

Benefits of Community Leader Program Training for Improving Social Entrepreneurship of Civil Society Organizations

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Abstract:

Complementing the limitations of the government in meeting the needs and demands of society, various civil society organizations (CSOs) were established. Their existence and progress in providing public services and helping solution of community problems is very strategic. To support the organization and program activities, CSOs need funding. However, there has been a budget shortage and reduced funding support from donors, especially foreign financial aid institutions. The NAMA Foundation, through the NICE Foundation as its executor in Indonesia, does not merely provide financial support, it channels its assistance in the form of training programs for CSOs aimed to build independence and sustainability of the organization and its programs. One such effort is the Community Leader Program Training program for developing social entrepreneurship for 10 community CSOs in the provinces of DKI Jakarta, West Java and Banten in 2019. This research is an evaluation of the training program using the Kirkpatrick 4 level training program evaluation model. The results indicate positive feedback from the participants especially in terms of knowledge and skills gained from the training.

Keywords: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Leader Program (CLP) Training, NAMA Foundation, Kirkpatrick 4 Level Evaluation Model

Introduction

The needs and demands of society for services from the government are vast and varied although it is widely recognised that the government has limitations to meet all these needs and demands (Suprajogo, 2011). This has prompted the establishment of civil society organizations (CSOs) aimed at providing services to the community (Armstrong, Bello, Gilson & Spini, 2011). In Indonesia, the number of CSOs has doubled in the Reformation era, even tripled now when compared to the numbers that existed during the New Order era.

The participation of CSOs is indeed needed by the community in various activities such as providing support to orphans, assisting in disaster management and prevention, teaching knowledge and skills for people with no formal education, identifying foster parents for school-aged children to help finance the education costs, training of volunteers to become leaders who are capable of driving development and empowerment of society (Herdiansah, Ari Ganjar, Randi, 2016).

In carrying out the program activities, CSOs need funding support. In the beginning, most of the CSOs relied on funding obtained from donations from individual donors, private companies in the form of CSR, and financial assistance from international funding agencies. However, in their development to ensure continuity in helping and facilitating society, these (CSOs) can no longer rely solely on private donations, let alone foreign aid funds. This is partly due to the lack of supporting institutions that can contribute funding to local community organizations. Flexible foreign funding sourced from international agencies that are available to CSOs to carry out their work independently has become increasingly difficult to obtain (Scalon, Alawiyah, Tuti, xxxx; LSM Annual Report Indonesia, 2017).

Responding to these challenges, NAMA Foundation, an international CSO provides support to foundations, associations, and communities engaged in social, educational, humanitarian, and religious activities in Indonesia in the form of social entrepreneurship training called the Community Leader Program (CLP). The purpose of the training is to prepare local CSOs personnel to gain knowledge and skills to enable them to use the strategies, methods, and techniques to develop their social entrepreneurship capabilities. Expected outputs from the training are that participating CSOs will take the initiative to pioneer, create, and even develop productive economic businesses intended to support empowering activities in their communities.

Research Methods

This study used a qualitative-exploratory approach in the format of evaluation of the Community Leader Program (CLP) organized by the NICE Foundation as the implementer of the NAMA Foundation program in Indonesia that was conducted from October to December 2019. CLP training was given to 10 CSOs in the DKI Jakarta, West Java and Banten provinces as the first phase of a pilot program that is to be delivered over five years. Data was collected through interviews with trainees and trainers, direct observation, documentation, and questionnaire during and after the training. The evaluation of the study used four levels of the Kirkpatrick evaluation model.

Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation consists of levels 1 to 4 (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2008). The four levels show the sequence of ways to 54 EDC2020 evaluation of a program. Each level is important and has an impact on the next level. From one level to the next, the process becomes more difficult and is time-consuming, but also provides more valuable information. Level 1 is an evaluation that measures how the reactions of the participants involved in the training are usually expressed in terms of participant satisfaction. The second level is learning, which is the extent to which participants change their attitudes,

improvise knowledge, and/or improve their skills after attending a training program. The third level is behaviour which refers to knowing the extent to which behaviour change has occurred due to trainees’ participation in training programs. Level 4 provides the final evaluation of trainees’ participation in the training program.

Results and Discussion

Level 1 evaluation is measured by the level of satisfaction concerning the suitability of training with organizational needs indicates that the reaction of participants to the training conducted was very positive (Figure 1). All participants agreed that the training provided by NICE Foundation meets the needs of their respective organizations which includes the content and delivery of the training. Amongst the participants, many viewed CLP training as eye-opening, adding information, widening the mindset and seeing new opportunities as well as exposure to traits and characters that drive or hinder performance in their organizations.

