneficiary of these development programmes may be one and the same person. What matters in the ultimate analysis is the total and combined impact of the programmes directed towards the community, rather than an unco-ordinated and independent approach.

These reflections should not be taken as suggesting that the various institutions mentioned above should merge their plans, programmes and resources for a more effective rural development approach. Considering the nature, size and variety of the needs that have to be met in any community, this would be impractical, confusing and ineffective. Institutional specialisation in such circumstances cannot be dispensed with.

What we are suggesting here is that there should be some form of close collaboration and co-ordination between all those institutions engaged in rural development. They should be made aware and appreciate each other's role, objectives, plans and programmes. They should be guided by a willingness to co-operate and share the available limited resources for the common good of all concerned. This requires regular consultations, joint discussion of plans, programmes and common problems. Co-ordination of this kind will ensure that not only are scarce resources fully and efficiently utilised, but also that duplication of effort is avoided. Naturally, this kind of collaboration will not come about by itself, and it may take much time before it can be attained. Bureaucracy, egoism, possessiveness and institutional identity are some of the tendencies that may stand in the way of development, and it will take great initiative, persuasion and patience on the part of the Education/Information Officer before he can make a breakthrough. He will also need a good sense for public relations which, as we have already mentioned, is one of the necessary qualities of the officer.

7.4 Producing Education Materials: Another role of the Education/Information Officer in the implementation of education programmes is the development of educational materials. It is necessary to stress that educational materials become more effective when they are developed and adapted to the problems and conditions in which they are to be applied. Rather unfortunately, however, most of the materials used by field educators are those developed and produced outside the environment in which they are ultimately to be used. While some of them may be extremely good, both in terms of quality and content, many of them fail to respond effectively to the need, because of lack of local touch and situational orientation. This is often true of films, slides, booklets and posters. Education materials should be adapted to the cultural, social and economic environment of the people for whom they are intended. They should respond directly and authentically to identified needs of people. Who is in a better position to understand all these, than the person who works directly with the people, knows their problems, and is responsible for their educational programmes? The Education/Information Officer - quite naturally!

This officer, however, cannot, and should not be expected to develop and produce all the materials required for his work. This would be beyond his capability and resources. He may already find quite a good deal of material produced elsewhere well suited for his requirements - perhaps needing minor modifications to fit his purpose. However for reasons already explained, he should aim as far as possible at developing his own materials suited to his particular needs, or rather, the needs of the people he is responsible for educating.

The production of educational materials can be simple and need not be costly in terms of stationery and equipment. With some imagination, innovation and will - and of course competence in the subject matter - the existing typing and duplicating facilities in the organisation will be quite adequate for the production of simple, but good quality materials such as booklets, manuals, handouts, small posters

and notices. Where such facilities do not exist, the officer should take the initiative to secure the use of facilities available in other institutions with which he collaborates (this is a practical aspect of the collaboration we discussed under 7.3).

As regards the subject matter of the materials to be produced, the Education/Information Officer should seek the collaboration of subject specialists in those areas outside his own competence. Subject specialists may not necessarily be co-operators or co-operative specialists. They may not even be good writers of educational materials and even if they are, they may fail to refine the material and tune it down to the specific needs and conditions of the target audience. In addition to briefing the subject specialists on the format, general framework and content of the material, the officer will also have to play the vital role of final editor who decides on the content, language and presentation of the material in its ultimate form.

Where illustrations or artwork is desired in the material - as in the case of posters and other materials requiring visualisation, the officer should identify and enlist the services of local artists. As with subject specialists, artists commissioned to do illustrations should be properly briefed by the officer about the message he wants to convey through pictorial symbols, the purpose and audience for which they are intended and the general specifications of the illustrations. Illustrations are not simply to be judged by their finery or attractiveness, but by their capacity to effectively convey a message. A manual on visualisation has been developed by CEMAS and is available to field educators.

Any type of educational material produced must be thoroughly tested before it is finally released for general use. Again this is the duty of the Education/Information Officer. Newly developed materials - booklets, manuals, posters and slides - should be tried out with sample groups of the target audience for whom the materials are intended. All

reactions from these groups should be carefully recorded, evaluated and incorporated in the final edition of the materials. The process of trying out materials in the field before they are finally released for use is known as field-testing. In addition to testing the material with sample groups of the target audience, the officer should also solicit comments from his colleagues, subject specialists, adult education specialists, other co-operative educators, editors and co-operative training institutions.

Some of the reactions that he should note when field-testing newly developed materials are:

- General presentation of the materials
- Level of comprehension: can people study and understand the materials?
- Relevance of content to existing needs
- Language and technical terms used
- Construction of sentences and style
- Size of letters used (type-face)
- Illustrations used
- Examples used

7.5 Organising and Managing Study Groups and Study Circles: Lack of adequate financial and manpower resources would usually make it difficult for any co-operative organisation to satisfy its education and training needs by relying on traditional methods, such as courses and seminars. Other less conventional methods have to be employed, not so much as a substitute but as a supplement to the traditional ones. Among these less conventional forms are self-study methods where people learn by themselves with little - if any - physical presence of an instructor or facilitator as is the case in face-to-face instruction.

One of the self-instruction methods of learning is the study group or study circle method where a group of people get together and study on their own, using a set of self-instructional materials - such as study guides, self-

instruction manuals, correspondence courses, programmed learning texts and tape recordings. Group studies are conducted at a time, pace and place determined by the group members themselves, and the procedures are characterised by regular discussions and an exchange of ideas under the leadership of a chairman elected from the group members. Like any other serious activity, study groups need proper organisation, order and management. They also need constant motivation and monitoring. It is here that the Education/Information Officer has a significant role to play. His duties involve organising the study groups, training of study group leaders in the techniques of group procedures and study group management; provision of study materials, motivation and monitoring of group activities.

Members of the Education Committee can also take on the important role of organising the groups and, where appropriate, serve as study group leaders (see page 64).

CEMAS offers a manual on the organisation and management of study groups.

7.6 Other Duties: There are many more activities falling under the category of implementation which have to be carried out by the Education/Information Officer. These include:

- Conducting study tours for co-operative members, committee members and employees. (The techniques and methods of organising study tours are contained in a booklet produced by CEMAS.)
- Conducting member information days
- Organising films and slide shows
- Monitoring of education programmes.

8. Methods of Implementation : The methods employed in carrying out educational programmes vary, and may be determined by identified education needs and the solutions designed for the needs, facilities and resources available. Some of the common ones have already been mentioned earlier in the chapter. Generally, they include short residential courses, short seminars, workshops, conferences, study tours, study groups, film shows, radio programmes and correspondence courses.

9. Information, Publicity and Public Relations : We have so far been discussing the duties and responsibilities of the Education/Information Officer relative to education and training. But as we mentioned earlier, the duties and responsibilities of this officer are not confined to education and training alone. He is also responsible for the information, publicity and public relations work of his organisation. It is because of this that he is designated Education and Information Officer. It would seem rather cumbersome to designate him Education, Information, Publicity and Public Relations Officer (oh, what a title!), so we have abbreviated it to Education/Information Officer, bearing in mind that under his role as an information officer, he is also responsible for publicity and public relations.

Let us now look at his functions as an Information, Publicity and Public Relations Officer.

- 9.1 Facilitating the Flow of Information: Information is essential for human interaction, and co-existence in any community of people - be it primitive or advanced. Information is the essence of communication between people. It is the cord that links and unifies people, transcending ignorance and bringing about understanding of each other's ideas, motives and actions.

The absence of communication results not only in ignorance, but also in suspicion, mistrust and apprehension. It is when our intentions and actions are not made known to others that people get suspicious. Suspicion leads to mistrust, which in turn breeds feuds, disputes and conflicts. History abounds with examples of families breaking up, organisations winding up and nations going to war against each other. All this because they mistrust each other's motives: a lack of communication; a lack of information!

Co-operatives which are made up of people cannot function properly without an efficient flow of information. A co-operative organisation has an obligation to provide information to all those connected with it, must as much as it is obliged to provide education and training. In a way, information complements education and training programmes of the organisation since the latter, due to often scarce

financial and manpower resources, cannot effectively reach all the target groups.

Information conveyed through the mass media has a capacity for reaching large, scattered populations in a wide geographical area.

Another reason for advocating information programmes in co-operatives is that it is the only way one can reach the general public (who are, in most cases, not catered for in the educational programmes). In addition to providing information to those directly involved in the co-operative (members, committee members and employees), it is necessary to keep the general public informed about the co-operative. It is important to remember that a co-operative is formed by people, and it is to the immediate public that the co-operative reaches out to increase its membership, thereby expanding and developing its activities. That public must not be ignorant of what the co-operative is doing, its motives and what it stands for. Co-operative information must reach and capture the attention of the community, and stir constructive discussion within it.

It is the duty of the Education/Information Officer to facilitate in the most effective way, this flow of information. He must determine the most efficient media to use for this purpose and ensure that he applies them with skill and vigour.

9.2 Introducing Information Materials: To facilitate an efficient flow of information the Education/Information Officer will have to make full use of both the print media (newsletters, pamphlets and posters) and the electronic media (radio, films and slides). He will have to produce most of these information materials himself just as in the case of educational materials.

9.2.1 Newsletters, Pamphlets and Posters: These are some of the print media that the officer can produce on his own with little if any external support, using simple and basic equipment, such as the office typewriter and duplicating machine. His duties in this area would involve collecting information,

evaluating and presenting it in the most communicative form and then disseminating it.

The publication of a regular newsletter is particularly encouraged. A newsletter should enlighten and inform. It should project the image, aims, organisation and work of the co-operative. It should maintain a direct two-way communication between the co-operative and its readership; communicate important items and events; create an awareness of needs and seasonal problems and deal with all relevant matters that are of interest to the social and economic welfare of its members. To ensure this, the Education/Information Officer who produces the newsletter must be objective in his treatment of information. The newsletter must be simple in format, rich and diversified in content.

- 9.2.2 The Electronic Media: Other information media the officer could use are radio, slides and films. Radio is the most effective. It can reach illiterate people, has a capacity for covering a wide audience and has no limitation in time or space.

Co-operative information radio programmes can only be produced on a co-ordinated national level with one national central co-operative institution being responsible for the production and presentation. The Education/Information Officer working at the district or provincial level may not have direct access to the broadcasting facilities but he could always prepare radio scripts for incorporation in the national co-operative programme. CEMAS offers a study manual dealing with co-operative radio programmes.

Another electronic medium that can be produced and used by the Education/Information Officer is slides. These are useful not only for communicating information but also for educational purposes. Unlike the other media already discussed, slides can only be used with small groups of people and they cannot

cover a wide area or serve a large audience. Nevertheless they are an effective medium, cheap and easy to produce and use.

The third medium under this category is films - or motion pictures. These are an effective medium of communication: they are lively, have sound and movement and are the nearest model to the real thing. The Education/Information Officer will however find that the use of films has some shortcomings - good and relevant films are not easily available. As repeatedly indicated in this manual, materials are most effective when they are based on or adapted to local situations and conditions. Most co-operative films available to Education/Information Officers in developing countries are those produced in more advanced countries, depicting situations completely divorced from realities in developing countries, and conveying information that is of little relevance to the needs of the community with which the officer is involved. There are, of course, very good "foreign" films which are of great education/information value to co-operators in the developing world - but these are rare and hard to come by. Few developing countries have produced their own co-operative films. This is a very costly affair and cannot be undertaken by one single co-operative organisation. If the Education/Information Officer decides on using films, he should be very discriminating in his choice; he must either choose "foreign" co-operative films that are relevant to his needs (i.e. the information he intends to convey), or locally produced co-operative films. If he does not have access to any of these two alternatives, he can still use films for entertainment purposes during breaks or leisure time when he is involved in more serious educational and information activities (e.g. when running courses or seminars lasting for more than a day).

