



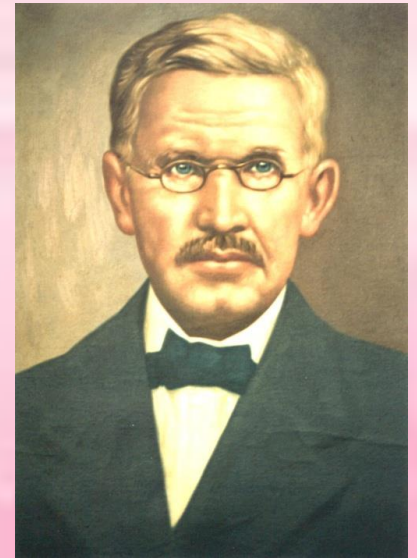
From 19th Century Germany to 21st Century in Chennai – Growth and Relevance of the Raiffeisen Model in the Global South

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Mission “Find Raiffeisen” – 1894, Chennai

Historical link of the Raiffeisen concept to Chennai

- ❖ In the Late 19th Century news spread of emergence of new Rural Finance System in Europe
- ❖ In 1894, Governor of Madras (now Chennai) Lord Wenlock, sent Sir Frederick Nicholson to Europe to study the mutualist credit and system based on self-help by farmers themselves.
- ❖ Results of his mission was called “Find Raiffeisen” that marked a dawn of new system of rural finance in India.



- ❖ 5 years after passing of the revised cooperative Act in Germany i.e., 10 years later in 1904, the Credit Society Act was passed in India.
- ❖ Replacing the moneylender by the Raiffeisen bank model.
- ❖ India is the first country in “the South” to adopt & adapt Raiffeisen type cooperatives.
- ❖ Raiffeisen 3 S formula – Self help, Self governance, Self responsibility is very relevant to Indian situation.

Indian Cooperative Network for Women – Long time member of International Raiffeisen Union (21 years)

- ❖ Despite Nationalization of Banks (1969), the poor working class could not access credit.
- ❖ In 1981 – the First Cooperative Society i.e., Indian Cooperative Network for Women in South India for poor, by poor women and of poor women was initiated.



- ❖ Organize, mobilize and strengthen poor women towards poverty reduction and gender equality through cooperatives.
- ❖ Innovative bottoms up structure building leadership from below.
- ❖ Creating an alternate financial inclusion cooperative banking structure.
- ❖ Organizational structure avoids class elitism and caste hierarchies.
- ❖ Staff are from the same poor socio-economic class as the participants.

❖ Build poor women's credit groups as base at the grassroots i.e., form groups, select a leader, organize new groups, monitor credit / business groups etc.

❖ Infuse confidence among members through capacity building - empowerment and leadership, financial literacy, alternate skill training etc.



- ❖ Generate productive jobs generating incomes towards poverty alleviation for women through micro-credit, fixed deposit, savings, insurance, etc.
- ❖ Use of Information Technology for poverty reduction strategies.
- ❖ 14 Cooperative branches in 3 southern states (Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh & Karnataka).
- ❖ Total loan disbursement – INR.3821 million to 600769 women entrepreneurs in about 6000 villages/slums in South India, 99.87% repayment.

Long Time Member of IRU

- ❖ We are the first women's cooperative in India to associate with the Rabobank and the International Raiffeisen Union
- ❖ The then Rabobank Chairman who was also the Chairman of IRU was instrumental to recommend ICNW to IRU, being the most successful women's cooperative in India.



- ❖ The ideas and solutions of Raiffeisen model and the ICNW are similar.
- ❖ The best way to fight poverty is to help people to help themselves and establish credit cooperatives.
- ❖ The long time partnership between IRU & ICNW brought in the cooperative/enterprise spirit, a stronger, more equitable platform to share/exchange ideas between member organizations, connect with the co-operators worldwide, pride and reputation, strong sense of identity and focus on values.

Women in Cooperatives/Self Help Group in India

- ❖ Emergence of worldwide women's movement in 1975 led to several grassroots women's initiatives /cooperatives towards social change process.
- ❖ New Economic policy (1991) and the Fourth World Conference on women in Beijing (China) gave a sharp focus to women's empowerment - socially and economically.



- ❖ Cooperatives contribute to gender equality and women's economic empowerment
- ❖ Cooperatives being driven by women an apt model, most suitable to practice.
- ❖ Cooperatives enable women to realize potential, build self-confidence, lead lives of dignity and fulfillment are attained.
- ❖ Cooperatives are an effective tool to attain collective goals, women come together for a common cause to raise and manage resources for the benefit of their lives – economically, socially and family welfare.

- ❖ Women's empowerment through cooperatives show the collective wellbeing of women (Eg: ICNW)
- ❖ Self-Help Group model of development is a 20th century social innovation to alleviate poverty and empower women.
- ❖ SHG's are primarily micro finance enterprises initiated both by the state as well as NGO's.
- ❖ The idea of self help group formation, concept of community and development of egalitarian relations among the members of the village.

Commitment for the IRU

- ❖ Long time association (21 years), First Women's only Cooperatives.
- ❖ Apply idea of self help, self responsibility and self administration in cooperatives and act responsibly.
- ❖ Cultivate true spirit of cooperatives, Raiffeisen's ideas to popularize, develop, discuss and spread it together with the member organization's.
- ❖ IRU is a platform for exchange of ideas and experience among members to increase cooperative spirit including economic and gender equality ideas.



IRU Centenary Celebration's: ICNW

- ❖ 2000 women mass meeting early next year, 2019 in Chennai, India – the advent of 'Raiffeisen values', 125 years ago to Chennai and 40th Anniversary of WWF/ICNW.
- ❖ 17 SDG Goals – 34 silk scarves (2 each for a goal) according to the color of goal – Presented to IRU by the WWF/ICNW as a SDG flag project for International Cooperative Solidarity.



THANK YOU

