

MESSAGE FROM HON'BLE SANAM LYONPO ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF COOPERATIVES, JULY 1, 2023



International Day of Cooperatives Cooperatives 4 sustainable development 1 July 2023

The International Day of Co-operatives (IDC) is observed worldwide on the first Saturday of July each year with the intention to create awareness on Co-operatives, its success and ideals of international solidarity, economic efficiency, equality and world peace. This year, the international community of cooperatives will be celebrating the 101st IDC, and the day falls on 1st July 2023 with the theme "Cooperatives: partners for accelerated sustainable development". The Department of Agricultural Marketing and Cooperatives (DAMC), as an associate member of the International Cooperative Alliance, Farmer Groups and Cooperatives in Bhutan has been observing the day since 2013.

At present, we have 110 primary co-operatives and 699 Farmer Groups that are registered with the DAMC. The activities are mainly centered on agriculture and livestock production, food-processing, savings and credit, and retail services.

Due to the challenging mountainous terrain, dispersed settlements, long distances to markets, expensive transportation and labor-intensive processes, achieving economies of scale becomes challenging for us. However, the cooperatives model provides viable solution to these obstacles, allowing members to collaborate in areas such as collective marketing, input sourcing, knowledge sharing, capacity building and improved livelihoods. Cooperatives hold significant potential for rural enterprises and employment by facilitating value addition initiatives, innovation, adoption of labor saving equipment, product diversification, improved access to information and enhancing community vitality.

Therefore on this significant occasion, I extend my heartfelt wishes to all cooperatives and Farmer Groups in Bhutan and across the globe, wishing them a Happy International Day of Cooperatives and a successful journey ahead.

The Ministry of Agriculture & Livestock reiterates its commitment to providing continuous support for the development and growth of all Farmer Groups and Cooperatives in Bhutan.

Finally, I am happy that 101st IDC is being observed with the Farmer Groups and Cooperatives of Zhemgang Dzongkhag at Pangbang. I thank Dzongkhag, Dungkhag Administration and DAMC for jointly celebrating this day. Warmest Co-operative Greetings

Tashi Delek Yeshey Penjor