



International
Labour
Organization

Think. COOP

AN ORIENTATION
ON THE COOPERATIVE
BUSINESS MODEL

TRAINING GUIDE

Welcome to Think.COOP!



This is an online group training for everyone who is interested in joining or starting a cooperative.

Welcome to Think.COOP!



You will work in a group with 4–5 people and with a facilitator.

Welcome to Think.COOP!



The training has **five sessions** and takes **two hours**.

Getting Started

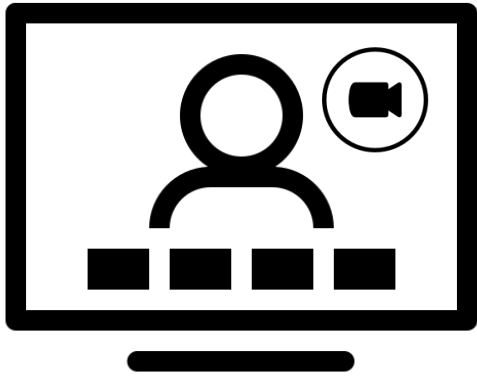


Wear earphones and make sure you hear each other clearly.



Mute your audio when you are not talking to avoid background noise.

Getting Started



If your internet connection is good enough, turn on your video. This will help you to interact with your group.

During the Training



Your facilitator will guide you through the module. The facilitator is not a teacher and will not make decisions for the group.

During the Training



Be active and participate.

Share your ideas with others in the discussions.



Work together as a group.

You will only succeed if you work together.



Be respectful.

Be polite and disagree respectfully.



Session 1

Good Relationships and Livelihoods



20 minutes

In this session


- You will get to know each other.
- You will learn about the importance of relationships in your life.



Getting to Know Each Other




1. Take turns in introducing yourself and your occupation.

 5 minutes



2. Who helps you most in making a living?
Choose three people from the list and share them with each other.

Neighbours	People who lend me money	Peers
Relatives	Children	Suppliers
Siblings	Boss	Husband/wife
Parents	People who work for me	Others (specify)
People who help me get new customers		

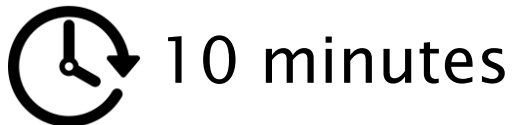
 5 minutes

Importance of Relationships

Good relationships keep you happy, healthy and help you to accomplish your work.



1. Discuss why good relationships are important for you?
2. Choose 1 person. Share why this person is important for you to make a living.





Session 2

Horizontal & Vertical Relationships



20 minutes

In this session

- You will learn what horizontal and vertical relationships are.
- You will explore the benefits of horizontal relationships.



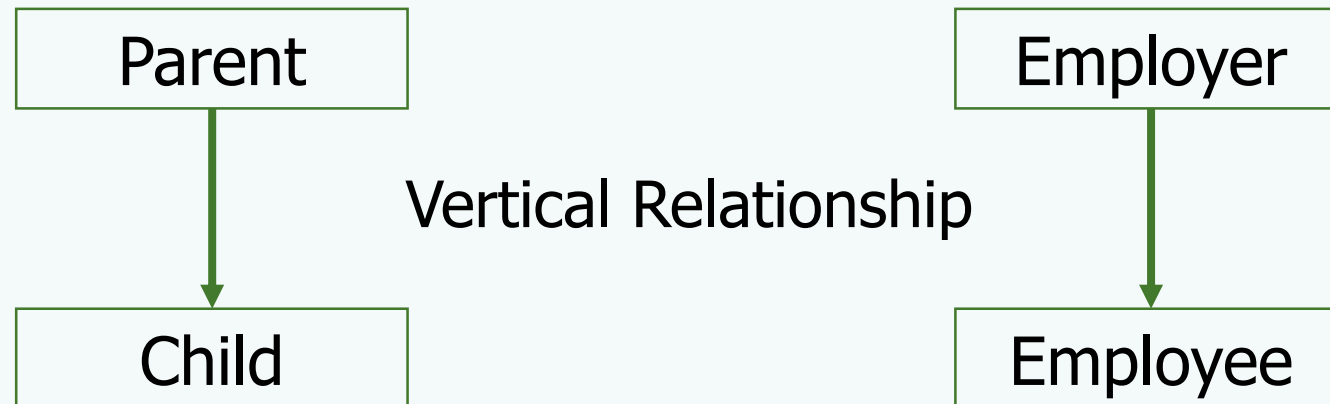
Vertical & Horizontal Relationships



1. Read the following explanation:

Vertical relationships:

