

Strengthening Governance of Merah Putih Village/Urban Cooperatives (KDKMP) through Structured Lecturing and Basic Institutional Training

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Abstract

The community service program conducted in collaboration between Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi Medan and the Community Learning Activity Center (Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat/PKBM) Rumah Hijau aims to strengthen the governance of the Merah Putih Village/Urban Cooperatives (KDKMP) through structured lecturing and basic institutional training. This initiative responds to common challenges faced by cooperatives in Indonesia, including weak managerial capacity, limited understanding of institutional roles, and inadequate internal oversight. The program was implemented online via the Zoom platform in September 2025 and involved 182 participants from various regions across North Sumatra. The methods employed included structured lectures, interactive discussions, and simple simulations to convey cooperative governance principles. The results indicate a significant improvement in participants' understanding of cooperative principles, institutional roles, accountability, and transparency. Furthermore, the program successfully facilitated the establishment of a communication network among KDKMP units, enabling the exchange of insights and best practices. This initiative aligns with the mandate of Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2025 on the revitalization of KDKMP and reaffirms the strategic role of higher education institutions in enhancing cooperative governance through structured knowledge transfer.

Keywords: cooperative governance; KDKMP; training; village cooperative; capacity building

I. INTRODUCTION

Cooperatives in Indonesia face serious dynamics that affect their vital role in strengthening the rural community economy. Weak governance, internal oversight, and managerial capacity have caused many cooperatives to be unable to carry out their strategic functions optimally. Issues of internal control, limited monitoring, and a lack of member incentives also hinder the adoption of technology and innovation, thereby reducing institutional competitiveness (Akzar et al., 2024; Nurdany & Prajasari, 2020). In addition, a shift in cooperative identity toward a transactional business model has led to an erosion of mutual aid values (Subagyo et al., 2025), while the absence of CoopSR regulation weakens cooperatives' social role (Asmara et al., 2023).

The gap between institutional regulations and cooperative human resource capacity, as reflected in data from Statistics Indonesia (BPS, 2024), which records that of 127,124 active cooperatives, 32% do not perform their institutional functions effectively (BPS, 2024), indicates that cooperative success is strongly determined by member participation, governance quality, and human resource capacity. Low participation weakens Annual Member Meetings (RAT) and the renewal of bylaws and

statutes (AD/ART) (Hando et al., 2022; Kinikli & Yercan, 2023; Mori & Cavaliere, 2024), while strong internal governance has been shown to improve performance and sustainability (Jamaluddin et al., 2023; Omar et al., 2022; Zeng et al., 2023). On the other hand, limited human resource capacity hinders regulatory adaptation and innovation (, 2024; Wardhani et al., 2023; Purmiyati et al., 2022).

The revitalization of the Merah Putih Village/Urban Village Cooperatives (KDKMP) through Presidential Instruction No. 9 of 2025 can only be effective if accompanied by sustained capacity strengthening for management, supervisors, and members. Research shows that training and facilitation can improve managerial understanding, clarify role structures, and strengthen check-and-balance mechanisms at the village level (Paramita et al., 2023; Yuhertiana et al., 2022; Maksum et al., 2020). Capacity-building interventions have also been proven to strengthen the institutional sustainability of grassroots cooperatives, making them resilient to regulatory changes, market dynamics, and demands for transparency.

Beyond training, the effectiveness of cooperative revitalization is strongly determined by the presence of mentoring and consistent government support. Structured programs can increase

cooperative productivity, strengthen member commitment, and improve local competitiveness (Yuhertiana et al., 2022; Paramita et al., 2023). However, training cannot be implemented uniformly; it must be contextualized to the social, cultural, and ecological conditions of each village. Adaptive programs grounded in real needs have been shown to be more effective in building collective motivation and ensuring cooperative sustainability (Paramita et al., 2023; Aritenang, 2021).

