Foundations of Cooperative Management

Module 10: Member Relations

Session 1: Introduction to Member Relations
Session 2: Member Recruitment and Retention
Session 3: Member Management
Session 4: Member Engagement
Session 1

INTRODUCTION TO MEMBER RELATIONS
During this module, you will work on...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“Over-to-You!” Activities</th>
<th>Your Development Plan</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>1. Begin thinking about key recruitment and retention questions.</td>
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<td>3. Begin drafting a survey to collect member feedback.</td>
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</table>
Find your SCOPEinsight score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Your scores per dimension</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERNAL MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Internal organization</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Business planning</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OPERATIONS</strong></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Storage, logistics &amp; technology</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Processing</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUSTAINABILITY</strong></td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Social issues</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Environmental issues</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPPLY</strong></td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>Procurement of inputs</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supply from members</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strength of membership base</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Member oversight &amp; training</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARKET</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Market related risks</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outbound logistics</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marketing strategy</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Financial management</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Planning, budgeting &amp; sourcing</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Record keeping &amp; monitoring</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTERNAL RISKS</strong></td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Awareness of external risks</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mitigation strategies</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENABLERS</strong></td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Capacity builders &amp; NGOs</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>4.3</td>
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</table>
Interpret your SCOPE score

Higher-scoring cooperatives:
- Have a stable or growing membership base.
- Provide an appropriate mix of member services.
- Routinely visit and communicate with members.

Lower-scoring cooperatives:
- Have a decreasing membership base.
- Do not provide services that promote member loyalty.
- Have little contact with members beyond product collection.
Let’s discuss

Your SCOPEInsight score

🌟 Why do you think you got these scores?
🌟 What do these scores mean for your cooperative and its members?
🌟 What do you think you can do to improve these scores?
Let’s discuss

The importance of relationships

Why is it important to build strong relationships with your members?
## Over to you!

Activity | Good member relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Describe what a cooperative must do to build strong relationships with its members. (In other words, what does “good member relations” look like?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>1. Individually, write down ideas on what you think cooperatives must do to build strong member relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. In your groups, compare notes and choose 5 ideas to present to the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Good member relations requires...

- Clearly defined criteria for membership.
- A plan for recruiting new members that is tied to supply and demand.
- Member policies that are enforced (e.g., on side selling).
- Regular contact and communication with members.
- A plan for actively involving members in cooperative life.
Member relations is a process

- Recruit Them
- Manage Them
- Involve Them

Stable Membership
Stable or Growing Membership
Growing Membership
Session 2

MEMBER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
During this session, you will work on...

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Let’s discuss
Member recruitment and retention

🌟 Why is it important to recruit new members?
🌟 Why is it important to retain members?
Keep organizational goals in mind

Organizational goals should shape your recruitment and retention strategy.

Goal: Increase volume

- Help existing members produce more
- Convince new members to join
4 key questions to ask…

1. Why do new members join?
2. Why do members leave?
3. How can you recruit new members?
4. How can you keep members once they join?
## Activity | Recruitment and retention strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Think about how your cooperative would answer the 4 key recruitment and retention questions.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timing</td>
<td>25 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions</td>
<td>1. Write down the question assigned to your group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Within your group, brainstorm a response to the question (aim for 3 to 5 ideas).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Have one representative from your group present your ideas to the class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Add to your development plan

Select 2 ideas on how to recruit new members and 2 ideas on how to keep them.

Add these to your development plan.

Today: Complete the section on the left

Later: Work with your cooperative to complete the section on the right
Session 3

MEMBER MANAGEMENT
During this session, you will work on...

“Over-to-You!” Activities  

1. Begin thinking about key recruitment and retention questions.
2. Evaluate your approach to enforcing member policies.
3. Begin drafting a survey to collect member feedback.

Your Development Plan  

1. Select 4 recruitment and retention ideas to add to your development plan.
2. Decide on a plan of action for enforcing member policies.
3. Outline how you will implement the member survey.
Let’s return to ANON

Anonymous Producer Organization (ANON) has a clear policy on side selling. Members are not permitted to sell their produce through other marketing channels.

Yet in recent months, several members have been caught violating this side-selling policy.
Let’s discuss

What would you do?

🌟 How might this situation affect other members of the cooperative?
🌟 If you were the President of ANON, how would you address this situation?
🌟 How might this situation be avoided in the future?
Create and **enforce** member policies

Examples of member policies:

- Sell production only through the cooperative.
- Avoid the use of child labor.
- Ensure a safe working environment.
- Attend the general assembly.
- Pay annual fee to the cooperative.
- Retain certification status.
- What are some examples from your cooperative?
### Over to you!

*Activity | Enforcing member policies*

<table>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Evaluate your cooperative’s current approach to enforcing member policies and determine whether a better approach is needed.</th>
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<tr>
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</table>
| Instructions | 1. In column 1 of your handout, write down 3 of your cooperative’s member policies.  
2. In column 2, write down the actions you take to enforce those policies (if any).  
3. In column 3, write down the results of those actions (or lack of action).  
4. Highlight which policies require more enforcement. |
Add to your development plan
Go to your development plan

🌟 Write down the member policies that your cooperative wants to enforce.
🌟 State what is required to enforce those policies.

Now: Complete left side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Policy</th>
<th>What is required to enforce the policy?</th>
<th>Who is responsible for enforcing it?</th>
<th>Start date for enforcing policy?</th>
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</table>

Later: Complete right side
Session 4

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
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Cooperative A or Cooperative B?

Cooperative A:
- Offers nothing beyond the price it gets for production.
- Holds 1 general assembly per year (it is the law!).
- Never asks members what they want in a cooperative.

*We are not here to make friends with our members. We collect their maize, sell it, and get them a fair price.*

- President, Cooperative A
Cooperative A or Cooperative B?

Cooperative B:
- Helps members improve quality, leading to higher prices.
- Holds 1 general assembly and 3 member forums a year.
- Surveys its members every 6 months.

“We believe in doing more for our members than the cooperative down the road. When our members do well, we do well.”

- President, Cooperative B
Let’s discuss
Cooperative A or Cooperative B?

🌟 Which cooperative would you rather join—A or B? Why?
🌟 What are the benefits of acting like A? Like B?
🌟 Does your cooperative look more like A or B?
The value of member services

Members who are satisfied with the services provided by the cooperative—who view those services as valuable—are more likely to be engaged and remain loyal to the cooperative.
Examples of member services

- Product collection
- Product marketing
- Equipment use
- Storage and transport
- Input supply
- Production credit
- Certification support
- Mentoring and coaching
- Education and training
- Community infrastructure

Can you think of others?
Find out what members want

If you do not know which services your members value…

Ask them!
## Over to you!

**Activity | Member survey**

<table>
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<th>Objective</th>
<th>Begin developing a survey to gather feedback on member satisfaction with your cooperative.</th>
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</table>
| **Instructions** | 1. With your cooperative, review the sample member survey on the handout.  
2. Write 3 questions for your own survey. These questions should ask members about:  
a. Their satisfaction with current services.  
b. The services they would like to see offered.  
c. Their likelihood of recommending the cooperative to a neighbor. |
Add to your development plan

In your development plan, outline how you will implement your survey.

Include details on how you will distribute the survey and how you will analyze the results.

Today: Finish the sections in blue

Complete the sections in yellow later with your cooperative