

Module Four

Cooperation

Handout

OPENING ACTIVITIES

Time: 25 minutes

Activity 1: Popsicle sticks

Activity 2: Lifting a chair with a man

Activity 3: Newspaper tearing

Discussion:

What messages did you take from these activities?

What do you remember?

Elements of Cooperation

THE VALUE CHAIN OF INDONESIAN MARINE FISH:

The value chain for marine ornamentals is segmented, with many “middlemen” or intermediaries between the collector and the exporter. Although the industry is highly specialized and requires skilled professionals, there are many unqualified people in the chain. This is one of the major reasons for the poor quality of marine ornamental fish exported from Indonesia.

Middlemen, or intermediaries, provide services in the industry chain but also cause a drop in produce quality through their poor practices. As such, they do not add value to the product but cause an increase in costs.

If a group of skilled collectors could provide the same services currently provided by intermediaries, value would be added to the product. The collectors could offer better services for a better product.

HOW DOES THE CHAIN WORK OUTSIDE OF INDONESIA?

Case Study: The integrated system in Australia:

In Australia, fishermen are licensed by governmental authorities, such as the Great Barrier Reef Management Authority, Fisheries department, and other bodies. Their equipment is checked regularly and all of their practices monitored, including the condition of the fishing area, the quantity of fish collected, and so forth. Fishermen collect for one exporter only. Equipment is provided by this exporter. The fishermen collect according to supply orders from the exporter. They are given a monthly basic salary, as well as a commission on the catch.

After fish are collected, they are handled by a well-trained export staff. There are no intermediaries. Exporters have branches near the fishing grounds and collectors are based in the branch.

Such a system would be difficult to implement in Indonesia due to the lack of communication, infrastructure, and regulatory organizations.

A SOLUTION IN BETWEEN: The Semi-Integrated System:

If fishermen join forces in a cooperative:

- They will combine their capabilities and skills to improve their practices and achieve goals that would not be able to achieve alone.
- This will enable them to reap greater benefits through adding some valuable services to the exporter and avoiding a long chain of intermediaries.

COOPERATION OR COOPERATIVE

Definitions:

- An organization in which members are individuals or group of people, and which has the principal goal of economic growth in communities. This objective becomes achievable with collaboration and cooperation of its members.
- An enterprise or organization that is owned or managed jointly by those who use its facilities or services.
- A society established on the principle of a joint-stock association, for the production of commodities, or their product and/or distribution for consumption, or for the borrowing and lending of capital among its members.

THE MOST BASIC THINGS YOU NEED TO FORM A SUCCESSFULLY COOPERATIVE

1. KNOW YOURSELF AND THE OTHER MEMBERS

To obtain cooperation in a group, it is important to know what you can expect of the other members and what is expected of yourself. Members must know that it is okay to discuss the plan to form a cooperative.

2. CONFIDENCE IN YOURSELF

Have confidence in yourself and the other members. This is something that can only happen after you know yourself and the others. In being confident, you can be sure that each person will do his share of the work.

3. GOOD UNDERSTANDING AND RELATIONSHIPS

If you know the group members and have confidence in them, you will also have good relationships with them. Good communication about activities and responsibilities will help the members to have a clear understanding of the group's goals and objectives.

FACTORS THAT WILL ENHANCE COOPERATION

1. CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT IS TO BE DONE

The group objective must be clear and specific. If clarifications are needed, the group leader should provide them. There should be transparency in the discussion about problems, activities to be done, and how a decision is made.

2. THE GROUP HAS THE CAPABILITY TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT

A person assigned to a task must have the ability to do it. A member should not be assigned a task for which she lacks the required skills.

3. AMPLE TIME AND INTEREST

Time and interest in doing an activity are critical factors in gaining cooperation among the members. Meeting these needs is essential for success.

4. THE BUDGET, MATERIALS, AND TOOLS ARE SUFFICIENT

Other important factors to be considered are budget, materials or supplies. Even if there are capacity, capability, expertise, time, and passion or interest among members, adequate resources are still crucial for success. Group members assigned to a task should not pay for the activities from their own pockets.

5. STATED COMMITMENT TO PARTICIPATION

It is important to make sure members of the group are committed to the group objectives and meeting them within the project budget. This is a sign of cooperation and organizational stability.

FACTORS THAT HINDER COOPERATION

The absence of all or some of the factors stated above will make it difficult to attain true cooperation among all group members.

REASONS TO BECOME A MEMBER OF A COOPERATIVE

Historic

Historically, cooperatives were formed in the struggle against colonization and domination of poor people or laborers by capitalists. The cooperative was a way for the poor to improve their lives by working together against exploitation by the wealthy.

Political

Remember the Popsicle stick activity we did earlier: one stick is broken easily, but, when many sticks are put together they are strong. In the same way, many people together are stronger than individuals. In Bahasa Indonesia, we have the slogan, “BERSATU KITA TEGUH BERCEKAI KITA RUNTUH”. In English: Cooperation means strength, but separation means destruction. When people are united, politically they become much stronger.

Economic

By joining a cooperative one can improve his economic situation by:

- a. Reducing costs

- b. Receiving services offered to its members

One of the goals of a cooperative is to offer services to its members. By joining a cooperative, one can use the services and facilities of the cooperative on a regular basis. In exchange, you participate in the cooperative's activities.

c. Joining a Badan Usaha (or legal establishment)

By joining the cooperative, one can be a part of a legal institution without creating a CV, PT, or other organization. These can be very complicated and expensive to form or join.

Social

By joining a cooperative, one can meet social needs by interacting with other members of the cooperative. This enhances social life and communication and helps build a network of people on whom you can rely.

Juridical

By joining a cooperative, one legalizes his business activities. Those activities are then protected by the laws.