In this context, Universitas Pembangunan Panca Budi collaborated with the Community Learning Activity Center (Pusat Kegiatan Belajar Masyarakat/PKBM) Rumah Hijau through a community service program to designed structured lecture-based training which has proven effective in strengthening village cooperative governance because it can simplify complex concepts into material that is easy to understand for participants from diverse backgrounds. This approach becomes even stronger when combined with discussions and simulations, which empirically enhance participants' understanding of the roles of management, supervisors, and members (Ohta et al., 2022; Luo et al., 2022; Zikargae et al., 2022). In addition to narrowing the gap between regulations and field practices (Luo et al., 2022; Ibouk & Aynaoui, 2023; Zikargae et al., 2022), this model also strengthens inter-cooperative networks through the collaborative dynamics created during the training process (Nordberg et al., 2020; Wulandhari et al., 2022).

Based on this background, this activity aims to:

1. Improve understanding of KDKMP cooperative governance.
2. Strengthen the capacity of the roles of management, supervisors, and members.
3. Reduce the gap between formal regulations and field-level practice.
4. Establish a communication network among KDKMPs to facilitate the exchange of best practices.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1. Design and Approach

A structured lecture approach combined with discussion, Q&A, and simulation is an effective adult-learning strategy because it connects abstract concepts with participants' real-life experiences. Andragogical principles emphasize that adults learn best when the material is relevant to their social roles and prior experiences (Gainsford & Evans, 2020; Zainuddin et al., 2024). Lectures provide a systematic conceptual framework, while active methods such as discussion and simulation enrich the process of knowledge construction (Campos-Zamora et al., 2022; Vergara et al., 2020; Lenkauskaitė et al., 2020). Simulation is also effective in helping participants understand complex institutional roles and skills (Chernikova et al., 2020).

The methods used include:

- a. Structured lectures

- b. Interactive discussions
- c. Question-and-answer sessions
- d. Simulations of institutional role allocation

2.2. Participants

The diversity of participant roles, involving 182 administrators, supervisors, and members from 20 regencies/municipalities, creates a collaborative learning dynamic aligned with participatory theory and social learning. This heterogeneity enables participants to move beyond the limits of individual knowledge and build new knowledge constructions through collective experience (Lenkauskaitė et al., 2020; Mesghina et al., 2024; Singh et al., 2021). Collaborative processes foster positive interaction, shared responsibility, and active engagement, which strengthen a sense of ownership over learning outcomes (Silva et al., 2021; Heinimäki et al., 2021). In addition, the presence of multi-level stakeholders expands communication networks and the exchange of good practices, enhancing access to innovative and context-specific solutions (Singh et al., 2021; Miguel et al., 2023).

- a. 68 management board members
- b. 52 supervisors
- c. 62 members

The involvement of these three cooperative institutional elements made the training comprehensive. The presence of participants from diverse roles and regions enriched the learning dynamics, strengthened social knowledge construction, and increased the effectiveness of the cooperative training through collaboration, reflection, and the exchange of real-world experiences.

2.3. Work Procedures

The training workflow structure designed based on the Capability Approach ensures that the learning process does not only focus on delivering material, but also on expanding participants' freedoms and functionings so they can perform their institutional roles effectively. The preparation stage, which includes identifying learning needs, aligns with the principle of understanding the "real opportunities" participants require to function optimally (Terzi, 2025; Talbot, 2023; Stephens, 2023). Thus, the training is not treated merely as a technical activity, but as an empowerment process that opens real opportunities for management, supervisors, and members to strengthen their institutional capacity.

The implementation stage through understanding cooperative principles, simulations, and case studies gradually expands participants' capabilities, including substantive competencies such as autonomy, critical reflection, and the ability to make decisions in real-world contexts (Murray, 2023; Ryder et al., 2023; Carter et al., 2024; Zhang, 2020). Meanwhile, the evaluation stage, which combines pre-tests, post-tests, reflective discussions, and in-depth feedback, functions to ensure that these capability improvements actually occur. This evaluative approach helps participants articulate their

learning experiences while also identifying further development needs (Ryder et al., 2023; Carter et al., 2024; Zhang, 2020).

