



## **SHALOM EDUCATING FOR PEACE RWANDA**

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**Training in *Resolving and Transforming Conflicts in Cooperatives*  
organized for cooperatives  
working with World Vision Rwanda,  
Tunga cluster in Western Province, Rwanda**

# **Training report**

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Held at Bethel Centre, Rubengera- Karongi District

From 31 July- 02 August 2017

**Prepared by**

**Dr Jean de Dieu Basabose,  
Training facilitator**

**Submitted on 07 August 2017**

## **Introduction**

This report briefly presents the three day training organized by World Vision Rwanda, Western Region, Tunga Cluster (operating in Rutsiro and Ngorerero districts) and facilitated by Shalom Educating for Peace Rwanda (SEP-Rwanda). The overall objective of the training was to equip the cooperatives with capacities to positively respond to conflicts and build trust among their members. 31 participants from four cooperatives actively participated in the training. The four cooperatives represented at the training are: COIMU (a cooperative of Maize growers); Imbuto Iwacu; Tubeho n'Ejo; Curuza Utere Imbere. The cooperatives operate in Mushubati Sector, Rutsiro district.

## **Objectives and Content of the training**

The training was pursuing the following objectives:

- Remind the participants about definition, organization and functioning principles of cooperative as determined by Rwandan Law regulating cooperatives;
- Understand conflict and identify sources of conflicts frequently occurring in Cooperatives;
- Learn positive ways to resolve conflicts , applying collaborative approach to resolving conflicts in cooperative;
- Analyse conflicts and discuss about positive aspects of Conflict in a cooperative;
- Learn about how to build trust among cooperative members;
- Explore the enormous potential of cooperatives for building and sustaining peace in communities where.

## **Expectations of the participants**

At the beginning, the participants were invited to list out the expectations they had for the training. Working in small groups, they listed out the following:

- ⊥ Identifying sources of conflicts in cooperatives;

- ⊥ Understanding conflicts and how to resolve them;
- ⊥ Preventing conflicts in cooperative;
- ⊥ Sharing experience on conflicts happening in cooperatives and how they are positively responded to;
- ⊥ Exchanging on ways of building a healthy cooperative;

### **Training Materials**

SEP- Rwanda has developed a training manual for training cooperatives in Resolving and transforming conflicts. This material was piloted and found very appropriate to the local context and applicable to trainings for cooperatives in Rwanda. The training material was used as the principal working document for the training. At the end, each participant got a printed copy of the document.

### **About the trainer**

The training was facilitated by Dr Jean de Dieu Basabose. With more than 13 years experience in facilitating trainings and workshops related to peacebuilding, Basabose has intensively facilitated trainings and workshops on building peace, mediation, networking, community organizing, monitoring local peace initiative, Nonviolent Communication, etc. As a committed Rwandan Peacebuilder and through Shalom Educating for Peace, a peace education organisation he co-found in 2007 and co-directs, Basabose is making efforts to build and sustaining positive peace through peace and nonviolence education.

### **Training Process**

This residential training activity was held at Centre Bethel in Rubengera Sector, Karongi district. The participants came on the 30<sup>th</sup> July and stay at the centre until the 02<sup>nd</sup> August, afternoon. The option of having participant staying at the training venue minimized different kinds of distraction: it allowed participants keeping focus on the training. The training applied active methodology engaging the participants and encouraging interactions between participants and

the trainer (who behaved as a facilitator). The training interchangeably used lectures, discussions, group work, case studies, plenary sessions, and role play.

### **Training evaluation and recommendations**

At the end of the training, the participants were invited to express their feelings and opinions and share their feedbacks on the training. All of them appreciate the content and the approach used by the trainer and their satisfaction, basing on their expectations, reached at 80%. In small groups, the participants also discussed about the outputs of the training and formulate recommendations. The participants:

- i. *Reiterated the importance and relevance of the training:* In addition to the knowledge learnt from the training, they described the event as a unique opportunity where the cooperatives members can meet, exchange experience, learn from one another, share about best practices, existing challenges and how they have faced and overcome them. The training enhanced their capacities in managing cooperatives, responding to conflicts in positive ways, building social cohesion and trust among the members of cooperative as key elements of a healthy and successful cooperative.
- ii. *Pointed out some of obstacles and challenges they are facing in order to build healthy and successful cooperatives:* the major challenges include lack of trust among cooperative members, conflicts of interest and interference of local authority in cooperative management, bad leadership and appropriation by cooperative leaders.
- iii. *Formulated recommendations to different actors intervening in cooperatives development:*
  - a. Cooperatives members:
    - Establish strong leadership structures in cooperative, accountable and capable to deliver and efficiently play their roles.
    - Apply laws and regulations regulating cooperatives in Rwanda and consistently put into place necessary internal regulations that can enable the cooperatives harmonizing and bringing order in day-to –day management.

- Make sure that all cooperative's books- including financial records, meeting records, etc- are completed, safe and kept in order.

b. Partners and non-governmental supporters:

- Prepare and sign Memorandum of Understanding with Cooperatives in order to clarify roles and responsibilities in their partnership agreements.
- Organize study visits, create and extend opportunities for exchanging experience between cooperatives.
- Establish mechanism that could enable effective follow up and ensure the proper use of the support given to cooperatives.
- Provide not only financial and material support but also build capacity of cooperatives and organise relevant trainings.
- Organize a workshop on conflicts in cooperative for the cooperatives' leaders and local authorities and advocate for the autonomy of the cooperatives in managing their resources and sharing interests.

c. Governmental institutions:

- To do not complicate the process of applying for and issuing official documents such as certificates, attestations,... required for cooperative's operations.
- Assist cooperatives in resolving conflicts in case the members failed to collaborate and resolve them.
- Avoid any kind of interference in cooperative management (especially, this recommendation was given to local authorities).

### **General observations and recommendations**

Cooperatives can provide unique opportunity to educate communities for peace and sustainable development. In a society where people live a community life, cooperatives have potential to bring community members together, unite them for a common objective, build social cohesion and trust among the members and move them towards a shared vision.

SEP-Rwanda commends the efforts made by World Vision Rwanda and oriented to supporting and sustaining cooperatives in Rwanda. We would recommend extending such training to other cooperatives. During the training, the participants' interventions repeatedly pointed out the conflicts generated by the interference of local authorities in cooperative management. This seems to be one of the major challenges that the represented cooperatives are facing. Also, there might be some gaps in regulations regulating how cooperative members calculate and share interest, especially when someone wants to leave and claim his/her shares and interests, including the support provided by a supporter. SEP-Rwanda recommends organizing a consultative meeting on these two problems highlighted by the participants during the training.

The training report signed by:

Dr. Jean de Dieu Basabose