9.3 Publicity Work: Publicity involves the task of making the co-operative, its ideals and functions known. Publicity is directed towards the public at large and not just towards co-operative members. A co-operative may be very efficient in its business performance, but as long as it remains anonymous in the community in which it exists, it will not enjoy the acceptance and confidence of the community. Publicity goes hand in hand with information, and the same media of communication may be used for publicity work. These are newsletters, pamphlets, posters, radio, films and slides.

In addition, there are other methods of making a co-operative organisation known, e.g. the use of badges, stickers, pin-up labels, T-shirts, exhibitions, and occasional publication of a supplement in the local press depicting various aspects of the co-operative organisation.

Publicity should not be confused with advertising, which is related to marketing of commodities. Although in a broad sense, publicity is some form of advertisement, the "commodity" we are advertising is the co-operative and its work rather than the goods that the co-operative is dealing with.

The Education/Information Officer is responsible for the publicity work of his organisation and should spare no efforts in making his organisation known to as wide a public as his time, ability and resources permit.

10. Other General Duties : From time to time the Education/Information Officer may be called upon to assist with other duties of a co-operative nature outside his immediate terms of reference. These may for example include gathering statistical information for his own organisation, assisting the national apex organisation with certain information, such as statistics and gathering data and information for the national co-operative development plan or the national co-operative education plan.

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In building up a framework for a sound co-operative education system within a co-operative organisation, we have so far dealt with two main features, namely:

- The Education Committee which makes and regulates policy on all matters relating to education, information and publicity programmes. We have also discussed the qualifications of the Committee members, their duties and responsibilities.
- The Education/Information Officer who is responsible for planning and implementing education, information and publicity programmes. We have also discussed his qualifications, duties and responsibilities.

The third component, which constitutes the subject of this chapter, is the Education Plan. When discussing the duties of the Education/Information Officer, mention has been made of the central role of an education plan. We shall now examine more closely what constitutes an education plan and its place within the general framework of co-operative education and the information system.

Why Planning?

It is a very elementary rule of life that the success of any human endeavour presupposes planning. Any activity that is performed without proper planning is likely to yield unsatisfactory results.

Depending on the objective or sets of objectives to be achieved, planning can be very simple and straightforward, or it can be complex and detailed. Whatever the case may be, some form of planning must precede actions.

Plans are made to project and guide our actions towards desired goals. They indicate the way the various actions projected will help fulfil the objectives. They also help in regulating the implementation of activities, in monitoring and evaluating those activities.

Simply stated, planning is concerned with two basic questions:

- What should be done (to achieve an objective)?
- What is the best way of doing it (in order to achieve an objective)?

The first question is concerned with identifying the best alternatives in order to fulfil the objective in the simplest and most effective way. The second question is concerned with the best manner in which the possible solutions are to be implemented to achieve the objective. This requires a clear predetermination of objectives (i.e. what do we want to achieve?) in response to already identified needs. It also requires the systematic organisation of the various actions, resources, facilities and other factors (such as time) that are necessary in order to achieve the objectives.

Co-operative education and information, like any other serious activity, require proper planning if the desired goals are to be achieved. Financial and manpower resources alone will not guarantee an effective education and information system if well formulated plans are lacking.

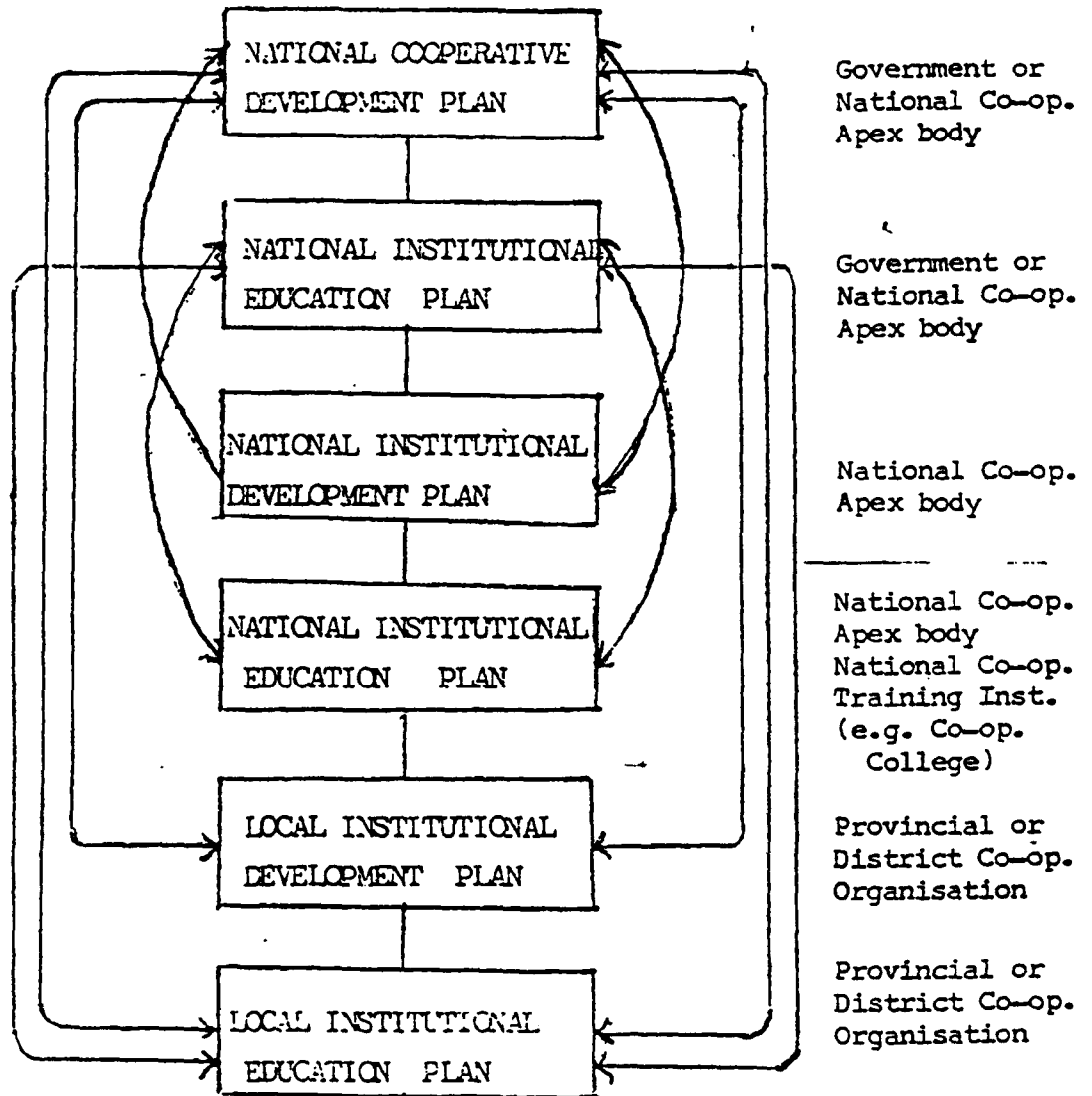
Levels of Planning

Ideally, co-operative education planning should not be an isolated activity formulated at the will and whim of individual co-operative organisations. On the contrary, it should link up with, and reflect, national co-operative development goals and aspirations, national long- and short-term co-operative education policies and plans. Furthermore, it must reflect and respond to genuinely identified needs at the grassroots level. It is only when such links are maintained that a national co-operative education system can be co-ordinated meaningfully and the best use made of the available resources and facilities. This will also bring about consistency and a higher level of efficiency when implementing national plans.

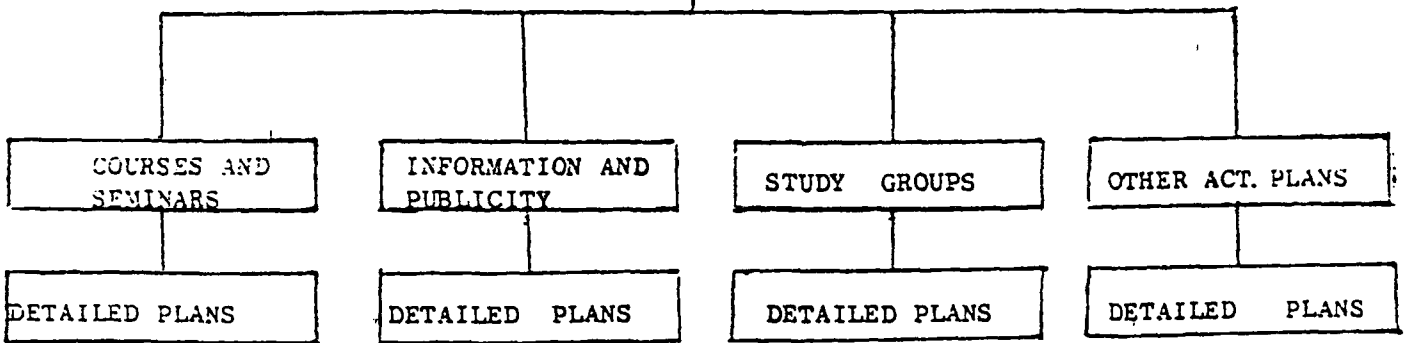
At the national level there should be a national co-operative education plan setting out the overall education objectives and strategy for co-operative education for the entire country - including the role of co-operative training institutions, such as co-operative colleges (if they exist), and the various co-operative education institutions at provincial, district and local levels involved in co-operative education and training.

Under this national educational umbrella there would be in turn regional plans for organisations and institutions at that level, and district and local plans formulated by co-operative organisations at that particular level. The local district and provincial

LEVELS OF PLANNING



ACTIVITY



plans (as the administrative set-up of the country may be) should identify with and reflect the overall national education plan.

At the local and district levels where most of the implementation work takes place, there are further levels of planning. These include:

- (a) The Organisation's Overall Plan: This is the organisation's general plan covering all aspects of its activities of which co-operative education and information forms a part.
- (b) The Co-operative Education/Information Plan: This is the actual education plan (with which we are concerned in this chapter) drawn up by the Education/Information Officer and incorporated in the organisation's overall plan.
- (c) Financial Plan: Under the Co-operative Education/Information Plan falls financial planning and budgeting for the planned education/information activities.
- (d) Activity Plan: Also falling under the Education/Information Plan are plans for each individual activity.
- (e) Topic Planning: Finally, under the activity plan would fall topic planning. This involves detailed planning for each individual learning situation in the case of educational activities and may entail lesson planning, resource and facility planning and performance management during a specific learning situation. In the case of information and publicity it may involve detailed planning of a particular issue of a newsletter or a particular publicity campaign.