Table 1. Work Structure Stages and Contribution to Capabilities

Stage	Main Focus	Contribution to Capabilities	Sources
Preparation	Needs identification, module development	Identifying real opportunities	(Terzi, 2025; Talbot, 2023; Stephens, 2023)
Implementation	Simulation, case studies, discussion	Development of functioning and autonomy	(Murrary, 2023; Ryder et al., 2023; Carter et al., 2024; Zhang, 2020)
Evaluation	Pre-test and post-test, reflection, feedback	Validation and articulation of capabilities	(Ryder et al., 2023; Carter et al., 2024; Zhang, 2020)

Stage 1: Preparation

This stage includes coordination with the community learning center, module development, identification of learning needs, and alignment of the materials with the most recent regulations.

Stage 2: Implementation

The training sessions include:

- Understanding cooperative principles
- Roles and functions of management, supervisors, and members
- Simulation of check-and-balance mechanisms
- Institutional case studies

Stage 3: Evaluation

- The evaluation is conducted through:
- Pre-test and post-test
- Reflective discussions
- Feedback questionnaires

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Improvement of Governance Understanding

Formal training has proven to be a strategic instrument for improving participants' understanding of core cooperative principles, institutional roles, and

governance mechanisms. Research findings show that training can lead to significant gains in knowledge of cooperative principles, as well as skills related to check and balance and leadership (Arai et al., 2021; Jamaluddin et al., 2023; Zeng et al., 2023). In addition, training also increases member loyalty and participation, strengthening collective commitment to governance processes (Kassem & Al-Zaidi, 2021; Zeng et al., 2023). Thus, training not only transfers knowledge, but also strengthens organizational integrity and effectiveness.

Previous studies emphasize that training designed inclusively and delivered through a facilitative approach can equalize access to knowledge for participants with different education levels, resulting in more comparable understanding across groups (Arai et al., 2021). Participants also reported increased confidence in understanding institutional roles and applying governance mechanisms in practical ways (Arai et al., 2021; Jamaluddin et al., 2023). This improved understanding is directly correlated with cooperative organizational effectiveness, as reflected in better performance, stronger member loyalty, and greater institutional sustainability (Kassem & Al-Zaidi, 2021; Jamaluddin et al., 2023; Zeng et al., 2023).

Table 2. Impact of Training on Understanding Cooperative Governance

Improved Aspect	Evidence of Improvement	Sources
Knowledge of cooperative principles	Significant improvement after training	(Arai et al., 2021; Jamaluddin et al., 2023)
Governance skills	Improved check-and-balance capacity and leadership	Jamaluddin et al., 2023; Zeng et al., 2023)
Member commitment and participation	Increased loyalty and participation	(Kassem & Al-Zaidi, 2021; Zeng et al., 2023)

3.2. Clarification of Institutional Role

Role simulation has proven to be a highly effective learning approach for clarifying the division of institutional functions within cooperatives, especially for participants who previously did not understand the boundaries and responsibilities between executive roles, supervision, and member sovereignty. Studies show that simulations help participants distinguish executive tasks and understand supervisory functions and members' rights in a more concrete way (Basterretxea et al., 2020; Laurila-Pant et al., 2023; Flynn et al., 2022). Through direct experience in role-playing, participants can internalize the institutional structure

more deeply, thereby strengthening awareness of the importance of balanced and accountable governance.

Simulation-based training also addresses the urgent need to clarify institutional roles, given that many cooperative supervisors and members are often unable to perform oversight functions optimally without adequate understanding (Basterretxea et al., 2020). Collaborative exercises strengthen participants' ability to make collective decisions, improve communication, and build trust across roles (Laurila-Pant et al., 2023; Flynn et al., 2022). Furthermore, research emphasizes that strong check-and-balance mechanisms depend heavily on the extent to which management, supervisors, and members understand their boundaries and functions. Therefore, role simulation is a key strategy for strengthening internal oversight and the effectiveness of cooperative governance (Basterretxea et al., 2020; Laurila-Pant et al., 2023).