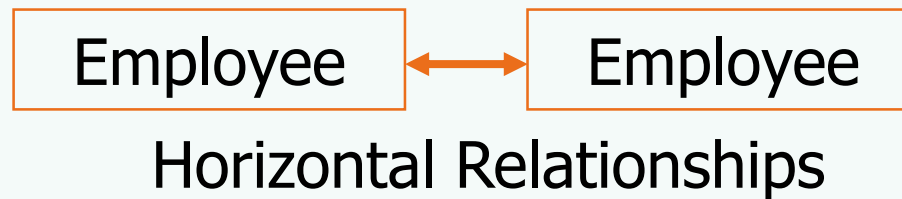
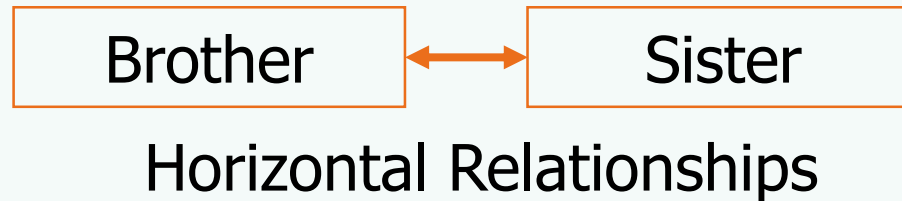
- Hierarchical relationships between people with different functions.
- One person has power over the other.





Horizontal relationships:


- Non-hierarchical relationships between people with same functions.
- Involve collaboration and cooperation.



2. Quiz: Are the relationships horizontal or vertical?



Relationship	Horizontal	Vertical
<i>Example: Farmer and trader</i>		X
Two workers		
Two shop owners		
Fertilizer supplier and farmer		
Construction worker and contractor		

 5 minutes



Solutions:

Relationship	Horizontal Relationship	Vertical Relationship
Two workers	X	
Two shop owners	X	
Fertilizer supplier and farmers		X
Construction worker and contractor		X

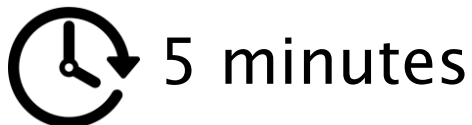
The benefits of horizontal relationships

1. Discuss the following questions.



A farmer works alone and wants to sell her produce for \$ 1 /kilo. The trader will only pay \$ 0.75 /kilo.

Will the farmer get the price she wanted?
What could change if she worked with other farmers?

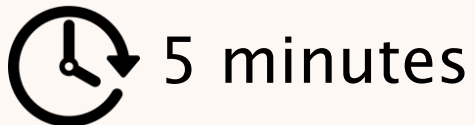


5 minutes

2. Quiz: True or false?



Read the sentences on the next slides and decide whether they are true or false.



5 minutes

True or False?

Horizontal cooperation does not help to negotiate better with traders.

True



False





Solution:

False: Horizontal cooperation helps to negotiate better with traders.

True or False?

When workers cooperate with each other, they can negotiate for better working conditions.

True



False





Solution:
True.

True or False?

Together, you are not stronger and are able to achieve tasks that you would not be able to do alone.

True



False





Solution:

False: Together you are stronger and are able to achieve tasks you you would not be able to do alone.



Session 3

The benefits of
collective action



20 minutes

In this session

- You will learn about benefits of group action.
- You will learn how to transform constraints into opportunities.



Opportunities for Group Action

1. Read the story of Oliver.




Oliver is a farmer and harvests small quantities of vegetables.

For small quantities, he receives a low price from the trader and has to buy fertilizer for a high price.

2. Discuss the questions below.



What are the constraints faced by Oliver to make a living?

 5 minutes

3. Now read the story of Maria.



Maria is a farmer. She is a member of a cooperative with other farmers.

Together they sell larger quantities of vegetables.


For these quantities, the trader pays a better price.

They buy fertilizer in together, which reduces the price for each member.

4. Discuss and use the table on the next slide.



How will the solutions by the cooperative help Oliver?

 5 minutes

From Constraints to Opportunities

1. Read the constraints & solutions of a shop owner.



Constraint: Stock is expensive in small quantities.



Group solution: Buying together with other shop owners.



Advantage: Stock will be 20% less expensive.



Disadvantage: Takes more time than working alone.