You will note from the foregoing that there is a chain linking planning from the lowest level of lesson notes planning to the national co-operative education plan. As already mentioned, this link helps to ensure that a consistent education system exists and that limited educational resources and facilities are fully utilised in a co-ordinated way. This does by no means imply that two different co-operative organisations at the same level (e.g. district level) should have identical education plans. Plans are formulated to respond to existing needs. Needs will differ from one area to another, requiring appropriate solutions and plans relevant to the needs. It would therefore be unrealistic to think of a uniform education plan applicable to every co-operative organisation.

What we are saying here is that although the plans may differ according to identified needs, they should nevertheless operate within the general framework of the national education plan.

CEMAS has developed a training manual entitled "National Education Plan" dealing mainly with planning at the national level.

Planning According to Needs

As already mentioned, an education/information plan is based on identified needs. Before we embark on planning, we must first of all carry out a study of all the aspects of a co-operative and the performance of the people involved in it with a view to identifying any performance problems that may exist. This exercise is known as "Situation Study". We then consider solutions to these problems through a systematic analysis of performance problems - their nature, size and causes. Having done this, we have some basic "raw material" for our planning. These are:

- Performance problems existing within the co-operative
- A set of carefully considered solutions to the performance problems. Armed with these, and taking into account available resources, facilities and other factors, planning can then commence.

Planning and Budgeting

An important feature of an education and information plan is the budget. The financial details that go into the education plan should correspondingly appear in the education budget. The budget is, in fact, a financial reflection of the plan which provides a realistic financial allocation for every expense that will go into each activity appearing in the plan and according to the resources available.

By resources we are referring to the total financial, manpower, equipment, materials and other inputs required for an education/information programme over a given period of time - e.g. one year.

These resources should be allocated as a result and on the basis of identified needs, translated into objectives and solutions and ultimately a plan. Thus the plan determines what resources are required for its implementation. The budget is then drawn up within the provisions of the plan and the limitations of the available resources.

This method however assumes that the organisation concerned has sufficient resources readily available to adequately meet the requirements of a plan.

In practice this is not always the case. Most co-operative organisations do not have ample resources readily available for what may seem a modest education/information plan. Planners are then compelled to resort to a reverse approach to the ideal one discussed above. The implication is that the resources determine the plan or in other words, planning is confined to the available resources. Faced with such a situation the only practical solution would seem to be that of a very careful identification of major priorities (based on the most pressing needs arising from the most serious performance problems). These priorities are then enshrined in the plan.

Whichever approach one takes, it would be necessary to bear in mind that the budget must be drawn up consonant with the plan and must operate within the confines of the available resources. To do otherwise would be tantamount to spending money that one does not have.

Requirements of a Good Plan

A good education plan, and for that matter any type of plan, must have the following basic requirements:

- (a) It must be realistic and pragmatic. This implies that a plan must reflect actual problems and conditions existing rather than a theoretical exercise isolated from realities. A plan must also be practical and workable. It would be futile and a waste of time to draw up plans which, because of their complexity and demand of unattainable resources, cannot be carried out. An example of this is the case where a whole range of courses and seminars or courses over a short period of time are planned without having financial and other resources necessary for the implementation of the plan.
- (b) It must be comprehensive: a good plan should be detailed and comprehensive enough to cover all aspects of an activity. One of the secrets of efficiency in management is the ability to give attention to details. Planning which itself is an aspect of management also requires very careful attention to details. What may casually be ignored as a negligible detail

can in fact frustrate the implementation of a major portion of the plan or, indeed, the entire plan. No detail should be too small to ignore.

(c) Objectives : Central to any plan should be precisely defined objectives of what one wishes to achieve. The objectives in turn are based on identified needs having carried out a situation study and problem analysis. Well defined objectives will provide the yardsticks against which achievement can be measured.

(d) The Plan must be implemented. It is not uncommon to find people spending a good deal of time preparing plans which end up unused in filing cabinets. A plan is not an end in itself, but rather a guide for a systematic implementation of a programme. Plans are not drawn up to be stored but to be used as a working tool. Once it is drawn up, checked and approved, and unless there are good reasons to deviate from any aspect of its content, every detail of a plan must be followed during implementation.

A specimen Education Plan appears in Appendix I. Note the close relationship between the Plan and the Education Budget in Appendix II.

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We have now covered three important features which are vital for a sound education/information system within a co-operative organisation. These features are:

- the Education Committee
- the Education /Information Officer
- the Education Plan

The three features are, however, not all that is required to complete the infrastructure. An equally essential element which will be the subject of this chapter is finance.

Education Fund

Any activity that involves provision of services to people requires money at one stage or another. This is equally true of providing education and information programmes to co-operative members and employees. Funds are required to meet the various expenses necessary to carry out a programme, such as:

- salaries for the Education/Information Officer and supporting staff
- travelling expenses
- costs for running courses, seminars and other educational activities (fees for resource personnel, accommodation and meals, etc.)
- production of educational and information materials
- purchase of stationery
- bursaries, fees, scholarships and study tours
- purchase and maintenance of equipment

For all these and others not mentioned above, funds will have to be made available to facilitate implementation of programmes.

In an earlier chapter we discussed the general attitude of some policy makers towards funds allocated for educational purposes. The argument that money invested in education does not yield immediate results and therefore does not deserve priority consideration is, to say the least, occasioned by shallow thinking and lack of

foresight. Enough has been said in the preceding pages about the important role of education and training in developing a sound co-operative movement, which only the most sceptical could refute. It is true that in the absence of proper management of the educational programmes, funds spent for this purpose would be wasted, but with proper management both of the programmes and of the funds, a great deal can be achieved. Where resources permit, it would be unwise to deny a co-operative organisation funds for educational purposes for, by doing so, the whole development of the co-operative could be frustrated. If such attitudes prevailed, it would be necessary to educate those responsible for policy about the long-term effects that such investment could make on the performance of the co-operative and the welfare of its members.

Creating an Education Fund

Every co-operative organisation, large or small, should as a matter of course, create its own education fund from which education and information programmes will be financed. The fund may be a modest one for a start, depending on the economic strength of the co-operative. It may not be sufficient to finance ambitious education programmes, but the determination and the initiative to create the fund can, nevertheless, form the basis for a stable education system. As the co-operative develops and gathers economic strength, the fund should be increased proportionally.

Self-Finance

There is no established formula for determining the amount that should be set aside for educational programmes or how it should be raised. This depends largely on the economic wellbeing of the co-operative organisation concerned and, of course, the seriousness with which co-operative leaders and members regard education and training.

In some countries the fund is based on a percentage of the net surplus of the co-operative within a given period of business operations. In others a fixed amount is allocated in the budget without any relation to the surplus, and this is reviewed during each budget session together with other expenditure items. It might be increased or reduced depending on what the management committee sees as priorities and their general attitudes towards education and training.

Where the fund is based on surplus, the percentages vary from one co-operative to another, and from one country to another. In

some cases it is 5% of the net surplus while in others it is as much as 25%.

The co-operative law in some countries makes it statutory for every co-operative to allocate a certain percentage of the surplus to education and training purposes. This is, in turn, enshrined in the bye-laws. In other countries the decision to determine the percentage is left to the members themselves, and is normally determined by the management committee.

A formula whereby the fund is based on a percentage of the surplus, and there is a law to protect this, has the advantage that it guarantees a steady flow of funds as long as the co-operative concerned continues to make a good surplus. Of course, when business is bleak, the fund will be adversely affected, just like any other sector within the organisation. An additional advantage of the surplus-based fund is that, once fixed, it remains operational for a long period and is thus protected from arbitrary reductions, especially by newly elected committee members who may be ignorant of the needs for education and training.

If a co-operative is unable to raise sufficient funds for educational programmes from its own business activities because of low turnover or nominal surplus, it should consider other means of raising funds. One such way would be to approach individual members or affiliated co-operatives and persuade them to make voluntary contributions towards the fund. The amount to be contributed by each member or each affiliated society should normally be decided upon at a members' general meeting. In the case of individual members contributing to the fund, such contributions may be made in any of the following ways:

- a direct cash contribution to the co-operative by the member
- a charge from the dividend payable to the member
- a deduction from the proceeds paid to a member when he sells
- a special mark-up on the price of commodities sold to a member
- a voluntary contribution of labour or goods to the co-operative by the member

We must emphasise that such contributions must be made on a strictly voluntary basis and should never be imposed on members without first

being discussed and agreed upon at a members' annual general meeting.

The Education Committee, working closely with the Education/Information Officer must ensure that the amount agreed upon is actually contributed by members within the specified time. This may involve writing reminders to members, making personal visits and talking to members whenever the opportunity arises.

Funds may also be raised through special campaigns and the organisation of charity activities such as dances, auctions, raffles and sweepstakes. In some cases permission might be required from the authorities to conduct such activities. Here again the Education Committee in collaboration with the Education/Information Officer must be responsible for organising these activities. Receipts must be issued for money thus collected, and proper records of the funds raised must be maintained and checked from time to time.

External Support

A co-operative may not always be able to raise funds - whether from its own business earnings or from organising other activities - adequate enough to meet all its training needs. This may be especially true of small co-operatives with a nominal surplus. Other means of raising funds have to be sought. One of these is through subsidies or grants given by governments for educational purposes as part of their financial contributions to co-operative development. Contributions from governments may, however, not always be in cash, but may be in kind. Instead of a government providing cash to a co-operative for its programmes, it can attach some of its experienced officers to help a co-operative organisation run its educational activities. Governments can also donate educational equipment and materials, provide transport and pay for the training and study tours of members, committee members and staff. They can also allow a co-operative organisation to use government-owned facilities such as co-operative colleges or other training centres for educational programmes free of charge or at subsidised costs. Such gestures by governments would provide great relief to the often meagre funds available within co-operatives. Co-operative organisations might thus be able to cover a wide range of education and training activities.

In addition to the support from governments, a co-operative may also get help from other institutions and voluntary bodies, both within and outside the country. As a matter of formal procedure and for purposes of co-ordination, external aid - particularly that emanating from outside the country - should be channelled through, or be provided with the approval of, the government. As a rule, co-operatives should work in close collaboration and consultation with their governments on such matters.

While external support is highly appreciated as a positive gesture from those committed to co-operative development, and may go a long way towards strengthening the educational programmes within a co-operative organisation, co-operatives should never relax and rely entirely on outside help. They should persistently strive to become self-reliant in financing their own educational programmes as much as they can possibly manage, because external support may not last for ever. Neither can it be the long-term solution to educational needs. It can, in fact, paralyse an established education system if such support is suddenly withdrawn or drastically reduced without a solid base of local resources being available. Donors do change their attitudes, management and policies, and during hard times there may be a shift in their priorities which may have detrimental effects on a co-operative education system relying mostly on such donations.

In any case, donors would be more inclined to help those who are willing and trying to help themselves and who have made a noticeable effort to that effect. The major component of the Education Fund must therefore be raised from within the co-operative itself. Any external funds could only be complementary.

Using the Education Fund

Whatever the source of finance, and however small the amount of money earmarked for education and training purposes, the need for good planning of how the money is to be spent is paramount. It is one thing to have money and other resources; it is another thing to spend that money and use the resources wisely and profitably. This requires careful consideration of the educational priorities as presented in the Education Plan, and a careful allocation of the available resources to the various items within the plan.

Sometimes the plan may be more ambitious than the actual resources that are available. In such cases, it would be necessary to review the whole plan and identify those areas of the programme which are absolutely necessary, leaving out for the time being those which are not of immediate urgency. The revised plan would then form the basis for drawing up an Education Budget.