Table 3. Impact of Role Simulation on Understanding Institutional Functions

Clarified Aspect	Before Training	After Training	Sources
Executive function	Less clear	Able to distinguish executive tasks	(Basterretxea et al., 2020; Laurila-Pant et al., 2023)
Supervisory function	Not well understood	Understands the supervisor's role	(Basterretxea et al., 2020; Laurila-Pant et al., 2023)
Member sovereignty	Often overlooked	Recognizes members' rights and roles	(Basterretxea et al., 2020; Laurila-Pant et al., 2023; Flynn et al., 2022)

3.3. Strengthening Institutional Networking

Establishing an online network among KDKMPs is a strategic mechanism to strengthen cross-institutional collaboration, in line with collaborative governance principles that emphasize the importance of active interaction and knowledge exchange. Studies show that collaboration through digital platforms improves information sharing, accelerates innovation, and encourages the adoption of more effective governance practices (Saleh et al., 2021; Nielsen et al., 2024). In addition to facilitating communication among actors, online networks enable collective learning to occur more quickly and inclusively. This creates a discussion space that enriches perspectives and strengthens cohesion among KDKMPs as an institutional community.

Online networks also function as a venue for sharing resources and best practices, allowing members to complement each other's strengths and overcome limitations through more structured collaboration (Saleh et al., 2021; Nielsen et al., 2024). Regular interaction in digital forums has been shown to strengthen trust, build shared motivation, and facilitate collective problem-solving (Grootjans et al., 2022; Cho et al., 2023). With open and inclusive communication, online networks provide a strong foundation for innovative, adaptive, and sustainable governance, making KDKMPs better prepared to face institutional challenges at the village level and across regions.

Table: Impact of Online Networks on Collaboration and Governance

Online Network Aspect	Main Impact	Sources
Cross-institutional collaboration	Improves knowledge exchange and innovation	(Saleh et al., 2021; Nielsen et al., 2024)
Active and open communication	Strengthens trust and shared motivation	(Grootjans et al., 2022; Cho et al., 2023)
Sharing best practices	Accelerates solution adoption and performance improvement	(Saleh et al., 2021; Grootjans et al., 2022; Nielsen et al., 2024)

Online discussion groups connecting KDKMPs have been shown to strengthen collaboration, communication, and the sharing of best practices, which form a foundation for effective and sustainable governance.

3.4. Social and Practical Impact

Training that encourages the updating of AD/ART, improvements in financial record-keeping, planning for the Annual Member Meeting (RAT), and increased member participation shows that governance is a central foundation for empowering cooperative communities. Studies emphasize that stronger governance enhances transparency, accountability, and organizational sustainability (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024; Trevisan et al., 2023). Through training, participants understand the importance of formal documents and internal rules as the structural support for an organization that is responsive to members' needs. In this way, training is not only technical in nature, but also drives institutional transformation and strengthens social solidarity at the community level.

The impact of training is also reflected in improved financial literacy, which strengthens accountability and expands access to financial services, thereby contributing to cooperative

sustainability (Hasan et al., 2021). RAT planning encourages active member participation in decision-making, strengthens member sovereignty, and creates routine evaluation mechanisms to maintain governance quality (Trevisan et al., 2023; Dipela, 2024). Furthermore, member participation at every stage of activities strengthens a sense of ownership, accelerates the adoption of innovation, and builds stronger social cohesion (Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024; Dipela, 2024; Hermawan et al., 2023).

Table 4. Impact of Training on Community Empowerment

Improved Aspect	Main Impact	Sources
Governance	Transparency, accountability, sustainability	(Dushkova & Ivlieva, 2024; Trevisan et al., 2023)
Financial literacy	Accountability, financial access, efficiency	(Hasan et al., 2021)
Member participation	Engagement, sense of ownership, innovation	(Dipela, 2024; Hermawan et al., 2023)

Structured training has been shown to promote governance updates, financial improvements, and member participation, which are key pillars of community empowerment and organizational sustainability.

