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Sahkar se Samriddhi: Cooperatives and Inclusive Rural Growth

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Sahkar se Samriddhi: Cooperatives and Inclusive Rural Growth

■ Yojana Chapter 3 · 3 min read ·

Theme analysis for Yojana July 2026 (Cooperatives for a Viksit Bharat), built from verified PIB and ministry data.

The slogan **Sahkar se Samriddhi**, meaning prosperity through cooperation, is more than branding. It captures a development philosophy in which people pool small resources to gain the scale, bargaining power and dignity that individuals cannot secure alone. In 2025, observed by the United Nations as the **International Year of Cooperatives** under the theme “Cooperatives Build a Better World”, this idea moved from the margins to the mainstream of India’s rural growth story.

THE AMUL TEMPLATE

No account of Indian cooperatives is complete without the dairy movement. The **Anand model**, built by pioneers such as **Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel** and **Vergheese Kurien**, showed that a farmer owned supply chain could turn milk, a highly perishable product, into steady rural income. India is today the world’s largest milk producer, and a large share of organised procurement flows through dairy cooperatives federated into brands like **Amul**. The lesson for policy is durable, which is that when producers own the processing and marketing, more of the consumer rupee stays in the village.

DIMENSION	INDIVIDUAL FARMER	FARMER THROUGH A COOPERATIVE
Bargaining power	Weak, price taker	Strong, collective
Access to inputs	Costly, retail rates	Bulk, discounted
Market reach	Local mandi only	Regional and national brands
Risk	Borne alone	Pooled across members
Share of final price	Low	Higher and more stable

WOMEN AND INCLUSION

Cooperatives are among the most effective vehicles for **women’s economic empowerment**. Dairy, thrift and credit, and self help group linked cooperatives put assets and decision making in women’s hands. The National Cooperation Policy 2025 explicitly pushes for **greater inclusion** of women, Scheduled Castes,

Scheduled Tribes and weaker sections in cooperative membership and leadership, so that the sector's reach translates into representation and not only headcount.

BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE BACKBONE

Scale needs skills. The **Tribhuvan Sahkari University**, established at Anand, Gujarat, and named after the Amul pioneer Tribhuvandas Patel, is India's first national cooperative university. It is designed to certify a very large number of people every year through degree, diploma and doctoral programmes in cooperative management, rural management and allied fields, along with short courses for serving cooperative staff. A trained cadre is meant to cure the sector's oldest weakness, which is amateur and sometimes captured management.

FROM WELFARE TO ENTERPRISE

The deeper shift the theme signals is from viewing cooperatives as instruments of welfare to treating them as **professional rural enterprises**. Computerised PACS, national cooperatives for exports and organics, and a dedicated university together aim to make cooperatives competitive rather than merely subsidised. This matters for **inclusive growth** because cooperatives reach exactly the small and marginal producers, roughly the bulk of Indian farmers, who benefit least from purely market driven consolidation.

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR UPSC

For **GS Paper 3**, this theme connects rural livelihoods, agricultural marketing and inclusive growth in one frame. For **GS Paper 1 and social issues**, the cooperative model of women's empowerment and community organisation is directly usable. For **essay and ethics**, cooperatives illustrate **trusteeship, self help and mutual aid**, values that let a candidate argue for a growth model that is participatory rather than extractive. The strongest answers will hold two truths together, celebrating the genuine success of the dairy and credit movements while candidly noting persistent risks of elite capture, political interference and thin capital, and will point to professionalisation and transparency as the bridge from Sahkar to lasting Samriddhi.



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