The next step would be to draw up a budget which will provide a detailed breakdown of the activities and the amount of money to be expended for each.

The Education Budget should be drawn up within the framework of the funds readily available or guaranteed to be made available. It would be a futile exercise to draw up a budget when there is no hope of getting the necessary funds. The budget should take into account the identified priority needs as presented in the revised Education Plan. There must be an intimate relationship between the revised Education Plan and the Education Budget. The latter is, in fact, a financial reflection of the former.

The Education Budget is normally prepared by the Education/Information Officer who then discusses it with his Chief Executive before it is presented to the Education Committee for further discussion and approval. According to co-operative procedures, however, the approval of the budget by the Education Committee is not conclusive or binding. It will still require the further endorsement of the Management Committee before it is incorporated into the general budget and submitted to the general meeting for final approval.

A good budget must provide details of every expenditure item. This is necessary not only for purposes of budgetary control, but it does also ensure that financial considerations are given for every aspect of the revised Education Plan. Ignoring or overlooking the slightest detail may affect implementation of the programme quite seriously. It is also important to consider possible increases in prices, salaries, travelling costs, educational equipment and materials. Inflationary trends may affect plans quite adversely, and it is always advisable to make some provision for this in the budget.

Economy

A good measure of austerity must be exercised when spending the Education Fund. Even where there is adequate provision in the budget for a particular expenditure item, attempts should always be made to make a saving by economising in the most stringent manner. It is the only way that one can operate within the limits of the budget and possibly stretch the available funds to cater for other identified educational needs left out in the revised plan.

Some of the ways in which savings can be made are:

- Making maximum use of the facilities and manpower resources available. Unless absolutely necessary, the Education/Information Officer should not spend money on equipment such as typewriters, duplicating machines, etc. Instead, he should share the available equipment with the rest of his colleagues. The same should apply to stationery, office accommodation, etc. He should also try to share the services of the existing clerical staff without having to hire more for the education section.
- Using colleagues both from his own organisation and from other organisations doing similar work, to help him in running his programmes or to serve as resource persons without having to hire and pay fees to outsiders.
- Using public transport when travelling on duty, or sharing transport with other friendly institutions within the locality. (This requires proper co-ordination and a good sense of public relations.)
- Collaborating with other institutions doing similar work and sharing the facilities and resources with such institutions.
- Using local public facilities such as community centres and recreation halls as venues for educational activities instead of hiring commercial facilities, such as hotels.
- Hiring or borrowing educational equipment from other institutions (particularly the kind of equipment that is not used very frequently - such as film, slide and overhead projectors) instead of purchasing such equipment.

- Purchasing necessary stationery and other materials in bulk rather than in small quantities so as to make full use of wholesale discounts. Overstocking should however be avoided.
- Careful planning of travel outside the officer's duty station so that he does not stay away too long and does not draw unnecessary travel allowance. When he is away in the field, the Education/Information Officer should try to cover as many activities as possible on his route.
- Avoiding calling unnecessary committee meetings even at the insistence of the Education Committee. (Here the Education/Information Officer should politely explain to the committee why a meeting is not necessary so as to avoid hard feelings.)
- Using locally produced materials (e.g. stationery) if they are available at competitive prices instead of imported ones, even if the former are slightly inferior in quality.

In addition to exercising thrift over money, it is equally important to exercise great care in the use of equipment and materials. Equipment should be handled with great care, kept in good condition and serviced regularly. This will reduce the rate of wear and tear and save money on repairs and replacement. Stationery and other educational materials should be carefully stored and used with maximum economy.

Budgetary Control

The Education Budget should be tightly controlled by the Education Committee, and under no circumstances should money earmarked for education, training and information purposes be diverted to other uses. Whenever this is done, the Education Committee should demand an explanation and insist that unless there is a satisfactory reason, an immediate reimbursement must be made.

In its regular meetings, the Education Committee should always insist on getting a financial report from the Education/Information Officer and check whether the Education Fund has been used properly and for the purpose for which it was originally intended. The committee should also ensure that expenditure does not exceed the amount that has been budgeted for each individual item. Spending money in excess of the budget amounts to spending money that one does not have. This must be avoided in all circumstances.

In Appendix II we give a specimen of an Education Budget covering a period of one year. Note how the Education Budget is closely related to the Education Plan (Appendix I).

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The implementation of many of the educational programmes will require some basic facilities such as a classroom (with all the necessary equipment - chairs, desks, chalkboard, etc.), accommodation (board and lodging) for some of the longer courses, etc. Almost invariably, a co-operative organisation (such as a co-operative union) launching an educational programme may not own all these facilities.

Even where financial resources allow, it would not be a wise economic venture for the co-operative to invest members' money in permanent buildings to provide classrooms and dormitories for its educational activities, however important education and training are. The nature of the programmes that are to be conducted and their frequency do not warrant such an investment.

With proper initiative, co-operation and co-ordination on the part of the Education/Information Officer (with support from the Education Committee and the management) it should be possible to utilise facilities owned by other educational institutions within the area - such as boarding-schools, farmers' training centres, community/social training centres or a co-operative college (if it happens to be located within reasonable proximity). Such places are occupied when regular institutional programmes are carried out, but their facilities could be utilised during slack seasons (when they are not running at full capacity) or when they close for short or long holidays. As already mentioned, this requires proper initiative and co-ordination, particularly at the planning stage. This is the kind of co-ordination we mentioned in an earlier chapter - the need for collaboration with other institutions.

What Kind of Facilities?

The kind of facilities required will depend largely on the type and duration of the educational activity. A two-weeks course for managers (or chairmen) of primary societies affiliated to the co-operative organisation may mean that the participants are travelling from different parts of the district, province or region to a central point where the training is taking place. Geographical conditions in the area may not make it possible for the participants to return home each day, and therefore they will

have to stay at the venue of the course or at a place within easy reach.

In such circumstances, the organiser of the course must consider the following basic facilities:

- (i) transport to and from the venue of the course (before it starts and after it ends)
- (ii) accommodation for the participants and resource personnel at the venue of the course or at a place near enough to the venue of the course (if accommodation cannot be secured at one and the same place)
- (iii) adequate meals for the duration of the course for the participants and resource personnel
- (iv) classroom facilities with all the necessary amenities
- (v) recreational facilities

If, however, a course of the same duration (two weeks) for members of one co-operative society is to be organised, one would have to consider that:

- (a) the society covers a relatively small area (a village or several villages close to one another)
- (b) the participants can attend the course on a "daily" basis - i.e. returning to their homes at the end of each day's sessions
- (c) no transport will be required, except perhaps for resource personnel coming from far away
- (d) no accommodation will be required for the participants, except perhaps for resource personnel coming from far away who cannot commute daily to and from the venue of the course
- (e) although full board may not be required, it may be necessary to provide lunch to the participants and resource personnel.

In such circumstances, the organiser of the course must consider the following facilities:

- (i) securing transport for the resource personnel (if this is considered necessary)
- (ii) securing accommodation for the resource personnel (if this is considered necessary)

- (iii) securing classroom facilities with all the necessary amenities for the duration of the course
- (iv) arranging meals (lunch) for the course participants and resource personnel (if this is considered necessary)

For other types of educational activities such as one-day courses/ seminars for members and/or committee members, study groups or demonstrations, there will be little demand on facilities, as such activities can be conducted under some makeshift conditions where more conventional facilities such as classrooms are not easy to secure - e.g. in the society's store (if there is adequate space), in a church, under a tree (if weather conditions permit), or at the local community hall if not otherwise occupied. All this calls for imagination, initiative and pragmatism on the part of the Education/Information Officer.

Other Considerations

What we have discussed above are only the basic considerations. A more detailed examination of some of these considerations is necessary for a practical approach to determining suitable facilities. The following are among the factors to be considered:

R. The Cost Factor: The first consideration when determining a venue is the likely costs involved. The Field Education Officer is likely to have to operate on a tight budget which must be stretched to cover his planned activities and at times he will find it extremely difficult to make ends meet. This necessitates stringency in spending money. It is therefore essential that in determining where to accommodate a course or seminar, his decision should be influenced by how much it will cost for accommodation, meals, classrooms and other facilities.

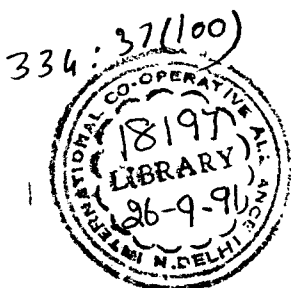
Naturally, some institutions will charge more than others. However, while it is ideal to look for the lowest rates, it is also important to consider the quality of facilities offered. Of course the most expensive facilities - just like the most expensive commodities - are not always the best. On the other hand, low cost is normally associated with cheap quality. It would thus serve no purpose to accommodate people in squalid conditions or feed them with a poor diet in order to save money. Some form of balance between cost and quality must be struck.

On the whole, government training institutions, such as farmers' training centres, community training centres, co-operative colleges, etc., are modestly priced and would only charge the actual costs as they do not operate on a commercial basis. What is more, such institutions are able to provide a "learning atmosphere" as they are specifically designed for educational purposes. Even then the rates may differ, even if the facilities offered are basically the same. It is the task of the Education/Information Officer to determine which institution is more suitable for his activity. Of course, as we shall see shortly, this choice is not determined by costs alone but also by other equally important factors. Hotels, motels, guest-houses and similar commercial institutions should be avoided as venues for educational activities, unless absolutely necessary, and used only if the quality of facilities and costs are competitive to those mentioned above.

2. Location: The location of the venue is of equal importance. Firstly, from the point of view of costs, it would not be wise to place a course three hundred kilometers from where the majority of the participants live, just because cheap facilities are available for such a venue. It may cost less in accommodation and meals but it will certainly cost a great deal more in transport and travelling time.

Secondly, it is necessary to consider the physical surroundings and the amenities offered. Some of the things to consider in connection with the location for an educational activity, particularly in the case of courses and seminars where the participants have to be accommodated for several days or weeks, are:

- accessibility: is it easy to get there by road or rail?
- are there shops nearby (in case course participants wish to purchase toiletries, cigarettes, etc.)? If not, can temporary arrangements be made to provide for such items?
- is there a hospital, dispensary or clinic nearby (in case someone falls ill during the course)?
- does the location offer a "co-operative" environment? Would it be possible, for example, for the participants to visit a local co-operative during the course for practical work or demonstration purposes?



3. Other Physical Facilities

Accommodation: In the case of courses where participants will be accommodated, it is necessary for the organiser to physically check the accommodation facilities offered. He should ensure that:

- there are enough beds
- there is enough bedding (mattresses, blankets, sheets, pillows, etc.)
- the rooms or dormitories are properly maintained with proper ventilation, lighting, etc.
- toilets and bathrooms/showers are in proper working condition
- towels, soap, toilet-paper are provided (if not he may either purchase these or ask course participants to bring their own)

Meals: The organiser should check and ensure that suitable meals will be provided, prepared and served under hygienic conditions. He should also ensure that there are ample facilities and utensils to cater for the size of group attending the course.

Classrooms: He should check and ensure that classrooms are:

- spacious enough
- clean and well maintained
- properly ventilated and well lit
- equipped with all the necessary furniture: chairs, tables and chalkboard

He should also check that:

- audio-visual aids and equipment e.g. film and slide projectors, screens, etc. are available if necessary. If not, he should procure some from elsewhere. Before doing this, however, he should ensure that electricity is provided (if not, he should obtain a generator).
- additional room is available for group-work (if the course will entail such).