2. Discuss the questions below.



Discuss a constraint you face in making a living.

What is a possible group solution?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of the group solution?



10 minutes



Session 4

Cooperatives

 25 minutes

In this session

- You will learn what a cooperative is.
- You will get to know the seven principles of cooperatives.



What are cooperatives?

1. Read the text on cooperatives:



Cooperatives

- are businesses which serve their members.
- are owned by equal members.
- are controlled by all members together.

Members

- pull resources together.
- act as both users and owners.
- share the profits of the cooperative.

2. Take turns and read the story sentence by sentence.



- Leyla makes woven bags.
- She used to work alone and struggled to make a living.
- She joined the Crafts Cooperative with other producers.

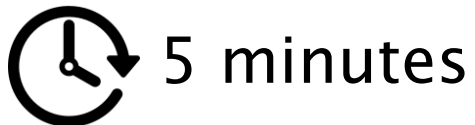


- The cooperative has its own store and with sewing machines, which member can use for a small fee.
- With the machines, they can produce faster and at a lower cost.
- Now, members earn more.
- The cooperative will open a nursery for members and the community.

2. Discuss the questions below.



What are the services provided by Leyla's cooperative to its members?
What are the benefits for the members?



5 minutes

Principles of a Cooperative

1. Read the seven principles and decide in the quiz, which action is violating the principle.



15 minutes



Principle 1 – Voluntary and Open Membership :

- Membership is voluntary
- Membership is open to everyone
- Members can leave whenever they wish



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Everyone is treated equally.
- b. The cooperative is accessible to everyone.
- c. The cooperative harasses members who want to leave.



Solution:

$$1 - c$$



Principle 2 – Democratic Member Control :

- Each member gets one vote
- Elected representatives act in the member's best interest



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Shares information with all members
- b. Only members who agree with the President are invited to meetings
- c. Encourages members to give feedback on the services of the cooperative



Solution:
 $2 - b$



Principle 3 – Member Economic Participation

- Members pull resources together to run the cooperative
- Economic decisions are agreed on by everyone



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Those who provided more money, decide how to use it.
- b. Shares surpluses with members.
- c. Uses resources to achieve cooperative's goals.



Solution:

$$3 - a$$



Principle 4 – Autonomy and Independence

- Cooperatives are not controlled by non-members.
- When cooperatives work with other organizations, they stay independent.



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Follow the "wishes" of politicians to gain trust.
- b. Enters agreements with organizations only when it stays independent.
- c. Acts independently.



Solution:

$$4 - a$$



Principle 5 – Education, Training and Information

- Cooperatives provide training for their members, representatives, managers, and employees.
- They inform the community about the benefits of cooperation.



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Inform about the benefits of the cooperative model.
- b. Improves knowledge of members on cooperatives.
- c. Only the manager is provided with training.



Solution:
 $5 - c$



Principle 6 – Cooperation among Cooperatives

- Cooperatives work together with other local, national, regional and international cooperatives.



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Builds relationships with other cooperatives.
- b. Avoids cooperatives, which might be competitors.
- c. Participates in cooperative knowledge sharing events.



Solution:
 $6 - b$



Principle 7 – Concern for the Community

- Contributes to the development of the community.



Which action violates the principle?

- a. Treats all people with respect and dignity.
- b. Uses local resources and skills.
- c. No consideration on nature because this is not its focus.



Solution:
 $7 - c$



Session 5

Doing Business Together



25 minutes

In this session

- You will learn about the types of cooperatives.
- You will reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of cooperatives.



Types of Cooperatives

1. Look at the different types of cooperatives.



Food cooperative

Housing cooperative

Artisanal mining cooperative

Energy cooperative

Day care cooperative


Farmer cooperative

Credit Union

2. Discuss the question below.



Which of types of cooperatives are most relevant for your community?

 5 minutes

Advantages & Disadvantages of Cooperatives

1. Discuss the question.



What are the advantages of forming or joining a cooperative?
What are the disadvantages?



10 minutes

2. Discuss the question.



After this module, would you like to form or join a cooperative?
Why or why not?



10 minutes



CONGRATULATIONS!
You just completed
this online training!

In this module you looked at

- The benefits of group action and cooperation.
- What cooperatives are and member's benefits.
- Whether a cooperative is right for you.

Please take time to finish the
Post-Participation Survey (5-10
mins)

[https://ee.humanitarianresponse.i](https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/#jZ1E0c2D)
[nfo/x/#jZ1E0c2D](https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/#jZ1E0c2D)