

# Evaluating Co-operative Life

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*Canadian Association for Studies  
in Co-operation  
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# Structure of Presentation

- Nature of co-operative life
- Why evaluate it?
- How to evaluate it?

# Objectives

- Better knowledge of cooperative life and of evaluation tools
- Understand why evaluation increases cooperative performance

# Part One: Nature of Co-operative Life

## ■ 7 Co-operative Principles

- ACI AMERICA
- EURO COOP
- CCA
- CQCM

# 7 Co-operative Principles

1. Voluntary and Open Membership
2. Democratic Member Control
3. Member Economic Participation
4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Education, Training, and Information
6. Co-operation among Co-operatives
7. Concern for Community

# Part One:

## Nature of Co-operative Life

- 7 principles based on values
- Co-operative values
- Self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity, solidarity
- Ethical values
  - honesty, openness, social responsibility, caring for others

# Part One: Nature of Co-operative Life

- Values and principles

# Evaluating Co-operative Life

Part Two:

Why Evaluate Co-operative Life?



# Part Two: Why Evaluate Co-operative Life?

- Co-operative performance increases by reinforcing co-operative life
- Daniel Côté
- J. Tom Webb
- Robert Briscoe, Michael Ward and David Griffiths

# Part Two: Why Evaluate Co-operative Life?

- How to integrate co-operative values into management practices?

# Part Two: Why Evaluate Co-operative Life?

- "When I finish this exercise, I will better understand how I am distinct and, trust me, I will know how to demonstrate it."

# Co-operative Advantages

- A "genetic" code of ethics
- A purpose other than profit
- A corporation of solidarity
  - equity
  - network
  - creation

# Co-operative Advantages

- More than a customer: a member
- The valorization of training practices
- Rooted in the community
- Self-responsibility

# Why Evaluate Co-operative Life?

- To better know and promote the advantages
- More relevant information on stakes
- To improve the sharing of information
- To improve decision-making processes
- To work more closely with stakeholders
- Evaluation enables continuous improvement

# Evaluating Co-operative Life

## Part Three: How to Evaluate Co-operative Life?

# Part Three: How to Evaluate Co-operative Life?

- Self-evaluation
- Audit



# Self-evaluation

- ≠ external visibility but:
  - Better self-knowledge
  - To understand one's distinctiveness
  - Better knowledge of members
  - "Patronage allocation" not the only element of distinctiveness

# Co-operative audit

- Recognized auditor
- Published
  
- International tendency:
  - From the 7 co-operative principles

# Certification of compliance

- 3 advantages
  - Commitment of the board
  - Auditor
    - External
    - Internationally accredited
  - Visibility

# ICA commitment

“The Board believes that having access to such a tool, which can validate and demonstrate the distinctiveness of co-operatives in a consistent and measurable way throughout the world, is something that may be of real value to ICA members.”

February 2005

# Evaluating Co-operative Life

## Conclusion

# Conclusion

- Co-operative model has advantages
- The evaluation of co-operative life will greatly develop in near future
- The evaluation and promotion of co-operative advantages is a board decision
- Tools to promote and evaluate cooperative life are available

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- Thank you!

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