

Doc 5.6. Group operations

For a group to function properly it is recommended that the members:

- are from areas of geographical proximity;
- share common goals and objectives;
- are willing to work together;
- trust each other.

The size of the group depends on many factors, including the number of people interested in participating, their proximity to each other, the size of investment and business operations and the availability of work space, etc. A five-member group is often found to be effective for small business operation, production and marketing of products/services and networking with other stakeholders. Informal groups with more than 15 members are, at times, difficult for the group leaders to manage. If required by local authorities, the group may have to fill up the necessary registration papers and get official registration.

The group divides responsibilities for smooth operation of the business and for day-to-day production, marketing and management. Each member has an assigned responsibility, but remains accountable to the whole group.

If conflicts arise, the TREE team should endeavour to help resolve them immediately so as to avoid group disintegration. The experience with groups demonstrates that for the most part participants have opted to work in cooperation with each other.