



## How Ethical Are You?

**Age:** 12+  
**Group Size:** 10-20  
**Time:** 60 minutes

### Objective

- To define an ethical policy for the co-operative

### Materials

- Paper
- Pens
- Flipchart paper and markers
- Copies of ethical policy questionnaire (appendix)

### Step-by-step instructions

1. Remind participants of the seventh co-operative principle, 'concern for the community'. This is something that can easily be forgotten in the busy life of an enterprise.
2. Ask participants to brainstorm briefly with their neighbour: How can an enterprise care for its community? Take notes of their ideas on flipchart paper.
3. Explain that in order not to forget their concern for the community, many co-operatives write down their 'ethical policy'. With this, they give themselves rules on how they can limit their impact on the environment and society, or how to make a positive impact. The ethical policy should be used to guide the co-operative in all its decisions, services and activities.
4. Present some examples of ethical policy; such as:
  - *Using 100% recycled copying paper*
  - *Buying only fairtrade products*
  - *Not accepting funding from non-ethical companies*Ask participants if they can think of other examples.
5. Ask participants to form small groups and to reply to the questions in the ethical policy questionnaire (appendix). This will help them to formulate their own ethical policy afterwards.
6. Back in plenary, compare the outcomes and take notes on a flipchart. If your group is big, you can also divide in subgroups per area.
7. Discuss which guidelines the group wants to give themselves in each area. Make sure that everyone agrees. Are there other areas for which you need guidelines? For the formulation of simple guidelines, you can split into smaller groups.
8. Write the ethical policy on a big poster and put it up in the meeting room, so that the group can remind itself whenever a decision is taken.



## Appendix: Ethical policy questionnaire

### Customers

- How will you make sure your customers get a good product or service?
- Will the price you charge them be fair?
- What can you tell your customers about how you use energy?
- What information will you give to your customers about the product or service?

### Environment (Waste and energy)

- What waste materials will be produced by your product or service?
- Are any of these recyclable?
- How will you get rid of your waste?
- What can you do to reduce the waste that you create?
- Will your customer be left with packaging? Will this be recyclable?
- Will your product or service use much electricity or gas to make it?
- How could you reduce this amount?
- What can you tell your customer about how you use energy?
- How can you tell your customer about how you use energy?

### Workers

- How will you make sure that everyone who works in your co-operative is treated fairly?

### Suppliers

- Are you using Fairtrade ingredients and materials where possible?
- Will you assess the Ethical Policy of your suppliers before using them?

### Community

- What will your co-operative do to help other people in the community?
- How could your co-operative work with other co-operatives?

*\*\*Based on the Ethical Policy exercise in the Young Co-operatives Action Kit (Key Stage 3/4), by the Co-operative College\*\**