4. Stationery and Other Educational Materials : The organiser must ensure that all the stationery and other educational materials he will require are either available at the venue or are brought in from outside. These include:

- chalk
- dusters
- audiovisual aids - e.g. slides, films, charts, graphs, posters, tapes, handouts
- books, notebooks, pens, etc.

Considerations for Other Types of Educational Activities

In the case of short one-day courses, seminars, study groups, demonstrations, etc., where accommodation is not required, some basic considerations are also necessary even when such activities are conducted on a makeshift arrangement.

(a) Where such activities are conducted in an enclosed area, e.g. a society's store, it is important to ensure that:

- the place is properly sheltered
- there is ample room-
- there is proper ventilation and light
- there are no chemicals stored there, such as fertilisers, insecticides or other compounds which can be dangerous to humans if inhaled or touched
- there are toilet facilities within easy reach

(b) Where these activities are conducted in the open air, it is important to check and ensure that:

- the weather conditions are suitable (e.g. free from scorching sun, rain, snow or windstorm)
- the area is free from noise (from passers-by, children, birds or animals); and
- free from insects, such as mosquitoes, etc. (bees are known to have caused havoc at open air gatherings)

Conclusion

Success in acquiring suitable facilities for educational activities will depend very much on the organiser - the Education/

Information Officer. As already mentioned, he must have imagination, a good sense of judgment, initiative and drive. It is absolutely essential that he should personally check the available facilities long before he convenes a course, and satisfy himself that they are suitable for the required purpose.

. . . .

This chapter deals with some of the most common educational methods employed in organising co-operative field education programmes. Neither space nor the scope of this manual allows us to go into great detail about any of the methods. Our purpose here is to provide a general description of these methods and how they can best be employed.

1. Courses

These are the most common methods of organising educational programmes. They vary in duration from one day to several months and even several years. Most of the long courses - one month and above - are conducted in residential institutions specialising in a specific type of training, such as a co-operative college or an agricultural training school. Long courses require resources and facilities far beyond what a co-operative organisation can afford and, of course, it would not be possible to cater for all co-operative training needs in residential institutions. It is true that employees, and sometimes committee members, can be sponsored for longer courses at co-operative training institutions (mainly co-operative colleges), but this is only a drop in the ocean compared to the large number of people who need to be trained.

Regardless of the duration, courses have the same characteristics and purpose. The main purpose of a course is to impart knowledge (education) and technical skills (training) to people who need the knowledge and skills in order to carry out specific functions or in order to enable them to take the right decisions.

The main method employed in a course is that the teacher gives instruction or explanations to a group. The participants of the group ask questions and discuss the topic with the teacher in order to get a better understanding, but the main flow of information is from the teacher to the group.

1.1 Types of Field Courses: We are using the expression "field courses" to distinguish the type of short-term courses (one day to three weeks) which is conducted by the co-operative field educator, from the long courses conducted in specialised training institutions.

Field courses can be divided into main groupings:

(i) One-day courses: Such courses can be conducted at any convenient place (see Education Facilities in Chapter VII), although it is most common to hold them at the premises of the co-operative. One-day courses are normally conducted for members and committee members (they are sometimes known as member information days), but non-members who are interested in the co-operative may also attend. One-day courses have, among others, the following advantages:

- Compared to other educational methods, they are less costly since they do not require accommodation for the participants, transport and other facilities.
- They give members of a co-operative the opportunity to come together more often to discuss matters relating to the co-operative and their own welfare. Otherwise such an opportunity would only occur once a year, i.e. at general meetings. The type of business to be dealt with in one-day courses is likely to be different from that of general meetings. Courses can provide an opportunity of discussing matters not tackled at general meetings.
- Where such courses are held on the premises of the co-operative, the very idea of members making a "school" out of their own co-operative fulfils a social co-operative need and serves to harmonise relationships among members. The co-operative is thus seen not merely as a place where members dispose of their produce, or purchase their consumer goods, or save and borrow money, but as a social centre where people can meet and discuss solutions to their problems, exchange ideas, views and experiences.

(ii) Week-long courses: Under this category all courses ranging in duration from one to three weeks are grouped.

Such courses are normally organised for managers and other professional employees of co-operative societies (such as

book-keepers, cashiers, store-keepers, chairmen of primary co-operative societies and committee members). Ordinary co-operative members would seldom attend such courses.

The organisation and management of week-long courses is more formal than the one-day courses discussed above, and require more resources and facilities. Because of their duration, it is necessary to provide the participants with accommodation, meals and class-room facilities.

Courses of this type normally impart knowledge on a variety of subjects relevant to the needs of the participants. These may include co-operative principles, management and organisation, duties and responsibilities of members, etc. They also impart skills in a variety of fields such as management, book-keeping and accounting, display of goods in shops, services to members, procedures at meetings and other skills required by the participants so that they can improve their performance in whatever capacity they are serving the co-operative.

Week-long courses have the advantage that they are long enough to tackle the essential features of a subject or problem, but short enough to allow the participants to return quickly to their regular work or homes where they have other pressing commitments. Co-operative employees cannot be kept too long from their place of work as the work of the society may suffer. Committee members usually have other personal commitments apart from serving the co-operative.

For all educational activities, it is essential at the planning stage to consider the most convenient time of the year to conduct the activity. Convenience here relates to the participants and not the organisers. It is, for example, unwise to organise training courses for committee members of an agricultural society at the "peak season" when both employees and committee members are busy receiving members' produce. Similarly, a course organised for members at the time of year when they are busy ploughing, weeding or harvesting, will have a poor attendance.

Organisation of these courses requires careful planning and preparation. In determining a suitable venue one must carefully observe all the considerations which we discussed under "Facilities" in the previous chapter.

Equally significant is the need to prepare suitable lecture notes, study materials and educational aids for the course. The nature and theme of the course will determine the type of materials and aids to be used, but whatever they are, materials and aids have to be prepared well in advance of the course.

It is necessary to mention that a course of such duration will require several, several resource people to tackle the various topics in the course programme. Not only would it be monotonous and boring to have one person talking to a group for two weeks, but it would be rare to come across one single person who could competently undertake to deal with the various subjects of a two weeks' programme.

When engaging resource personnel the course organiser should try to get the best talents available in the particular field. Ample time should be given to the resource personnel to prepare their lectures. They should be thoroughly briefed on the subject matter, the type of participants and the objectives of each topic they are to deal with.

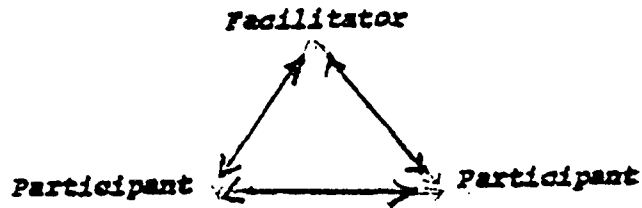
A specimen programme for a two-weeks course for committee members of agricultural co-operative societies appears in Appendix III.

2. Seminars

The purpose of a seminar, as in the case of a course, is to provide knowledge and information. Training in technical skills, however, does not normally feature in a seminar.

The purpose of a seminar, much more than in a training course, is to facilitate active discussion among the participants. Resource personnel will play a significant role in a seminar. But whereas in the case of a training course the flow of information is mainly from the teacher to the participants (with relatively little flow of information from the participants to the teacher), in a seminar the

flow of information is more liberal and is three-directional: from resource person (facilitator) to participant, from participant to participant, and from participant to facilitator.



In a seminar there are no teachers as such. They are known as resource persons or, to use a more appropriate term facilitators giving informative talks, often with the aim of initiating discussion. It is also important that the participants themselves deliver reports and initiate discussion. Although there should be a substantial amount of knowledge and information coming from the facilitator, the flow of information between participants should also be rich.

Seminars may be organised for employees of co-operative societies, committee members and members. Their duration may range from one or two days to three weeks.

3. Conferences

The purpose of a conference is to bring together a group of people with a common interest for a short period of time - normally one or two days - to receive the latest information relevant to their fields of interest and to discuss matters of importance.

A conference is therefore very similar to a seminar, but whereas the latter discusses matters of principles and policies, the former is normally more concerned with practical questions and more tied to the daily work of those who participate.

Managers of primary societies within a district or province may be summoned to a conference to discuss matters related to the operations of their societies. They may also be summoned to regular conferences organised a few times a year to receive the latest information and instructions from the district co-operative organisation or government officers concerned with co-operative development.

The organisation and management of a conference is much the same as that of a seminar, although there is usually a larger part

of the time allocated to the provision of information than to discussions, as the time of a conference is much shorter than that of a seminar.

4. Study Groups

Another method of organising co-operative education programmes in the field is that of study groups. This category also includes study circles and discussion groups.

A study group is a gathering of people with the same interests who get together to study a subject or subjects under the direction of a leader appointed by and from amongst the group. Studies are conducted at a time, pace and place determined by the group itself with very little - if any - external influence.

Unlike a training course or seminar, there is no teacher or facilitator in a study group. Studies are conducted in an informal and flexible manner. The group appoints from amongst its members, a chairman and a secretary. The chairman leads the studies, while the secretary notes down all the decisions and main points emanating from the study and the discussions that follow. Essentially, the chairman and the secretary should be literate although not all the other members of the group need be literate. Generally, there are no restrictions or qualifications required for those who wish to participate in a study group other than a genuine interest in the co-operative, and active and regular participation.

Central to learning in a group are study guides or study manuals specially designed for the purpose. Correspondence courses (see below) may be used as study guides. Other materials such as posters, charts, books, films, slides and tapes may also be used to support the study guides. Co-operative radio programmes are another way of backing up the study materials.

When the group meets, the secretary reads from the study guides, followed by discussions guided by the chairman, in which each member of the group should participate. The discussions are of great significance as they ensure active participation by all members - including those who cannot read or write.

The role of the chairman during the discussions is crucial. He must ensure that each member of the group participates actively but without allowing some individuals to dominate the discussions

or talk out of context. He must also summarise the conclusions reached as a result of the discussions. These conclusions are then noted down by the secretary.

The size of a standard study group should be between 5 and 15 people (including the chairman and secretary). Less than 5 is considered too small; if the group exceeds 15 it becomes too large to manage.

A study group does not always confine itself to educational matters. It may also discuss other issues or problems affecting the group members and their community.

Although a study group is informal, both in structure and procedures, it nevertheless requires proper organisation and management. Members must be properly motivated and a good amount of discipline and seriousness must prevail. This calls for good leadership.

The role of the co-operative field educator in connection with the study group is:

- Training of study group leaders (chairmen and secretaries)
- Preparation of study guides and back-up materials
- Organising and motivating members of the study group
- Providing regular guidance to the group and its leaders
- Monitoring the activities of the group
- Evaluating the activities of the study group

5. Correspondence Courses

Correspondence courses fall under the group of educational methods known as Distance Education whose main characteristic is that the student is separated from his teacher (or teachers) by geographical distance. Education by radio or television is among these methods.

As in a study group, the correspondence course student studies at his own pace, at a time and place largely determined by the student himself. Unlike a study group, however, there is a stronger and more direct link between student and teacher even though they are physically isolated.

