

## CEMPCO:

# HUMBLE BEGINNING OF A MILLIONAIRE COOPERATIVE

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*"A people without the knowledge of their past history,  
origin and culture, is like a tree without roots."*

--- **Marcus Garvey**

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Founded by eighty-one employees of the Central Negros Electric Cooperative, Inc. (CENECO), sometime in June 1979, the Association of Loans, Mutual Aid and Savings (ALMS), now CENECO Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative (CEMPCO) is without doubt a fast rising cooperative. And one of the most admired in Negros Occidental today. For who would have thought CEMPCO would reach the point where it is today? Who would have predicted that with a meager capital of only P42, 000.00, its financial potency would reach multifold just as a couple of years after. Who would have ever thought about it?



The so inspiring history of CEMPCO is something that the founders, who painstakingly studied the rudiments of building up a coop, and its

contemporary members alike, will always be proud of. Its historical significance should not be kept from within us. It deserves to be shared, to be unraveled to each and everybody so that others may draw strength and inspiration from it. "So how it all started?" you may ask. Well, this is how it all started...

ALMS was created with the noble intent to provide soft loans to CENECO employees. Through CENECO Policy No. 48 dated June 1, 1979, the lending association was conceived to extend financial assistance initially to the pioneer-members. A mutual contribution of P10.00 per member was collected. But like some neophyte institutions destined to live and endure, ALMS had its trying and distressing moments. It was in 1986 when some members of the credit

organization had lost confidence on the set up and the way the association was managed, ALMS integrity was shaken and became rocky when the national leadership was changed.

After suffering from leadership turmoil, ALMS was changed to CEKBCI which aptly stands for CENECO Employees Kilusang Bayan for Credit, Inc. Its existence came due to cohesive perseverance of the members themselves.

On the other hand, we are forever grateful to our pioneer cooperators who took the cudgels and created CEMPCO, from its infancy period up to the time it became one of the most-admired millionaire cooperatives in the country, today. Our endless thank you words to Plaridel Villadelgado, Andresito Gellecanao, Jose Ramos, Aurelio Divinagracia, Jr., Roshiro Garcesa, Leopoldo Appe, Jr., Federico Fieldad, Edwin Rio, Benedicto Balo, Myrna Pagsuberon, Pedro De Oca, Jr., Enrique Tabino, Eduardo De Guzman, Bernard Desabille, and Elpidio Amantillo.

Under the tutelage of Engr. Christopher S. Rios, erstwhile CENECO General Manager, and General Manager Remia Dayon, a seven-member Ad Hoc Committee was created to expedite the formulation of the organization's By-Laws which will jibe with its operation. In December 1986, CEKBCI Constitution and By-Laws were ratified ----- purpose of which was to create a strong, viable and productive employee's credit cooperative. After the ratification, the new set of officers was elected. Engr. Christopher S. Rios was unanimously elected as the first ever Chairman.

Truly laudable and worth-mentioning accomplishments of CEKBCI were the following: a) Amendments of CEKBCI By-Laws; b) Increased maximum investment to P30,000; c) Increased the loanable amount of emergency loans at the same time decreasing its interest rate; d) Implementation of Savings deposit plan; and e) Launching of the official coop publication ----- CEKBCI Bulletin.

The fateful day of November 12, 1993 marked another milestone when the amendment to the Articles of Corporation was approved by the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA). The moniker, "**CENECO Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative**" had since then been adopted, A notable increase in membership was visibly an indicator of the coop growth and gradual stability. Its capital has accumulated to more than P2M and total assets of P7M. However, canteen and grocery opportunities were stopped but services offered were further extended to Commodity, Memorial Lot, Appliances, SSS-Made Livelihood Loans, Savings Deposit Plan and Mutual Aid Benefit which included member's dependents.

During the culmination of the Cooperatives Week held in Valladolid, Negros Occidental on November 12, 1995, CEMPCO proudly received three awards when

it was named recipient of the Most Outstanding Coop for Non-Agricultural, Highest in Volume of Business and Highest in Build up Capital.

That same year (1995) saw the victorious farewell of the well-loved Manager Remia C. Dayon, who after eight arduous yet rewarding years of unstinting service to the coop had to leave the friendship she established with fellow cooperators. During the 9th AGMA, Manager Dayon bade goodbye to the institution she herself nurtured.

1996 ushered in with Emelita Gacho serving as the new Manager. As expected positive indications revealed that the coop had advanced a step higher with its impressive financial figures reflected on the coop's ledgers and books.

In 1998, several activities were initiated to encourage members to be more participative to the coop's endeavors. One of these was the Re-Awakening Seminar which was participated in by 84% of total member's populace. A development plan using the Coop Vision and Mission as guiding principles was also mapped out on November 21-22, some twenty seven (27) selected coop members were given a chance to observe the operation of one of Negros Oriental's most admired cooperatives ----- the Dumaguete Cathedral Credit Cooperative (DCCCO).

In 2008, Roel C. Venus, became the youngest Chairperson elected to the VICTO National Board ----- the biggest and largest cooperative federation in the Philippines. His coop leadership created market economies, social development advocacy, and sector and network building among the growing VICTO member-cooperatives.

In September 3, 2012, a Certificate of Registration of Amendments was issued from Cooperative Development Authority, attesting that the new Articles of Cooperation and By-laws of CEMPCO are pursuant to Republic Act 9520 or the

Philippine Cooperative Code of 2008.

In January 2013, Stephanie Grace T. Gonzales occupied at the top helm when she was assigned as General Manager of the multi-awarded cooperative. CEMPCO was also recognized as a large or centennial cooperative by CDA for reaching a total asset of Php102,494,383.00 as of December 31, 2011. CEMPCO also bought the 947.50 square meter lot in Corner Ciocon-Mabini Streets, Brgy. 26, Bacolod City ---- the venue of its building construction.



Function Room



In 2015, we were included in the Top 359 out of more than 25,000 cooperatives registered in the CDA nationwide for having a total asset of Php133,462,961 as of December 31, 2014.

In July 28, 2017, the construction of CEMPCO's Three Storey Multi-Use Office and Commercial Building commenced. The building was fully constructed on December 31, 2018.

And the rest is our history. Let us continue to be united in the same spirit of unity that bound us all through these years. Let us join hands in meeting the challenges ahead of us. CEMPCO is our refuge. A partner in economic growth. It is even our way of life.

As the old noble maxim goes, ***“A thousand mile begins with a single step”***, CEMPCO had its first step thirty five (35) years ago, and as it journeys to the next thousand steps or so, let us renew, strengthen, and revitalize our commitment. It is through this that we will be able to attain a better quality of living standard and achieve whatever aspirations we have. This is what our very own coop, CEMPCO, dreams for us. Make it yours too!\*



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