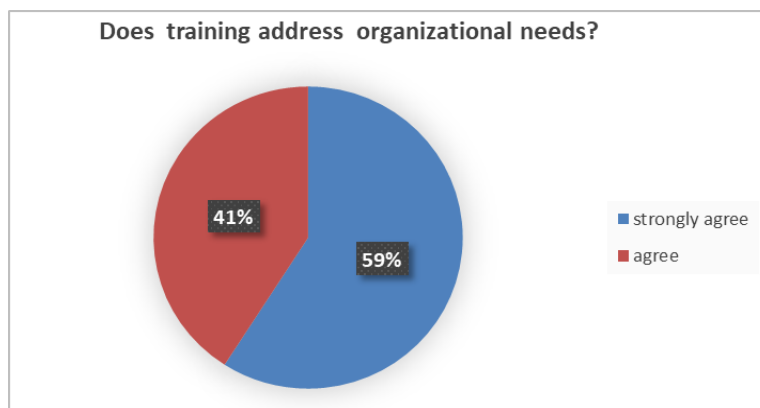


Figure 1: Level 1 Evaluation: Suitability of Training with Organizational Needs

In the second phase of CLP training, participants received training materials on Brainstorming Pattern, Hearing Model, Stakeholder Analysis, Prototype, LFA, Value Proposition, analysis, and problem-solving, which were considered important. In this phase of training, the participants were more inspired by the provision of business planning materials in organizations where such material had never been obtained before. The reaction of the participants to the training remained consistently high at 100% that the training answered their organization’s needs. The response from the interviews with participants is that the CLP training teaches participants how to solve problems, build leadership insight and skills, even encouraging social institutions to be supported into profit-making organizations to develop and contribute to all. In addition to increasing knowledge and insights about CSOs and NGOs, the training included methods and tools to solve problems and achieve organizational goals and objectives as well as build ideal leadership criteria.

The comments by the participants which are indicative of the participants' positive reactions to the training reinforce that the training was effective and can be continued. Although

participants' verbal testimony is at Level 1 and in the form of knowledge which is cognitive, it has led to Level 2 which is learning in the Kirkpatrick model. This means that theoretically, by increasing knowledge and skills, participants can be motivated to learn further and develop their ability to solve problems, especially in their organizations. The training has also fulfilled the expectations of the participants as strongly agreed by 50% of them and agreed by the remaining 50% as shown in Figure 2.

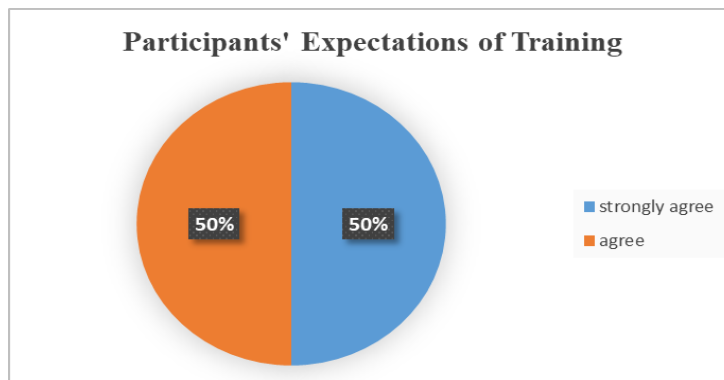


Figure 2: Training has fulfilled participants' expectations in phase 1

The positive reaction shown by the participants with high expectations of CLP training will encourage their desire and willingness to learn at a later stage. The first stage of CLP training is a motivating factor for participants to participate in stage 2 of CLP training. The participants expressed great satisfaction with their expectations on stage 2 CLP training with 83% strongly agreed and 17% agreed. This shows that the participants' positive perception of the training is strengthened significantly in the second stage. In turn, this motivated the participants to be more actively involved.

The effectiveness of CLP training was evaluated in terms of management and organization of the training that was designed by the training manager. The success of a training implementation cannot be separated from the supporting factors such as training equipment and facilities provided, training venues, meals and refreshments, teaching aids, stationeries, and other services. On average, the assessment by participants is in the range of 70% -80% of them being very satisfied with what was provided during the training.

