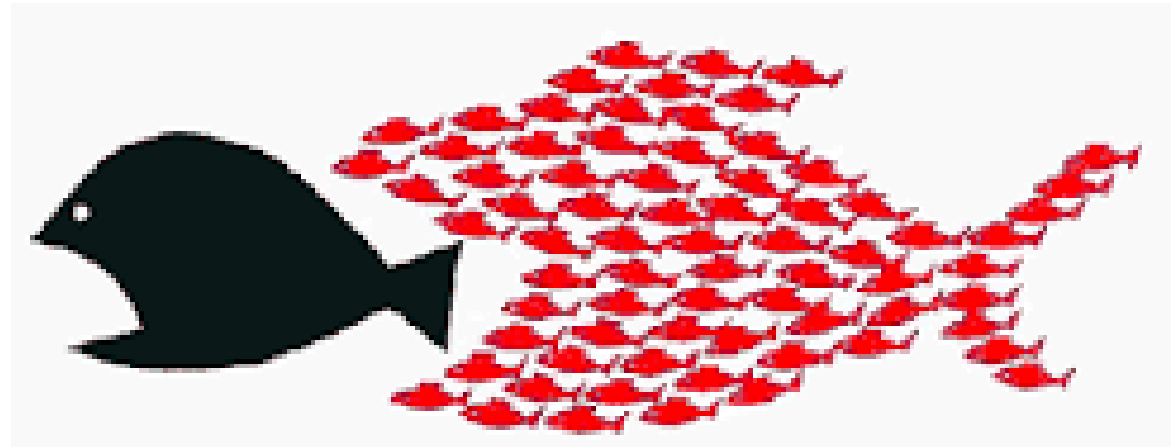


# Why cooperatives for indigenous women?

## An ILO Perspective

Simel Esim and Andrea Davila - ILOCOOP

## ► Benefits of collective action

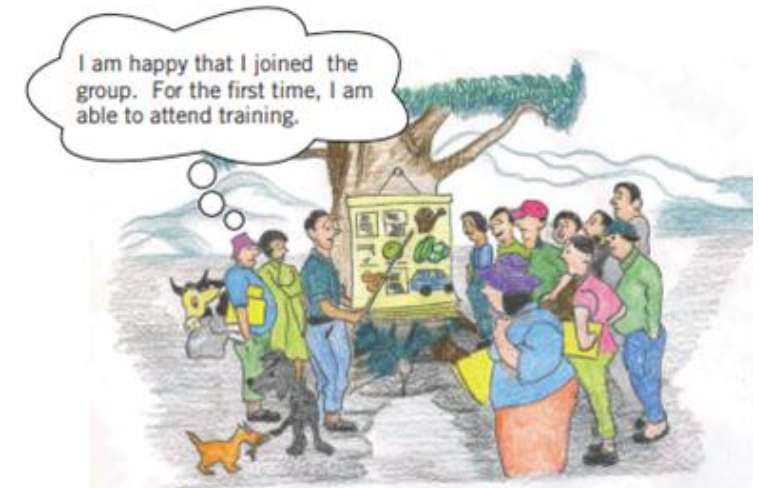


## ► Benefits of collective action

Individual Action	Group Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Decisions can be made more quickly and easily</li><li>• There is no consultation or discussion needed</li><li>• If successful, benefits automatically go to the individual</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The workload can be shared</li><li>• Resources can be pooled</li><li>• The group has more power, voice and negotiating power which can also translate to better access to extension services from government and lead firms</li><li>• Members of the group can learn from each other</li><li>• The group can save on costs</li><li>• The group can negotiate better prices when buying inputs jointly</li><li>• The group produces more and satisfies larger orders</li></ul>

## Benefits of collective action

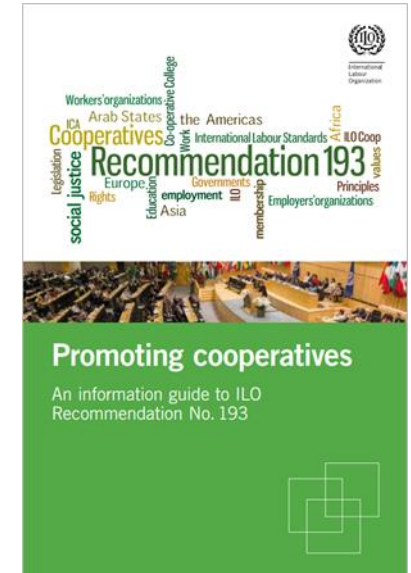
- ▶ Joint purchase & use of equipment
- ▶ Joint purchase of inputs to get a discount
- ▶ Access to a range of services (e.g. finance, care, housing)
- ▶ Increased bargaining/selling power
- ▶ Access to training opportunities