Correspondence courses may be studied either by individuals or in study groups (see above).

There are two crucial factors in a correspondence course:

- (a) The Teacher: The correspondence course student has the disadvantage of being deprived of the physical presence of a teacher as in the case of face-to-face teaching. He learns by himself relying on study materials and comments received from the teacher who marks his written assignments. It is therefore important that the teacher should not only be aware of this characteristic limitation, but should also endeavour to compensate for this limitation through the presentation of the study materials and the counselling and motivation that he provides to the student through correspondence. In dealing with the student's written assignment he should refrain from the classical practice of marking examination papers just with ticks and crosses, without explaining to the student where he has gone wrong and why, or praising him where he has done well. The teacher should take the trouble, calmly and patiently, to assist the student with his studies by counselling and encouraging him.
- (b) The Materials: Of equal importance is the quality of the materials. Since the student depends almost exclusively on the study materials and has no way of seeking immediate or direct clarification whenever he is stuck with a difficult part of the course, the study materials must be prepared and presented in a manner that will eliminate such problems. They should be presented in a simple and clear way, with a lot of illustrations, examples and "test yourself" exercises.

Provision and management of correspondence courses is a function undertaken at the national level - almost invariably by the national co-operative training institution. It involves a costly infrastructure and it would be absolutely out of the question for the field co-operative educator to ever think of organising and providing correspondence courses on his own. Where correspondence courses are offered, however, he can assist both the students and the institution offering the correspondence courses by:

- Recruitment - encouraging and assisting co-operators to enrol for the course
- Administration - liaising between the student and the institution offering correspondence courses

- Guidance - serving as the local "representative" of the correspondence institution, particularly with regard to counselling, guiding, assisting and motivating the correspondence course student
- Monitoring the performance of the student and providing appropriate help and encouragement
- Back-up - providing back-up materials and facilities, including additional study guides, relevant reports, short seminars (especially week-end seminars and tuition).

CEMAS offers a manual on "Correspondence Education" in its series of publications on "Methods in Co-operative Education". This manual is highly recommended to Co-operative Field Educators who have access to, or who intend to use, correspondence instruction as a means of educating co-operators. The manual will also prove valuable to co-operative institutions which provide correspondence courses as part of their education and training programmes, as to ways and means by which their present provision might be improved. It can also serve as a guide to those co-operative institutions which may be planning to introduce such courses.

6. Radio Programmes

Like correspondence courses, education by means of the radio medium falls under the category of methods referred to as distance education, where the learner is separated from the teacher by a physical distance.

Radio is indisputably the most powerful means of mass communication. It has the added advantage that it has the capacity to reach illiterate people.

On the negative side, however, radio has some characteristic limitations - prominent among which is the absence of the visual element so crucial in communication. It is also instantaneous, i.e. the message, once given, is not repeated and cannot be questioned.

Despite its limitations, the radio medium can be, and is being, used as an effective method of disseminating co-operative education and information programmes. In fact, some of its characteristic limitations have been eliminated or drastically minimised through the use of study guides complementing the radio programmes, and organised radio listening groups.

A radio listening group is organised in the same way, and has much the same features, as a study group, the only difference being that, instead of relying mostly on study guides, the message relayed through the radio is the major source of information. Other back-up methods, such as study guides based on the study materials, can be reinforced or complemented by radio programmes, cassette recordings, slides, telephone discussions, occasional visits to the student by the teacher, and short seminars.

7. Study Visits

Study visits, study excursions and study tours are all terms used in reference to a visit made by an individual or a group of people to a place other than their normal place of residence or work for educational purposes.

The expression "study tour", because of misuse, has gained a rather unsavoury connotation because it has come to be associated somehow with tourism - a kind of "joy ride".

Most people have a natural liking for travel - to see other places, see new things and meet new people - especially if someone else is paying for the expenses. This tends to obscure or defeat the bona fide educational purpose of a study visit.

A study tour is a serious educational activity just as much as other educational methods, such as training courses and seminars. A well organised study visit or tour will provide a good opportunity for people to learn by talking and observing, thus getting new ideas and learning different ways of doing things. If badly organised, however, it will be a waste of time and money: the promotion, not of learning, but of meaningless tourism.

Study visits may be organised for committee members, members and employees from a village, district or province to another village, district, province or country. For any meaningful study visit, the following considerations must be taken into account:

- (a) The Need: There must be a genuine need for people from one co-operative to visit another area. This must be a type of need which cannot be solved satisfactorily through other educational methods such as training courses, seminars, exhibitions or demonstrations.

- (b) Objectives: The objectives of the study visit must be clearly formulated. The leading questions should always be:
- What do we want to achieve by the study visit?
 - What should the individual or group do after the study visit?
 - How will the study visit change attitudes and improve the performance of the people taking part?
 - How will one be able to judge or measure whether the study visit has had the desired impact?
- (c) Type of people to be involved: Study visits cost money (transport, accommodation, meals, etc.). It is important that the type and calibre of people sponsored for study tours should benefit from the visit. It would be unwise, for example, to sponsor a store-keeper, a watchman or office messenger for a study tour. The co-operative would not benefit much from such a visit. On the other hand, committee members should be given a higher priority than members, by virtue of their being leaders who can articulate new ideas and initiate action more effectively than ordinary members.
- (d) Areas of Study: Study visits require proper and careful planning. At the planning stage it is necessary to identify specific areas which should be studied during the visit.
- (e) Communication with the Hosts: Those organising the study tour should have a fairly good knowledge of the area or institution to be visited so that they can pinpoint the specific areas to be studied. It is important that the hosts be informed in advance about the proposed visit, the type of visitors and the kind of things they will wish to see.
- (f) Practical Arrangements: Efficient planning and organisation require careful attention to practical details. This applies equally to organising study visits. It is important that the practical arrangements include the budget for the trip, booking of transport, accommodation and meals, both en route and in the area to be visited.
- (g) Briefing of the Participants: Those taking part in the study visit should be properly briefed about the journey, the time involved, physical features of the area to be visited, what they will see, whom they will meet and what they should observe. It is important that the participants should be given a mental

picture of what they will see, before they set out on the study visit.

- (h) During the visit: If the visit involves a group of people, it is advisable that the group keep together during the trip. It may happen, of course, that during a visit, say to a small co-operative factory or shop, the group is too large to fit into one room which may necessitate splitting it into two or more smaller groups. Whether members of the group move together or in smaller groups, it is important that at the end of each day the whole group should meet together in order to discuss what they have seen and what they have been told. Participants should take careful notes of everything.
- (i) Debriefing: After the study tour the group should meet with the co-operative officials and discuss the report of their visit. If there are recommendations on new ideas that could be adopted by the co-operative, they should be noted down and brought forward for discussion and appropriate decision at a committee meeting or, if need be, at a general meeting.

8. Audio-Visual Aids

Audio-visual aids are just what the words say: aids to hearing and sight in the learning process. They aid in facilitating communication. They help improve, as well as simplify, learning.

Audio-visual aids are divided into three main categories, namely -

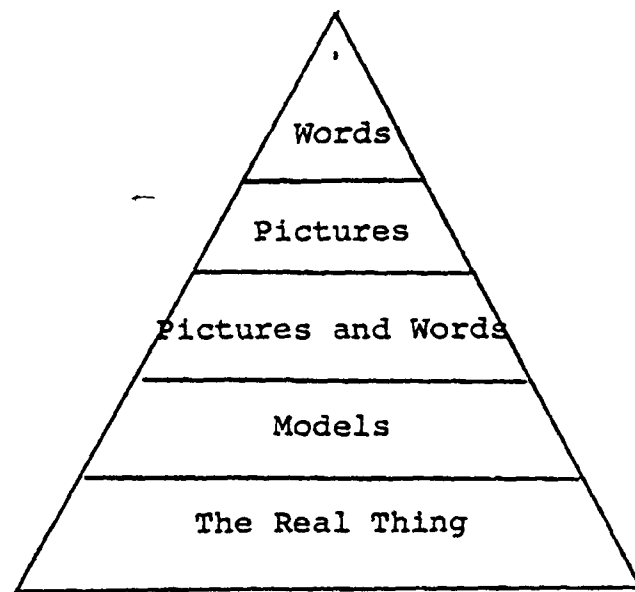
- Audio aids: Those relating to hearing - e.g. recorded cassettes, tapes, gramophone records, radio, etc.
- Visual aids: Those relating to sight - e.g. chalkboards, flannel graphs, flip charts, overhead projectors, posters, charts, graphs, photographs, slides, filmstrips, models, etc.
- Audio-visual aids: Those relating both to hearing and sight - e.g. motion pictures (cinema) and television.

Co-operative field workers, as indeed all those involved in communication, will find that verbal communication (e.g. lecturing), though used most frequently, is not always the most effective way of communication. Information communicated in this way is not easily retainable - as the old saying goes: "What I hear I forget; what I

see I remember; what I do I know". Audio-visual aids render learning more effective as they involve both hearing and sight. They are also closer to reality.

In co-operatives, people learn about real things in real life. Thus the closer to reality the teaching aid is, the more effective communication will be; the more abstract or distant from reality an aid is, the less effective will learning become. If we wanted to teach someone how to type, the best aid to use would obviously be a typewriter. Sometimes however, it is not possible to use the real thing as a teaching aid. It would, for example, be unthinkable to teach people how to extinguish fires by setting a house on fire! Where the real thing cannot be used, one should try to use an aid that is as close as possible to the real thing, or better still, a model.

The following triangle illustrates the relative effectiveness of reality in relation to verbal communication:



We must emphasise here that audio-visual aids are simply what they are: aids to teaching/learning. An aid is only a tool in the hands of a teacher to help him communicate, and should in no way replace him.

Audio-visual aids should be carefully selected and should only be used when relevant and necessary. They are not things to be wantonly used by gadget-happy communicators. To attempt to make an educational session more interesting merely by adding a few pictures is not necessarily the best way of teaching. It is important to first analyse the problem one is dealing with, prepare proper lesson

notes and then decide on the best audio-visual aids to use. Local conditions, the type of audience, their level of comprehension (especially of pictorial symbols), are some of the things to be seriously considered when deciding and designing the type of aids to be used. It is important also to remember that no aid will be of much value unless the person presenting it is lively and enthusiastic.

When deciding which aids to use, we must also consider the possibilities of maintaining them. As a rule, the more sophisticated an aid is, the more difficult it is to maintain. This is of special importance when deciding on investing in new aids. If it is necessary to move the aid about, it is necessary to consider its portability. One would, for example, find it cumbersome and certainly risky to move around with a film projector if the only mode of transport available is a motorcycle. Other facilities such as electricity must also be considered.

The person using an aid should be skillful in using it. An aid in the hands of a novice, however good it is, may defeat the purpose for which it was meant - i.e. to communicate effectively. A good piece of advice here, is to practise the use of the aid before the session commences, until one has a feeling of confidence that one has mastered its use. It is important also to ensure that the aid is in proper working order.

Planning: Good planning is necessary for the best presentation. When planning what one is going to teach, it is also important to bear in mind how to visualise one's ideas. Whether one is writing a manuscript or just the key words, you should make notes on how to handle the visual aids as you go along.