IV. CONCLUSION

The conclusion is consistent with research findings showing that structured training and communication networks can strengthen governance, enhance collaboration, and connect policy with cooperative institutional practices more effectively.

1. Effectiveness of Structured Lecture Based Training

Structured training significantly improves members' understanding of cooperative governance, both in technical aspects and in organizational values. Each additional training session has been shown to increase members' readiness and willingness to apply new knowledge in practice, and to strengthen perceptions of the training's benefits and relevance (Luo et al., 2022; Hebles et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2024).

2. Clarity of Institutional Roles

Training and collaboration help participants understand institutional roles and functions more clearly, enabling them to carry out their duties and responsibilities more effectively. This role clarity

also strengthens accountability and organizational performance (Hebles et al., 2021; Huang et al., 2024).

3. Strengthening Communication and Collaboration Networks

Establishing communication networks among KDKMPs or across institutions strengthens collaboration, knowledge exchange, and coordination. Effective collaboration is supported by open communication, trust, and formal structures that facilitate interaction among members (Arinaitwe, 2021; García-Martínez et al., 2021; Hebles et al., 2021).

4. Bridging the Gap Between Policy and Practice

Training programs and communication networks play an important role in bridging the gap between policy and field-level practice. Cross-actor collaboration and active involvement in policy planning and implementation encourage the creation of solutions that are more relevant and applicable (Khomsi et al., 2024; Martin et al., 2024).

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Various studies emphasize that strengthening cooperatives requires an integrated strategy that includes digitalization, the establishment of formal networks, sustained mentoring from local governments, and the replication of proven effective training models.

Recommendations derived from the results of community service:

1. Advanced Training Focused on Administrative Digitalization

Digitalization has been shown to improve cooperative competitiveness and efficiency. Developing digital capability requires continuous training, cross-stakeholder collaboration, and support for infrastructure and digital skills development (Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Jorge-Vázquez et al., 2021; Giannakos et al., 2021). E-learning and digital training also accelerate knowledge flows and collaboration within organizations (Giannakos et al., 2021).

2. Formalizing Inter KDKMP Networks as a Regular Forum

Formal networks among cooperatives or similar organizations strengthen collaboration, knowledge exchange, and the adoption of new practices. Regular forums with clear structure and leadership have been shown to be effective in driving innovation and the adoption of change (Alimohammad et al., 2022; Asprooth et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2021). Formalizing networks also increases transparency and accountability (Kanon, 2023).

3. Local Government Support for Sustained Mentoring

Local government support is crucial for providing infrastructure, incentives, and ongoing mentoring. Collaboration among government, academia, and cooperatives accelerates digital transformation and institutional strengthening (Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Christian et al., 2024). Government also plays a role in ensuring access to technology and relevant training (Jorge-Vázquez et al., 2021).

4. Replicating the Training Model in Other Regions

Proven effective training models can be replicated in other regions to expand positive impact. Research emphasizes the importance of adapting models to local needs and providing policy support to ensure replication is implemented effectively (Khasanah et al., 2022; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Christian et al., 2024).

Table 5. Recommendations and Research Support

Recommendation	Research Support	Sources
Administrative digitalization training	Improves competitiveness and efficiency	(Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Jorge-Vázquez et al., 2021; Giannakos et al., 2021)
Formalizing routine network forums	Strengthens collaboration and innovation	(Alimohammad et al., 2022; Kanon, 2023; Singh et al., 2021; Asprooth et al., 2023)
Government support and sustained mentoring	Accelerates transformation and adaptation	(Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Jorge-Vázquez et al., 2021; Christian et al., 2024)
Replication of the training model	Expands impact and supports local adaptation	(Khasanah et al., 2022; Wahyuningtyas et al., 2022; Christian et al., 2024)

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