The venue used for training was equipped with air conditioning, tables and chairs, adequate lighting, quiet and comfortable space to fit a maximum of 40 participants. Although the training centre was in the heart of the city, the room was soundproofed from any noise that could disturb the smooth running of the training. A comfortable and calm atmosphere is needed for a conducive learning environment. While training materials or content is important, equally if not more important is the approach of training and even more important is the teaching actor or trainer in the case of training activities. In terms of evaluation, one important component is the assessment of trainers. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2008) posit that selection of trainers or instructors is an important consideration when planning and implementing an effective training

program. This means that the effectiveness of training is determined by the performance of the trainer and that the success of the training cannot be separated from the success of the trainer in delivering the training to the trainees.

There are several criteria for assessing a trainer's performance including his/her knowledge of the subject matter, desire in training, ability to communicate and skills to engage trainees to participate (Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick, 2008). In this study, 55% of the trainees gave a very satisfactory rating and 45% gave a satisfactory rate. In addition to the criteria above, there are other indicators that have been prepared by the NICE Foundation training management team and the research team including, how the trainer explains the material and facilitates the training participants' activities. CLP trainees reacted to the way the trainer explained the training material, 36% stated that it was very satisfying in the sense of being easily understood, 59% as satisfying in the sense of being easily understood and 5% answering as difficult to understand. (Figure 4). When the delivery of content is made easy to understand, it will greatly assist participants in absorbing the knowledge, and in turn, motivates and encourages participants to follow the entire session of the training. This is an indicator of effective communication skill that must be possessed by every teacher or trainer. Training is both science and art, the combination will make training interesting, fun, meaningful and impactful (Biech, 2017). Positive reactions from participants will stimulate them to continue participating in future learning activities.

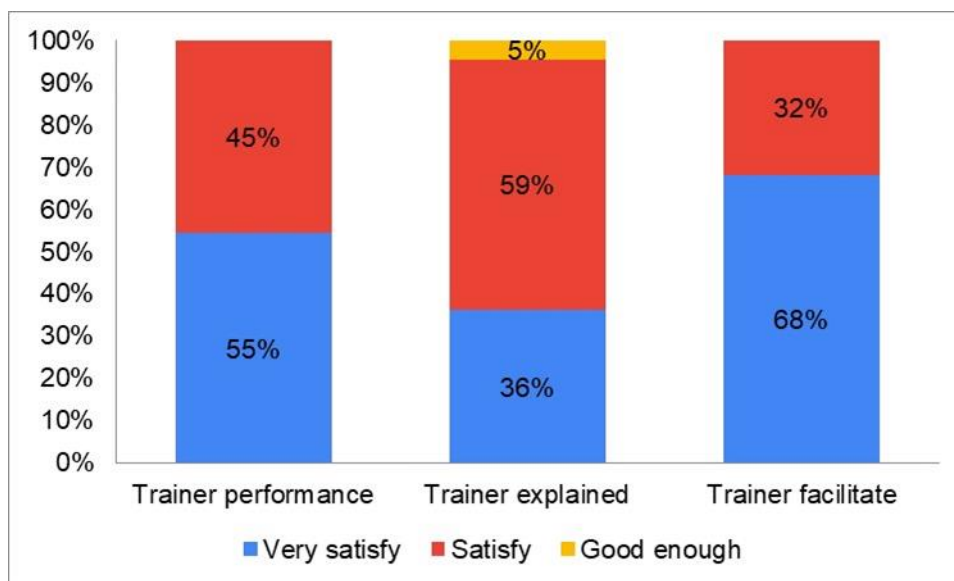


Figure 4: Participant's evaluation of the trainer for the CLP training

The participant's assessment of the trainer is also based on how the trainer facilitated the whole training program. Based on direct observation by the research team at the training venue and documentation, the trainer started the training activities by implementing a learning contract as agreed between the trainer and all participants through exchanging ideas, sharing suggestions and advice. The result of the agreement was made into a joint rule that must be

obeyed and implemented by all participants during the training. If there is a violation of the learning contract that has been mutually agreed upon, then the participant is given a penalty in the form of singing or recitation. This approach witnessed a training activity that is interrupted by a fun game. It was also emphasized that the training was to be conducted using a facilitation approach which encourages two-way communication between the trainer and trainees beginning with ice-breaking sessions followed by a short introduction about the training and related training materials that were distributed to all participants. Subsequently, brainstorming was conducted among participants facilitated by the trainer to talk about the concepts contained in the material that needs to be understood together. There were also group discussions where each group was required to present the group's consensus after which some conclusions would be reached.