Preparing the Audience: The teacher should prepare the audience and put people at their ease, showing personal interest in them. He should explain what kind of aids he is going to use and how they will help them to learn, and he should suggest specific points requiring attention and observation. It is always a great help if the audience is prepared and knows what to look for. This is of special importance when films are used, as the teacher will not normally be able to interrupt and explain or call attention to any particular point, once projection commences.

Presenting the Material: A too rapid presentation of visual materials should be avoided. A teacher already familiar with his material may find that, for this reason alone, he is making insufficient allowance for his students to assimilate material which is new to them. Care must be taken, therefore, with the rate of presentation. Varying the pace will both stimulate and add interest but, like the art of story-telling, it will be best developed as a personal technique. If it appears that the subject is not fully understood, it will be necessary to revise the subject and review the aids.

In addition to the above, it is important to remember the following points when using audio-visual aids:

1. Use only visual aids which can be seen by all members of the group. View the visual aids critically from a distance and make sure that all words, pictures and symbols are readable.
2. When using audio aids, make sure that they are sufficiently audible. Listen critically from a distance to ensure that anyone sitting in any corner of the room can hear without difficulty.
3. Make sure that all present can see both the speaker and the visual material.
4. Do not present too much material at any one time.
5. Do not leave a poster, a chart or any display material on display for too long. It will lose its effectiveness and may even detract from the value of material displayed later.
6. Make sure that materials are presented in a logical sequence.
7. Experiment with the material to ensure that it is not subject to misinterpretation.
8. Face the audience, not the aid.
9. Do not talk to your audience while you are turned away from it to change part of your material.
10. Use an aid only when you are fully satisfied that it will effectively communicate what you want to put across.

CEMAS has published a manual on Audio-Visual Aids, which is available to co-operative field workers.

APPENDIX I

SPECIMEN EDUCATION PLAN

MELUSA DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE UNION
Education and Information Department

EDUCATION PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1st JANUARY - 31st DECEMBER 19X5

1. Introduction

This plan has been drawn up in response to educational needs identified following a situation study carried out by this Department, and a subsequent analysis of performance problems existing among our member societies. Due to limited resources, priority has been given to the most pressing needs, while the less urgent ones have been relegated to future plans.

2. Some Basic Data

The Union serves all the primary co-operative societies in the Melusa District, which covers an area of 110 square kilometers. There are 25 agricultural marketing co-operative societies in the district affiliated to the Melusa District Co-operative Union (MDCU). The position regarding membership and staff in the societies as at 30th September 19X4 was as follows:

Number of affiliated primary societies	25
Total number of individual members	9,312
Committee members (9 in each society)	225
Managers (1 in each society)	25
Book-keepers (1 in each society)	25
Clerks and storekeepers	64
Other supporting staff	37

None of the members has attended a course on co-operatives. 75 committee members have attended various courses; the rest (150) have not had any training.

All society managers and book-keepers have attended the basic co-operative management and co-operative book-keeping courses respectively at the Co-operative College.

28 of the clerks and storekeepers have undergone the two-month induction course at the college.

3. Planned Activities

3.1 Staff Training

Although all managers and book-keepers have attended basic courses at the Co-operative College, their training was too brief and inadequate to match the standards of performance expected of them. Almost invariably, the managers are having problems in adopting the new crop procurement procedures recently introduced. Book-keepers too are having problems with the new standardised accounting system. Consequently, there is a high degree of produce leakage, and records in many societies are not properly kept. As a matter of priority there is a need to train the two categories of staff, and the following courses have been recommended during the year:

3.1.1 Society Managers

Activity:	Society Management Course
Participants:	18 Managers of primary societies
Time:	Monday 1st to Friday 5th February 19X5
Venue:	Farmers' Training Centre, Melusa
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To enable the managers of societies to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.- To enable the managers of societies to plan and organise their work in the manner prescribed in the Societies Operating Manual.- To enable the managers of societies to adopt the new crop procurement procedures efficiently.

Note: A detailed course programme will be worked out to meet the above objectives.

3.1.2 Book-keepers

Activity:	Society Book-keepers Course
Participants:	18 Book-keepers of primary societies
Time:	Monday 8th to Friday 12th February 19X5
Venue:	Farmers' Training Centre, Melusa
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To enable primary society book-keepers to apply the new standardised

book-keeping system accurately.

Note: A detailed course programme will be worked out to meet the above objective.

- 3.1.3 In addition to the two courses to be conducted by MDCU, the Department of Co-operative Development, in collaboration with the Co-operative College, has offered 7 places at the college for managers from our societies to undergo a 6-month certificate course in co-operative management.

The objective of the course is to raise the standards of performance of those managers who have already taken the basic co-operative management course at the college. It will deal with more advanced levels of management in agricultural marketing co-operative societies. The newly introduced crop procurement procedures will also feature in the programme. All expenses will be met from the Department's special fund for staff development. The seven managers will be selected from those societies with competent book-keepers who will temporarily take over the functions of the managers while the latter are on study leave.

- 3.1.4 The Department has also offered 7 places to book-keepers of our affiliated societies to undergo a 3-week training course in co-operative book-keeping.

The objective of the course is to enable book-keepers of agricultural marketing societies to implement the new standardised book-keeping system with maximum efficiency.

The seven book-keepers will be selected from those societies which have shown poorest performance in book-keeping due to inadequate training of their staff.

Like the managers' course, all the expenses for the book-keepers' course will be borne by the Department of Co-operative Development.

The two courses at the college will be conducted during the first half of 19X5.

If the above staff training plan is properly implemented and the objectives achieved, it is expected that by the beginning of July 19X5 all managers will have undergone some training. It will therefore be possible to implement the new crop procurement procedures and the standardised book-keeping system with the desired standards of performance.

3.2 Committee Member Education

Our performance problem analysis of the societies has confirmed that some of the most serious problems constraining efficient performance in the societies arise from lack of training on the part of committee members. There is an obviously higher degree of performance in those societies where committee members have undergone training relating to their basic duties than in those where committee members have not undergone any training. The crucial role played by committee members in important decision-making and the day-to-day supervision of the societies' affairs demands that they are properly trained for these duties. Of the 225 committee members in the societies, only a third have so far been trained. There is thus a backlog of 150 untrained committee members whose training needs have to be catered for. With our limited resources, however, we cannot afford to train all of them immediately.

Against this background, we have planned the following activities for committee members:

Activity:	Training course for committee members
Participants:	25 committee members of primary societies
Time:	Monday 1st to Friday 5th March 19X5
Venue:	The Union Board Room
Objectives:	To enable committee members to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- interpret the bye-laws of their societies- interpret financial statements- make sound decisions on the management of the societies- exercise proper control of the societies' funds and property- maintain good relations with members and staff

Three more courses, each with the same number of participants and the same objectives, will be held at the same venue on the following dates:

Monday 8th to Friday 12th March

Monday 15th to Friday 19th March

Monday 22nd to Friday 26th March

Participants for these training courses will be selected from amongst those who have not had any training in the past.

When this programme is completed, there will be altogether 175 training committee members by the end of March 19X5.

The remaining 50 who cannot be accommodated in the present programme will be enlisted in the member education programme and study groups (see 3.3. below).

3.3 Member Education

For our co-operative societies to achieve the required standards of performance, it is necessary to educate not only the staff and committee members, but also the rank and file co-operative members. No member education programmes have been conducted in the past and it is planned that during 19X5 and subsequent years, much emphasis will be placed on this area. The following activities are planned during the year:

3.3.1 One-Day Seminars

36 one-day seminars for society members are planned to take place during the months of May, June and July (the period between end of planting and harvesting which starts in August, when members are less occupied with their farms).

- Participants: Each seminar will be attended by 50 members.
- Venue: All seminars will be held at the local societies.
- Objectives: To enable co-operative members to:
- play an active role in the affairs of their societies by making full use of the services offered, and by participating actively and constructively in discussions aimed at developing the societies;
 - fulfil their obligations towards the societies;

- interpret and adhere to the bye-laws which govern the operations of the co-operative;
- conduct themselves in a manner that will help to develop the co-operative.

Note: A detailed course programme will be designed to meet the above objectives.

The 36 one-day seminars will cater for 1,800 members, which is only a small percentage of the total membership. The following methods will be used to cater for the rest of the members:

3.3.2 Study Groups

It is planned that at least four study groups, each consisting of 15 members, will be formed in each society.

Materials for use in the study groups will be developed during the latter half of July and August 19X5. The latter half of September will be devoted to the training of study group leaders (see 3.3.4.).

The organisation of the study groups will start in the latter-half of October and the beginning of November so that by the end of November at least 100 study groups will be working.

It is estimated that by the end of the year, about 1,500 members will have studied in these groups.

3.3.3 Radio Programmes

During the year the Co-operative College will launch a weekly radio education programme designed for co-operative members. Members will be urged in their general meetings, by circular letters and posters, to listen to the radio programmes. It is estimated that at least 5,000 members will listen to the programmes. Because of limited resources and time, it will not be possible to organise members' radio listening groups, but we plan to do so in the future.

3.3.4 Study Group Leaders

Prior to the organisation of the study groups, four training courses are planned for study group leaders who, with

the help of the Education Committee, will organise and lead the groups. The plans for the courses are as follows:

Activity: Training course for Study Group Leaders
Participants: 25 committee members selected from each society. The committee members must have attended the committee members training course (see 3.2.).
Time: Monday 14th to Friday 18th September
Venue: The Union Board Room
Objectives: To enable committee members to:
- organise members and form study groups
- manage study groups and lead discussions arising from the studies.

Three more courses, each with the same number of participants and objectives, will be held at the same venue on the following dates:

Monday 21st to Friday 25th September

Monday 12th to Friday 16th October

Monday 19th to Friday 23rd October

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

A regular feature of the work programme during the year will be the monitoring of the education and information activities of the Union. This work will be carried out mainly by members of the Education Committee, the Chief Executive and the staff of the Co-operative Development Department. The objective is to ensure that the programmes are properly designed and implemented and that the objectives set are being achieved.

Towards the end of the year a team consisting of senior officers from the Co-operative Development Department, the Co-operative College and the Union, will carry out an evaluation of the education and information work carried out by the Union during the year.

5. Information and Publicity

5.1 Information

5.1.1 During the year the Union will launch a quarterly newsletter with an initial circulation of 600 copies. The newsletter, to be named "The Melusa Co-operator", will

appear in the Melusian language and will be directed primarily to co-operative members of our affiliates. Copies will also be made available to the public and other co-operative institutions in the country.

It will consist of 12 pages featuring, among other things, the work of the Union; news about co-operative development in Melusa in particular, and the rest of the country in general; and inform leaders about general co-operative problems. One-third of the newsletter will be devoted to co-operative member education. The first issue will appear at the end of March 19X5. The Assistant Education/Information Officer, to be recruited in January, will be assigned the responsibility of producing the newsletter, among other duties. The newsletter will be issued free of charge.

5.1.2 The Education/Information Officer, other senior staff members and members of the Education Committee, will use every available opportunity to inform co-operative members about the work of the Union, and any other relevant information of interest to members. This will be done mainly at general meetings of the societies. All societies have been requested to submit schedules for their annual general meetings during the year, so that the Union can assign officers to address the meetings.

5.2 Publicity

5.2.1 We plan to produce three simple posters (60 copies each) featuring the following:

- An appeal to members to participate actively in their co-operatives;
- An appeal to co-operative members to join study groups and listen to co-operative radio programmes;
- An appeal to the people of Melusa to join co-operatives.

