
Capacity Building on BSB Organic Development Center

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Abstract: *This community service project was aimed to scale up Bina Sarana Bhakti (BSB) organic development center's management with two-day workshops. BSB needs to improve its managerial skills and knowledge in-order able to transform its business in a more profitable way. Agile leadership with good communication approach and human capital plays important role in-order BSB able to keep in the right track and sustainable in facing fierced market competitions and future uncertainty.*

Introduction

Bina Sarana Bhakti (BSB) is an organic center foundation established in May 7th, 1984 and volunteered by Agatho Elsner, a Switzerland origin then became Indonesian citizen and celibate Catholic priest, who had dedicated his life in Indonesia inland since 1960 until his old retirement in 2010. As a social worker, Father Agatho, which later his first name became a famous organic product brand of Agatho, worked together with other founders, Father Gregorius Utomo, Ibu Djoeariah, and Pak Suryoto Suryomurcito who work together to establish this foundation. Endorsed by Indonesian Ministry of Environment (KLH) and Indonesian Catholic Bishop Conference (KWI), BSB was aimed in helping Indonesian farming society to be more independent and introduced organic/natural farming philosophy for communities who live at the surrounding Cisarua area, Bogor district. The founders then also developed an organic information center there to train many farmers, reputable university/college students, public who want to learn a new way to live organically.

Agatho's new organic life was deeply rooted by a philosophy from a book written by a Japanese farmer and author, Masanobu Fukuoka, entitled "The One-Straw Revolution". In

his book, Fukuoka wrote that "nature has worked properly and humans only support it" and based on this principle, the organic agriculture was then developed at BSB's land in Cisarua. Therefore in 1987 all of BSB's land was used for organic farming, or in another words they use agriculture method that follows the laws of nature, where there are no more usage of all forms of synthetic chemical intake (pesticides and fertilizers) produced by human. This philosophy was then followed by other surrounding farmers and other regions who learned and inspired by BSB, therefore since then BSB was known as one of the pioneers in the development of organic agriculture in Indonesia. And the philosophy was then well justified when Indonesia hit by monetary crisis in 1998 period which resulted in the imported price of all agricultural fertilizer and pesticides were rising. And this became a blessing in disguise, because the demand for training or courses at BSB has increased significantly.

Father Agatho was then believed that the key success factor of organic/natural farming is not merely based-on the organic farming techniques alone. He said that the mindset or mentality of the human being is the center of their success. In the absence of good mentality, hardwork, disciplines, and caring attitudes, no matter how good the philosophy is, it would not work well. Therefore, he introduced a new community concept called as "Cormundi" comes from two latin words: "Cor" which means the heart, and "Mundi" which means the world (Syukur, 2016). Cormundi is simply referring to "the organic community that makes new difference". He also introduced a new motto in their organic products called as: "Organic in All Way", which means that the products which promotes the love of nature, caring others, and understanding more about the nature cycles.



Figure 1. Agatho's BSB Organic Farming

(Source: <https://blog.kecipir.com>)

BSB then formulates 3 main values which are derived from the passion in respecting the nature, understanding the cycles of nature, and caring for others. As times goes by, BSB was not becoming an organic information and education center anymore and with the help of its marketing channel, BSB also markets their products to survive the operation costs of the organization who pay fixed salaries to their growing number of employees. It uses SNI (Standar Nasional Indonesia) certified organic products which are produced by the local farmers, such as: organic-based vegetables, rice, eggs, sugar, mushroom and other herbs. Furthermore, BSB also tried to develop an integrated eco-edu-tourism farming (animal farm, herbs stations, agro-forestry), as well as developing a micro-hydro electricity generator.

Unfortunately in 2010 Father Agatho became weak and sick, meanwhile there was lack of successful regeneration on his leaderships. He returned back to see his family last time in Switzerland and passed away in 2016 there. In fact, he left such a valuable assets funded mostly by his family charity money (his father was a world-famous Victorinox brands owner) to the farming communities and education society, his writings, organic center organization that needs to be continued and improved in-order to be more sustainable and developed in a more professional way. And the problem was begun since the Agatho's family

finally made decision not to support BSB operations like the late Father Agatho did, so as the existing BSB organization must transform itself to be a more sustainable organization.

Method

This community service project started with field orientation and focus group discussion (FGD) with BSB key personnel conducted to understand and portray the real problems and conditions faced by BSB. It was conducted in BSB Organic Center, Cisarua, West Java. Based-on the findings in the discussion, further action plans was developed based-on the needs and availability of the key participants.