The CLP training included a plenary discussion where participants were asked to identify the profiles and characteristics of CSOs from the ten foundations participating in the training including the purpose and the orientation of the foundation as well as problems faced by each foundation. The information was used as the basis of a problem-based learning (PBL) approach by the trainer to discuss possible solutions. A deep pattern of knowledge and experience sharing occurred between each group and among all training participants. Facilitation was also carried out by the trainer through a reflective approach where each participant was given the opportunity to reflect his/her strengths, weaknesses, obstacles, and challenges faced in the course of their work. Participants learned from their past experiences to find ways to strengthen their weaknesses and overcome the obstacles and challenges to improve future undertakings. It was a turning point for some which triggered changes to mindset and strategies for the better.

For mastering the material, simulation techniques and role-play were applied where each participant was asked to play the role of facilitator to explain to the other participants. This approach created a pleasant atmosphere while there was a process of internalizing ideas for each participant. The evaluation of the CLP training using Kirkpatrick's 4 level evaluation model showed that participants strongly agreed that there was an increase in knowledge and understanding of social entrepreneurship and related issues as well as social entrepreneurship management. The increment from knowledge to comprehension level was especially in terms of the tools that teach the structured and systematic concepts and techniques that are useful for mapping, diagnosing and analyzing problems, developing social projects, prototypes, and business models. Based on Bloom's Taxonomy, this represents an increase in one level of thinking ability from the previous level (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001). The extent of participants' understanding of the training content was measured by how participants presented their work, handled, and responded to the questions by their trainer and peers.

Evaluation of level 3 training program in the form of behaviour change examines the impact of CLP training on the respective CSOs, the beneficiaries of the program. This includes several question indicators, namely (1) behaviour change to be more active in socializing social entrepreneurship, (2) behaviour change to be more consistent in acting towards social entrepreneurship (3) increased creativity in the implementation of social entrepreneurship, (4) increased responsibility in the implementation of social entrepreneurship. According to Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2008), at least four conditions are needed for any change to occur:

one must have a desire to change, one must know what one wants to do and how to do it, one must work in the right climate, and finally, one must be given appreciation for the changes he/she made. Training is only one form of intervention and that behaviour change takes time. In this study, although changes in behaviour from the training are yet to be seen directly, these changes are expected to occur if supported by a conducive environment given that participants are now equipped with knowledge and skills and are motivated and stimulated.

Finally, the evaluation of level 4 training program is to examine the results both in terms of outputs and impact of CLP training using the following indicators: (1) improvement in social entrepreneurship skills; (2) improvement in the ability to find solutions for problems faced by individuals in the organization; (3) increase in the ability to find solutions to problems faced by the organization, (4) increase in the ability to develop social entrepreneurship in the organization, (5) upgrade of ability to deal with environmental changes originating from within organizations, (6) the benefits of applying social entrepreneurship training materials to participant performance, and (7) the benefits of applying social entrepreneurship training materials to organizational performance.

The desired results in the form of increased knowledge, understanding and skills of trainees participating in CLP training have been confirmed by all participants in their evaluation at the end of the training. The CLP training output can be summarised as follows: gaining knowledge from the experience of other institutions and from practitioners; developing a new mindset for managing the institution; building networks among similar institutions; applying science for institutional development; using tools to map, analyze and solve problems; adding insights and motivation to the development of the foundation; increasing the knowledge and capacity as an organization; acquiring skills in managing institutions. It can be said that the training program was effective and beneficial for CSOs who took part in the training.

Conclusion

Overall, the goals/targets of the CLP training program facilitated by the NICE Foundation have been achieved based on the positive reaction from the training participants. The outputs of this program include added knowledge and skills in mapping and problem solving, stakeholder analysis, prototypes and business plans for pioneering business units and marketable and valuable product enhancements. Training impact is cognitive insight, new perspectives, motivation, and enthusiasm to improve and develop social entrepreneurship CSOs, and the courage to start economic businesses for social activities and creative products.

Participants' understanding was enhanced through the use of multiple approaches of training delivery which focused on two-way communications between participants and trainer as well as among participants themselves. The emphasis given to encourage participants active participation during the training was made possible by having brainstorming sessions, group discussions and individual presentation. The CLP training is found to be effective given there is increased knowledge, understanding and related skills. In addition, participants were indeed motivated to be involved in the activities of the training, encouraged to contribute and engage in class and to have an enjoyable learning experience.

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