

"In almost every field of development, especially in the rural economy, the Plan emphasizes the role of co-operative organizations. The principle of co-operation is indeed basic to rapid social and economic development under democratic conditions. The co-operative movement in India has a membership of 12 million organized in 173,000 co-operative societies with a working capital of Rs 233 crores. There has been rapid expansion of co-operation during the past five years and an increasing variety of activities are now being handled by the co-operative movement. It is important that in implementing the Plan administrative authorities should foster co-operative methods of organization and not look upon co-operative development as being the responsibility only of the Co-operative Department. With the growing interest of the Reserve Bank and the assistance which the Bank is already giving to the movement, the prospects of co-operative development during the next few years are favourable. The Central Government has provided a sum of Rs. 50 lakhs during the period of the Plan for arranging training in co-operation and for undertaking experiments in different forms of co-operative organizations."

With special reference to the development of the fishing industry the summary states:

"Elimination of middlemen in the industry and provision of fishing requirements through co-operatives has been recommended. Funds have been earmarked to facilitate distribution of supplies. As large scale fishing operations develop large catches will be landed at Bombay, Cochin and Calcutta ports on some days of a month and as a result conditions of glut may be created which may cause wide fluctuations in prices. Consequently the small fishermen would suffer. To safeguard their interests marketing of catch through co-operatives and establishment of fish marketing boards at these centres have been recommended."

The Plan itself points out that the development of co-operatives, multi-purpose and credit societies, marketing societies, community projects and industrial co-operatives is hampered by the lack of competent and trained men to give community leadership in co-operative projects. "Co-operatives are sometimes organized and administered by those who lack both the qualifications and the experience necessary for the job. This factor alone accounts for a large number of the co-operatives' failures and for the uneven development of the movement in the country." The text goes on to point out that existing facilities for the training of personnel in co-operatives are not adequate. The Plan, therefore, provides a sum of Rs. 10 lakhs (1,000,000 rupees) for setting up "three or four colleges in various parts of the country to meet these needs." The Planning Commission hopes that the State governments will arrange for the training of other staff. Not only is there a shortage of trained staff, but because the main functions of the co-operative departments already established in almost all the States have been statutory and concerned with registration, audit and inspection they are not equipped to provide effective guidance to the development of the co-operative movement.