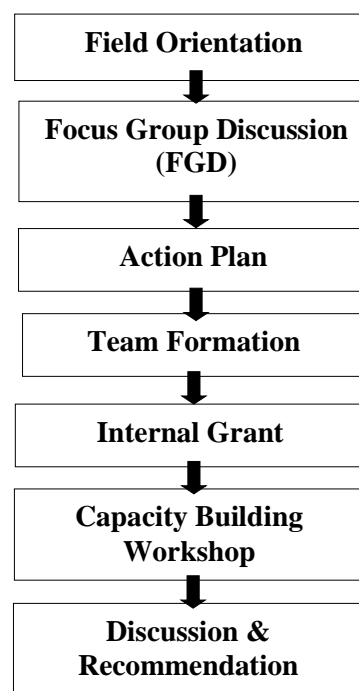


Figure 2. Community Service Project Diagram

(Source: Author)

After the site visits, focus group discussion with BSB foundation's board members was conducted to get the latest situations about BSB conditions, exploring the strengths, weaknesses as well as current threats and future opportunities. It might discovers a brief history of the foundation and its activities, what went well and what need to be improved, the

aspiration from the board and what strategic direction should be done in near future, what are the impact for the local farmer community as well as greater society, and last but not least is to trying to understand deeply about what organic philosophy of the main founder, Father Agatho, was trying to communicate to local community and Indonesian greater society.

Based-on the focus group discussion findings, further action plans for capacity building program was then proposed. Community service team project and tasks division were formulate to be implemented in the next steps. In-order to implement it, sufficient fund was needed and it could be achieved through internal university's community service grant program. Once the fund was received, the team members prepared the materials needed to implement capacity building program based-on individual expertise. After the capacity building workshop held, it was expected to have two-way communications and opened discussions with the key participants to understand their problems and give some plausible recommendations that might beneficial for them in the near future.

Result

Before the focus group discussion started, the team leader visited all of the BSB sites and facilities in August 9th, 2019, starting from the organic farming garden, meeting rooms where the farmers meet BSB facilitators, warehouse to keep the fruits and vegetables, organic plantations and animal farming, hydropower electric generator, watering system, shopping outlet and main education center facilities. First focus group discussion was conducted with BSB foundation board members (Head of the Board, Co-Founder/Board Member, and Board of Secretary).

According to the focus group discussion, it was indicated that there was common managerial problems within the BSB organic center. It was due-to lack of proper organizational behavior communication and leadership skills, especially since there was no agile leader who is suitable to lead the BSB operations since the late Father Agatho passed away. Also since there was problem in producing proper BSB financial reports, due-to lack of good governance practices. Some preliminary recommended action plans that might be relevant during the discussions, includes:

1. BSB may need to redefine its mission and vision, to implement workable action plans;

2. BSB may need to restructure its organization so they are able to run an organic center social business; and
3. BSB may need to find alternative financial resources, in-order to develop a modern concept of organic center.

Based-on the FGD, further capacity building program from Sampoerna University team shall be done to scale up and having discussion with existing BSB key middle management level. The purpose was to equip them with fresh ideas to cope with near future changes. The project team was then formed through Sampoerna University's Center for Research and Community Service internal grant to make the implementation of capacity building program happened. And finally the internal grant was awarded, so the team can implement the capacity building workshop that held on November 27th - 28th, 2019.

There were four lecturers and two students from different study programs (Management, Accounting, and Visual Communication Design study programs) and from two different faculties (Faculty of Business and Faculty of Engineering and Technology) from Sampoerna University involved in this project. There are three main workshops activities, includes: marketing fundamentals and communication design workshops in the first day. And then followed by accounting information system and finance system procedure workshop at the second day. There were two BSB foundation board members and nine key BSB middle management participants attended in this two-day capacity building workshop.



Figure 3. Sampoerna University Team and BSB Participants

(Source: Author)

Based-on the further discussions and learning reflections with BSB board members and key middle management after the capacity building workshop sessions, it found some important lessons learned, includes:

1. BSB may need to apply word-of-mouth and redefine its positioning strategy to communicate BSB main product portfolio to potential customers and new prospects, especially to their relatively new eco-edu-tourism unit.
2. BSB may need to apply new communication design concept as part of their brand communication strategy to be survive in the competitive market, because of their transformation to be a more profitable organization.
3. BSB human capital may need to revisit its founder's Cormundi values by implementing consistently its accounting and financial system procedures, as they will be transforming from the pure charity-funded organization to be more a social business organization. As the results it will impact to the organization sustainability in the long-run. At the same time, more accountable and transparency system may also attracting more fund for investments in their new business model in near future.

