

What is a Co-op?

## The Principles, Structure, and Scale of Co-ops

## The 4 Main Organizational Structures

A **cooperative** is an organization that is owned and democratically-governed by its members.

1. A **consumer cooperative** is an enterprise in which its members are its owners
2. A **producer cooperative** is an organization in which producers collaborate to jointly produce and market their goods
3. A **worker cooperative** is a cooperative in which the workers are the only member-owners
4. A **collective** is an organization that is managed without hierarchy

## The Cooperative Principles!

1. Open, voluntary membership
2. Democratic governance
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education and training
6. Cooperation between cooperatives
7. Concern for community

## Trivia!

How many co-ops are there in the world?

**Hundreds of thousands** of cooperatives around the world.

Over **1 billion** people are member-owners of these enterprises.

Co-operatives also employ **250 million** people worldwide.

They generate **\$2.2 trillion** in revenue

## Modern Co-ops Around the World

### Spain



7th largest company in Spain

Approx. **84,000** employees

Multi-sector company in finance, industry, distribution, and tech R&D.



### Italy

International manufacturer of machines and plants for ceramics, beverage, packaging, and plastics.

Approx. **3500** employees

### India



Dairy co-operative

Jointly-owned by over **3 million** milk producers

Largest food brand in India

## American Cooperatives



Worker-owned  
producer to  
consumer co-  
op



High tech worker-owned co-op



Retail consumer co-op



Community-wealth building co-op network



Farmer owned producer co-op



Student-run food co-op

There are nearly **30,000** co-ops in the U.S.

They hold more than **\$3 trillion** in assets

They make **\$625 billion** in revenue

They employ close to **1 million** people

Who earn **\$25 billion** in wages



# Co-operatives come in all shapes and sizes

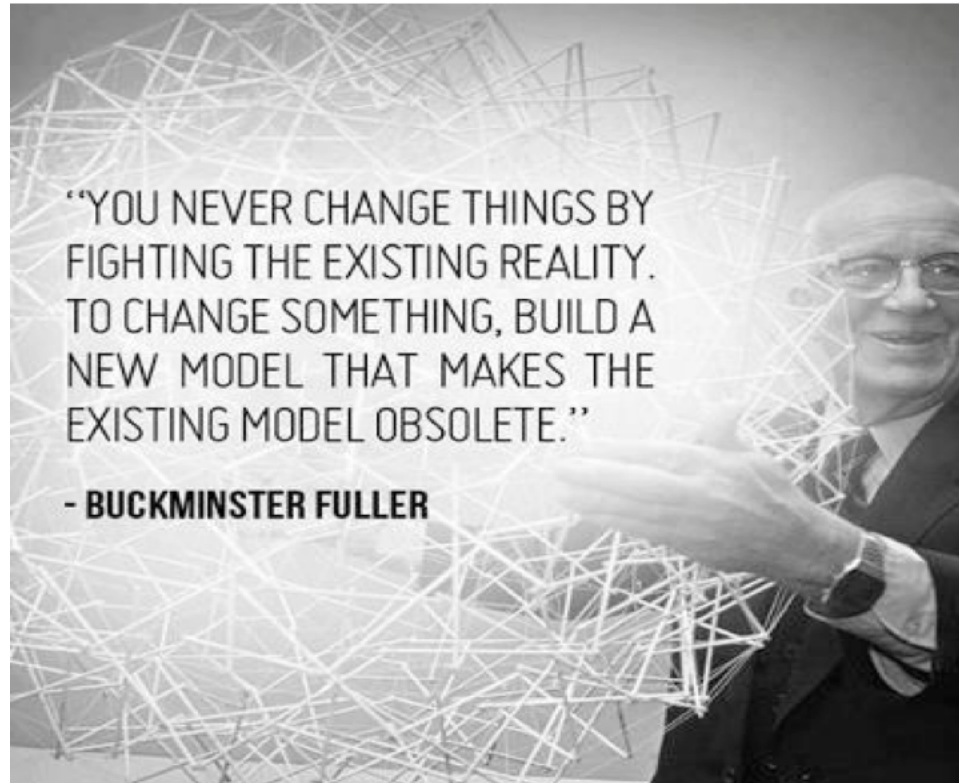
Co-ops are an organizational model and (depending on the state) a legal definition.

Co-ops often follow the Rochdale Principles but have unique goals for impact.

Co-ops can be high tech engineering firms or small-scale urban farms.

Co-ops can be international or local.

In essence...



“YOU NEVER CHANGE THINGS BY  
FIGHTING THE EXISTING REALITY.  
TO CHANGE SOMETHING, BUILD A  
NEW MODEL THAT MAKES THE  
EXISTING MODEL OBSOLETE.”

- **BUCKMINSTER FULLER**

**How can co-ops affect social change?**

**What are some problems and challenges our society faces where co-ops can be a solution?**