



Conseil de la coopération  
de l'Ontario

# Cooperating for the integration of Francophone immigrants in Ontario



# Who we are:

- **The Conseil de la Coopération de l'Ontario (CCO)**

Contributes to the progress of the social economy in Francophone and bilingual communities through cooperation.

## **Our values:**

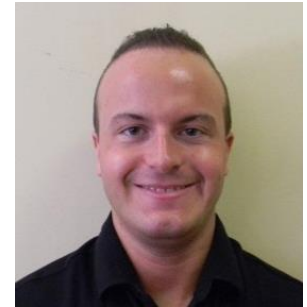
The most important values of cooperatives and social enterprises are the prioritizing of people over capital, self-sufficiency, personal and mutual responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. Collective enterprise stakeholders adhere to an ethic based on honesty, social responsibility, and sustainable development.

## **5 lines of action:**

- Promotion of the cooperative and social enterprise business models
- Service to members
- Development of cooperatives and social enterprises
- Training, research, and resources on the cooperative and social enterprise business models
- Social finance

# Who we are:

**Julien Geremie** - Director of Development



## Relevant activities:

- Currently accompany more than 40 developing projects (social enterprises, cooperatives, and programs) across Ontario.
- Provide business expertise and consulting
- Develop, receive, and manage funding of more than \$1,000,000 annually.
- Manage a team of 2 to 5 workers.
- Speaker and presenter at several events around the world, providing training to more than 2,000 people.

# Summary

- I. Overview
  - A. Cooperatives in Ontario
  - B. Economic viability
  - C. Immigrants should lean towards the co—op model for several reasons
- II. Concrete examples of successful co-ops
  - A. Rural communities
  - B. Urban communities
- III. Perspectives for worker co-ops and business succession

# I. Overview

## A. Cooperatives in Ontario:

- 1,300 cooperatives
- 15,500 employees
- 1.4 million members
- \$2.1 billion in revenue
- \$30 billion in assets



# I. Overview

## A. Cooperatives in Ontario:

Major economic sectors/industries:

- Financial and insurance services
- Agribusiness
- Energy and forestry
- Housing
- Services to individuals
- Retail trade and services
- Information technology and telecommunication
- Others, like: art, culture, education, catering, etc.



# I. Overview

## B. Economic viability:

- Cooperative businesses have the highest survival rate after 5 years compared to normal businesses.
- More than two thirds of Canadians agree that co-ops are a trusted place to do business.
- Every year, Canadian cooperatives give back more than \$120 million dollars in the form of donations and sponsorships.
- Within the next 5 years, we expect the co-op sector to create over 20,000 jobs across Canada.



# I. Overview

- c. Immigrants should lean toward the co-op model for several reasons...
  - To cooperate in order to achieve mutual goals
  - Share financial risk between all the members
  - 80% of new cooperatives are owned by ethnocultural and immigrant communities, and primarily serve these demographics in their neighbourhood or region.





# I. Overview

- c. Immigrants should lean toward the co-op model for several reasons...
  - o Nearly 50% of immigrants have elaborate skill levels
  - o Great diversity in their specific business activity (examples: services, catering, arts and culture, textile and fashion)
  - o Embracing cultural diversity can give small communities a competitive edge
  - o The Conference Board of Canada reports that communities that welcome diversity gain greater social capital and social cohesion

## II. Concrete examples of successful co-ops

### A. Rural communities

#### **Antaya Root**

**Main Mission: Introduce African communities to organic ginger juice in order to reduce health risks to the liver.**

- Created by Rose Marie Antaya in 2011
- Produce ginger juice for the African population
- 3 workers
- 1 cook
- 2 sales assistants
- Aim to sell their ginger juice in specialized retail stores



## II. Concrete examples of successful co-ops

### A. Rural communities

#### **La Samaritaine**

**Main mission: grow and sell exotic flowers, native vegetables, and other fresh produce that originated in Africa and the Caribbean.**

- Created in 2011 by Yvonne Kabeya
- Based in Brampton, Ontario
- Homegrown variety of healthy exotic vegetables
- Selling method:
  - Business to customers
  - Business to business



## II. Concrete examples of successful co-ops

### B. Urban communities

#### **Cuisine et Santé des Canadiens**

**Main goal: to teach others how to cook healthy foods for their children and families and offer healthy meal options for purchase**

- Created in October 2014 by Guy Dongué
- Activity: Create 40+ meals a day, 3-4 days per week for companies, schools, hospitals, retirement homes, and for personal consumption
- Human resources:
  - 1 experienced cook
  - Sales team
  - Marketing team
  - Logistics team



## II. Concrete examples of successful co-ops

### B. Urban communities

#### **UMOJA sewing cooperative**

**Main objectives are to produce typical African cloth and mend clothing for African communities based in the GTA.**

- Created in 2009 by Marie-Jeanne Kabelala
- Team management : 5 positions
  - President
  - Secretary/Treasurer
  - Director of promotions and marketing
  - Two administrative members
- This cooperative aims to have a retail store, create their own brand, and set up a manufacturing space.



### III. Perspective on worker co-ops and business succession

#### A. Successful future:

- The new economic reality has forced traditional businesses within the sector to increase their productivity and to diversify their activity.
- Cooperatives increase employees participation in their development, whether through capital, or active management.
- Transfer of ownership to the employees to become a workers cooperative could save lots of businesses

# III. Perspective on worker co-ops and business succession

## A. Successful future:

- A cooperative survival rate longterm is nearly twice that of a traditional company.
- 66% of cooperatives created are still in service after 10 years.
- 80% of new cooperatives are owned by ethnocultural and immigrant communities, and primarily serve these demographics in their neighbourhood or region.

# III. Perspective on worker co-ops and business succession

## B. Benefits of the cooperative model in immigrant-rich communities

- Social cohesion and support:
  - Democratic structure
  - Build social capital by increasing contact within their supportive networks
- Training and education
  - Participation in committees, Board of Directors, general meetings
  - Improve business and leadership skills



# III. Perspective on worker co-ops and business succession

## B. Benefits of the cooperative model in immigrant-rich communities

- Professional development
  - To creatively use their professional skills through involvement in a cooperative
  - Create flexible work schedules
- Co-ops give immigrants and ethnocultural communities a tool they need to meet their own social and economic needs



Thank you!  
Questions?



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