Discussion

Based-on findings from the preliminary focus group discussion with BSB foundation board members and the reflections after the workshop with the key middle management, this project may produce further SWOT Analysis that may beneficial for BSB (Figure 4).

Table 4. SWOT Matrix

Strength	Opportunities
1. Agatho and BSB names have been recognized in organic agriculture community and education institutions as the pioneer in organic products.	1. The increasing awareness of healthy life style in the society in general which are looking for healthy organic food (vegetables and fruits)
2. BSB has good technical knowledge and experience to be the organic development center	2. New eco-edu-tourism sites developed to attract more visitors
Weaknesses	Threats
1. Lack of agile full-time leader in continuing Father Agatho's leadership	1. There are many organic farming already surrounding BSB site or Puncak areas. Some of them were actually learning organic techniques from BSB.
2. Charity fund from Agatho's family was discontinued after his pass away, makes the BSB organizational costs funded purely by selling their organic products and education services. Meanwhile, BSB need larger investment funds to maintain and improve its facilities.	2. There are many tourism attraction places surrounding BSB or Puncak areas, and potentially compete with the new BSB unit on eco-edu-tourism.

According to the SWOT matrix in Figure 4, it indicates that actually BSB have already positioned itself as the pioneer in organic agriculture. In the marketing communication term, it means that actually they have already set a good branding strategy to market its products through existing channels. However, there is either lack of skills and knowledge or lack of good leadership to optimize this strength. For example, there is no integrated communication tools to develop its digital marketing strategy, such as: strong brand building through existing website, no updated information, and lack of professional web design. It seems that there was no proactive marketing effort, probably because BSB is relying their product selling through existing channels. Meanwhile the loyalty of existing

channel partners is questionable, because at the same time they also sell BSB competitor products.



Figure 5. Agatho Organic Brand Packaging
(Source: Katoliknews.com)

Father Agatho was born in a family who appreciated hardworking and discipline values. These values inherited from his father who was the founder of a world famous high quality knife and watch maker, Victorinox. His leadership style was quite effective in developing an organic farming center in Indonesia from the scratch with all obstacles and resistances from the fertilizer industries and even past government policy of “swasembada pangan”. Based-on the stories told by the board members and other employees, he was a charismatic leader who always gave examples and taught how to apply organic life style easily to be understood, respecting the nature and caring for others, based-on Cormundi values. This agile leadership style (Joiner, 2019) could not be replicated easily, since there was lack of recruited leader who perfectly matched with this kind of leadership style. The BSB organizational behavior and culture (Robbins & Judge, 2017) was also communicated based on Cormundi values, however there was lack of consistency in applying it, after he passed away. Therefore, there was lack of good governance and communication (Gitman et al., 2018) practices, especially in implementing existing accounting and financial systems, meanwhile the family fund which helped BSB operations was discontinued. This condition

was very frustrating for BSB board and employees, they have to struggle with it.

Fortunately, the organic life style is now becoming popular in the society. Many people now is looking for healthy food and going to “back to the nature”, moreover in the current Covid-19 pandemic condition since the beginning of year 2020. This bring good opportunities for BSB to market its products expansively. BSB has already developed their marketing unit, however this unit relies heavily on their marketing channel agents. They don’t only selling organic vegetables and fruits, but also expand it to sell other product like organic chicken eggs and dairies. BSB also developed a new business unit to promote its eco-edu-tourism. Besides organic education in BSB organic farms, they also invited potential customers to “live-in” (stay with local farmers’ house) and learn how to live with organic philosophy as proposed by Father Agatho. It’s quite an interesting product development, however it was still in the initial stage, because the facilities need to be developed and maintained. Furthermore because BSB still have to compete with similar eco-edu-tourism concepts in other tourist destinations in surrounding Puncak areas.

Conclusion

The community service project in BSB organic development center has concluded some keypoints and lessons learned that may beneficial for the community as a whole:

1. Facilitators learned new things about Cormundi organic life style which teaches the importance of balancing human being and the nature could collaborate and communicate in a more harmonious way.
2. BSB may need to research its company unique value proposition creatively with current strengths to grab more opportunities with new product development and need to adapt its strategy with the market needs as well as competitions.
3. The capacity building program opens new horizon of thoughts for BSB board members and key middle management about the importance of agile leadership practices in facing uncertainties and its transformation from charity-funded oriented organic center to a more social-profit oriented business.
4. It is recommended for BSB to improve its integrated digital marketing strategy and find suitable candidate who meet its unique Cormundi’s organizational

cultures and values, while also keep improving its good corporate governance practices to attract new investments.

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