## What is a cooperative?

A cooperative is defined as “an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise”

- ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
- International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) Statement on the Cooperative Identity



## What is a cooperative?

### Cooperatives are:

- ▶ Businesses
- ▶ To serve members
- ▶ Democratically controlled by members

### Cooperatives members:

- ▶ Provide resources
- ▶ Use & pay for its services
- ▶ Participate in decision-making



## Cooperative values & principles

- ▶ Voluntary and Open Membership
- ▶ Democratic Member Control
- ▶ Members' Economic Participation
- ▶ Autonomy and Independence
- ▶ Education, Training, and Information
- ▶ Cooperation among Cooperatives
- ▶ Concern for Community



Values: Self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity



## ▶ How cooperatives fare on women empowerment?

- ▶ Creating employment and improving incomes
- ▶ Providing affordable and accessible services (e.g. finance, care, housing)
- ▶ Generating resource pools and collective bargaining power
- ▶ Promoting education and training
- ▶ Exercising economic democracy (decision making, ownership, use)





## ► Plenary discussion

- What kind of cooperatives exist in your country?
- Who are the members?
- What kind of services do they provide?



## ► Examples of indigenous peoples cooperatives

### ► Union of Indigenous Communities of the Isthmus Region (UCIRI)

- Established in 1982
- Members: coffee producers from 53 communities in Oaxaca (reaching 5000 families);
- Sells at national and international level through Fair Trade;
- Infrastructure and services to members: warehouses, transport, food supply systems and health services;
- Cooperative Solidarity Fund (purchase of goods and equipment and provision of credit);
- Training to members and workers on organic production methods.



## Examples of indigenous peoples cooperatives

### ► Negros Islands Handicrafts

- Established 25 years ago;
- Members: Women weavers from Negros Island (reaching 500 families);
- Products: baskets, mats, trays, coasters made of abaca, bamboo, buri and coconut (protection of environment as a priority);
- Commercialized through Fair Trade;
- Benefits for members and community: all members are paid a fair return for their products; their children can be sent to school and receive better nutrition;



## ► Examples of indigenous peoples cooperatives

### ► Toudarté Cooperative - Morocco

- <https://aroundtheworld.coop/portfolio/cooperative-story-2-toudarte/>

## ▶ When choosing a business structure consider:

- ▶ Motivation for setting up the business
- ▶ Ownership
- ▶ Participation and control
- ▶ Profit sharing
- ▶ Resources
- ▶ Liability

## Learning tools

### Our.Coop Package

- ▶ Series of tools orienting the cooperative business model: conceive the idea of organizing, establishing and managing a cooperative
- ▶ Training package includes training and facilitator's guides of:
  - Think.Coop
  - Start.Coop
  - Manage.Coop
- ▶ Uses activity learning methodology
- ▶ Potential for quick and easy adaptation to different contexts



## Think.Coop

- ▶ One-day sensitization module on the importance of relationships, benefits of collective action, and cooperative business model
- ▶ At the end of the training the participants should be able to have a better understanding on whether cooperative might be a suitable business model





## Start.Coop

- ▶ Outlines the steps to be taken in order to start-up a cooperative
- ▶ Four modules:
  - Identify the core members and the business idea
  - Research the feasibility of the business idea
  - Prepare a business plan
  - Organizational set-up
- ▶ After the training, participants should be able to identify the steps required for setting-up a cooperative



## Manage.Coop *(under development)*

- Focuses on the management of a cooperative

- Six modules:

  - Governance and leadership

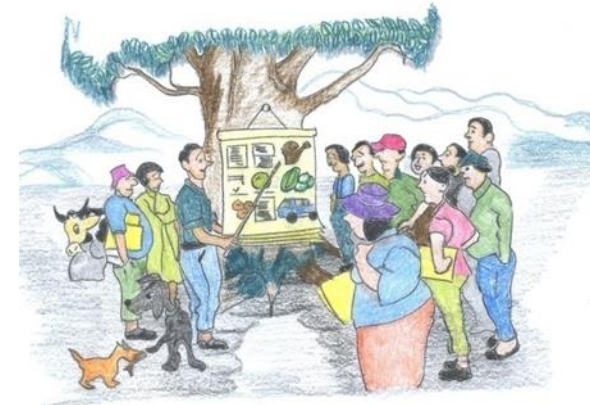
  - Effective and open communication

  - Conflict management

  - Business and market growth strategies

  - Human resources management

  - Financial management



# Thank you!

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