5.2.2 During the year the Union will participate in the Annual Melusa Agricultural Fair where its activities and those of its member societies will be featured. The Department of Co-operative Development and the Ministry of Agriculture will have a stand at the fairground, which the Union has been invited to share.

6. Production of Educational Materials

The following publications will be produced during the year, using the facilities and simple equipment available at the Union:

- 6.1 A booklet on the Organisation and Management of Agricultural Co-operative Societies in Melusa. The booklet will be used in connection with the training of managers and committee members. We intend to produce about 90 copies of the booklet.
- 6.2 Guide for Study Group Leaders. This booklet will form the main resource material for the planned training course for study group leaders (see above). 60 copies of the guide will be produced.
- 6.3 We plan to produce a booklet on Duties and Rights of Members to be used for training committee members. 600 copies will be produced initially.

In addition to the above publications, there will be a need to purchase other books and study manuals which we are unable to produce on our own. The publications to be purchased are:

- 6.4 28 copies of the manual "The Work of Co-operative Committees" to be used for training committee members.
- 6.5 30 copies of the manual "How to read a Balance Sheet" to be used for member education programmes as well as in the training of committee members.
- 6.6 A selected number of reference and resource books for the library.

7. Meetings of the Education Committee

Four meetings of the Education Committee are planned during the year as follows:

January: To discuss, among other things, details of the Education Plan and its implementation.

May: To receive monitoring reports and review the training programmes for managers, book-keepers and committee members;
To discuss, among other things, the planned one-day courses for members and, in particular, the recruitment of members to the courses;
To review the first issue of the newsletter and make suggestions for future issues.

- August: To discuss, among other things, the proposed training of study group leaders;
- To receive monitoring reports and review the one-day courses conducted in the societies during May, June and July;
- To discuss the proposed evaluation of the activities carried out during 19X5.
- November: To receive monitoring reports and review the training programmes for study group leaders;
- To receive monitoring reports and discuss progress of the study groups;
- To discuss the Education/Information Plan for the year 19X6;
- To discuss the Education/Information Budget for the year 19X6.

As far as possible, meetings of the Education Committee will be called about the same time as those of the main (Managing) Committee, so as to save money on travel and subsistence.

8. Summary of Activities and Programme Calendar

- January Complete production of the booklet "Organisation and Management of Agricultural Co-operative Societies" (see 6.1).
- Preparations for Society Managers' course.
- Make preparations for Society Book-keepers course.
- Make preparations for the Education Committee meeting.
- Meeting of the Education Committee (see 7).
- February Training course for managers of primary societies (see 3.1.1).
- Training course for society book-keepers (see 2.1.2).
- Preparations for the committee members' seminars.
- March Training courses for committee members (see 3.2).
- Production of first issue of newsletter.
- April Preparation of reports.
- Production of the manual "Duties and Rights of Members" (see 6.3)
- Preparations for members' one-day courses.

Preparations for meeting of the Education Committee.
 Production of two posters.

May Meeting of the Education Committee (see 7).
 Conducting 14 one-day courses for members (see 3.3.1).

June Conducting 9 one-day courses for members.
 Preparation for more one-day courses.
 Preparation of reports.
 Production of second issue of newsletter.

July Conducting 9 one-day courses for members.
 Preparation of materials for study group leaders' guide.
 Preparations for agricultural fair.
 Preparations for study group leaders' training course.
 Preparations for meeting of the Education Committee.
 Participation in National Agricultural Fair.

August Production of group leaders' study guide.
 Meeting of the Education Committee.
 Production of one poster (as part of campaign for study groups).
 Preparation of group leaders' course.

September Conducting 2 training course for study group leaders. |
 Campaign for study groups.
 Production of third issue of newsletter.

October Campaign for study groups.
 Conducting 2 training courses for study group leaders.
 Preparation of reports.
 Preparations for meeting of the Standing Committee.
 Organisation of study groups.

November Organisation of study groups.

Preparation of Education Plan and Budget for the year 19X6.

Meeting of the Education Committee.

Conducting 4 one-day courses.

December Work with study groups.

Evaluation.

Preparation of Annual Reports.

Production of fourth issue of newsletter.

* * * *

APPENDIX II

SPECIMEN BUDGET

MELUSA DISTRICT CO-OPERATIVE UNION LTD.

Education and Information Department

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION BUDGET FOR THE PERIOD 1st JANUARY -

31st DECEMBER 19X5

SUMMARY

	£	£
1. SALARIES		
1.1 Education/Information Officer @ £75 per month x 12	900.00	
1.2 Asst.Education/Information Officer @ £55 per month x 12	660.00	
	<hr/>	1560.00
2. EDUCATION/INFORMATION PROGRAMMES		
2.1 Two Staff Training Courses @ £80.00	160.00	
2.2 Four Committee Member Seminars @ £130.00	520.00	
2.3 Thirty-six one-day courses @ £10.00	360.00	
2.4 Four seminars for Study Group Leaders @ £130.00	520.00	
2.5 Organisation of Study Groups	200.00	
2.6 Production/Purchase of educational materials	355.00	
2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation	80.00	
	<hr/>	2195.00
3. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY		
3.1 Production of a Newsletter	220.00	
3.2 Publicity	105.00	
	<hr/>	325.00
4. EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS		90.00
5. TRANSPORT		120.00
6. STATIONERY AND SUNDRIES		100.00
7. PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT		110.00
		<hr/>
		4500.00
8. CONTINGENCY @ 5% OF TOTAL		225.00
		<hr/>
TOTAL BUDGET		4725.00
		<hr/> <hr/>

DETAILED BUDGET NOTES

	£	£
1. <u>SALARIES</u>		
1.1 The Education/Information Officers' salary has been increased from £65 to £75 per month on the recommendation of the Managing Committee. £75 per month x 12	900.00	
1.2 The Managing Committee has approved the employment of an Assistant Education/Information Officer at a monthly salary of £55. £55 per month x 12	660.00	
	<hr/>	1560.00
2. <u>EDUCATION/INFORMATION PROGRAMMES</u>		
2.1 <u>Staff Training Courses</u>		
2.1.1 The Education Plan provides for a week-long course for 18 <u>managers</u> of affiliated societies. Transport costs will be borne by the societies and accommodation and meals will be provided free of charge by the Farmers' Training Centre where the seminar will be held. The following is a breakdown of the costs:		
(a) Travelling costs for course organisers and resource personnel: £5 x 6 people	30.00	
(b) Production of Educational Materials	20.00	
(c) Stationery and Sundries	10.00	
(d) Miscellaneous	10.00	
(e) Contingencies	10.00	
	<hr/>	80.00
2.1.2 The Education Plan also provides for a week-long course for <u>book-keepers</u> of affiliated societies. The course will involve the same costs as the Managers' Course (see 2.1.1)	80.00	
	<hr/>	
Total for Staff Training		160.00
2.2 <u>Committee Member Training Seminars</u>		
Four Committee Members' seminars are planned during the year, each lasting a week. The seminars will be held in the Board Room of our office building. There will be no costs for		

accommodation or transport as the participants will be drawn from neighbouring villages. The following is a breakdown of the costs involved:

(a) Lunch for 30 people @ £0.50 x 6 days	90.00	
(b) Production of Educational Materials	15.00	
(c) Stationery and Sundries	10.00	
(d) Miscellaneous	5.00	
(e) Contingencies	10.00	
	<hr/>	
Cost for each seminar	130.00	
Cost for four seminars	<hr/>	520.00

2.3 Member Education

The Education Plan provides for 36 one-day courses for members of affiliated societies.

There will be no costs for travel, accommodation or meals, but a provision of £10.00 per seminar has been made to cover the costs of travel and meals for the organisers.

360.00

2.4 Four seminars for Study Group Leaders are planned during the year. The seminars will involve exactly the same costs as the Committee Members' seminars, i.e. £130.00 per seminar

£130.00 x 4

520.00

2.5 Organisation of Study Groups

The Education Plan suggested the organisation of members' study groups in all the 25 member societies. A provision of £200.00 has been made in the budget to cover the costs of study materials and group leaders' expenses.

200.00

2.6 Production/Purchase of Educational Materials

A number of publications are planned during the year. Others, which cannot be produced locally, will have to be purchased. The following is a breakdown of the costs involved:

1 - Production

(a) Booklet on the Organisation and Management of Agricultural Marketing Co-operatives:
94 copies @ £0.50

47.00

	(bf 47.00)	
(b) Guide for Study Broup Leaders: 120 copies @ £0.25	30.00	
(c) Booklet on the Duties and Rights of Members: 600 copies @ £0.25	150.00	
	<u>227.00</u>	
2 - <u>Purchase</u>		
(a) "The Work of Co-operative Committees": 28 copies @ £2.25	63.00	
(b) "How to Read a Balance Sheet": 30 copies @ £0.50	15.00	
(c) A selection of resource and reference books for the library	50.00	
	<u>128.00</u>	
Cost of production/purchase of educational materials		355.00

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of the education activities will be a regular feature of the programme. Towards the end of the year, an evaluation of the activities will be carried out. The cost of the monitoring and evaluation is estimated at £80. 80.00

3. INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY

3.1 Production of a Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter - "THE MELUSA CO-OPERATOR" - will be launched during the year, and will be issued free of charge. 250 copies per issue will be produced at an estimated cost of £0.20 per copy.

1000 copies @ £0.20	200.00	
Contingencies	20.00	
	<u>220.00</u>	

3.2 Publicity

It is estimated that the sum of £105.00 will be spent on publicity as follows:

(a) Production of posters	75.00	
(b) Other publicity activities (e.g. participation in fairs, exhibitions, etc.)	30.00	
	<u>105.00</u>	

4. MEETINGS OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Four meetings of the Education Committee are planned during the year, the cost of which will be:

(a) Travelling costs for five members @ £1.00 x 4 meetings	20.00	
(b) Subsistence allowance for 5 members @ £2.50 x 4 meetings	50.00	
(c) Provision for emergency meetings	20.00	
	<hr/>	90.00

5. TRANSPORT

Although transport is included in the costs of the planned courses and seminars, transport will nevertheless be required for other activities not directly related to courses and seminars. A provision of £120.00 has been made for this. 120.00

6. STATIONERY AND SUNDRIES

In addition to the provision already made for stationery in connection with courses, seminars and production of educational materials, it has been necessary to make provision for stationery to be used for general purposes. This will include duplicating paper, stencils, ink, newsprint etc. 100.00

7. PURCHASE OF EQUIPMENT

A modest provision has been made for purchase of much-needed equipment in the Education Department. Note that no provision has been made for repairs as these are not expected - at least during the first year.

(a) Purchase of one 35mm camera	40.00	
(b) Purchase of one slide projector	35.00	
(c) Purchase of one bookshelf	25.00	
(d) Depreciation @ 10%	10.00	
	<hr/>	110.00
TOTAL		<hr/> 4500.00

8. CONTINGENCY

A provision has been made for any items of expenditure arising in the course of implementing the education/information programme which are not covered in the breakdown above. This provision for contingency is calculated at 5% of the total budget. Thus 5% of £4500.00.

225.00

TOTAL BUDGET

£4725.00

The example given here is, of course, hypothetical. It does, however, serve to illustrate the need for paying attention to details, since a deviation from this may result in some important items being left out, which could impede the implementation of the programme.



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