

Evolving Fisherwomen Livelihoods to Business

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Introduction

What is a **business**?

A business can be defined as an organization or economic system where the exchange of goods and services happen. The primary objective of a business is profit maximization, along with other goals such as growth, customer service, retention, and efficiency. Business management can be defined as planning, organizing, leading, and controlling of human and other resources to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently. Managing a business requires knowledge, dedication, organizational skills and ingenuity. The overall vision for the business may be to address a need, provide a service or create something new. Generating revenue is a given goal for businesses, so the vision statement should be broader than a statement about profits.

Basic forms of business ownership

- ❖ Sole proprietorship: a single person owned business is known as sole proprietorship. It is the least cost form of business ownership and is very easy to set up.
- ❖ Partnership: a legal form of business operation between two or more individuals who share management and profits.
- ❖ Corporation: a corporate structure in which the business is a separate, legal entity guided by a group of officers known as the board of directors.
- ❖ Cooperative: an autonomous association of people united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled business.
- ❖ Franchises: a firm which already has a successful product or service (the franchisor) enters into a continuing contractual relationship with other businesses (franchisees) operating under the franchisor's trade name and usually with the franchisor's guidance, in exchange for a fee.
- ❖ Limited liability company: a business structure that combines the pass-through taxation of a partnership or sole proprietorship with the limited liability of a corporation.

Classifications

- Primary/ raw material: The primary sector is the sector of an economy making direct use of natural resources. This includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and mining.
- Secondary/ manufacturing: The secondary sector is the manufacturing sector which mainly uses the output of the primary sector. The sector includes industries that produce a finished, usable product or are involved in construction.
- Tertiary/ service: The tertiary sector involves commercial services that work to provide support to distribution and production processes.

What is needed for a business?

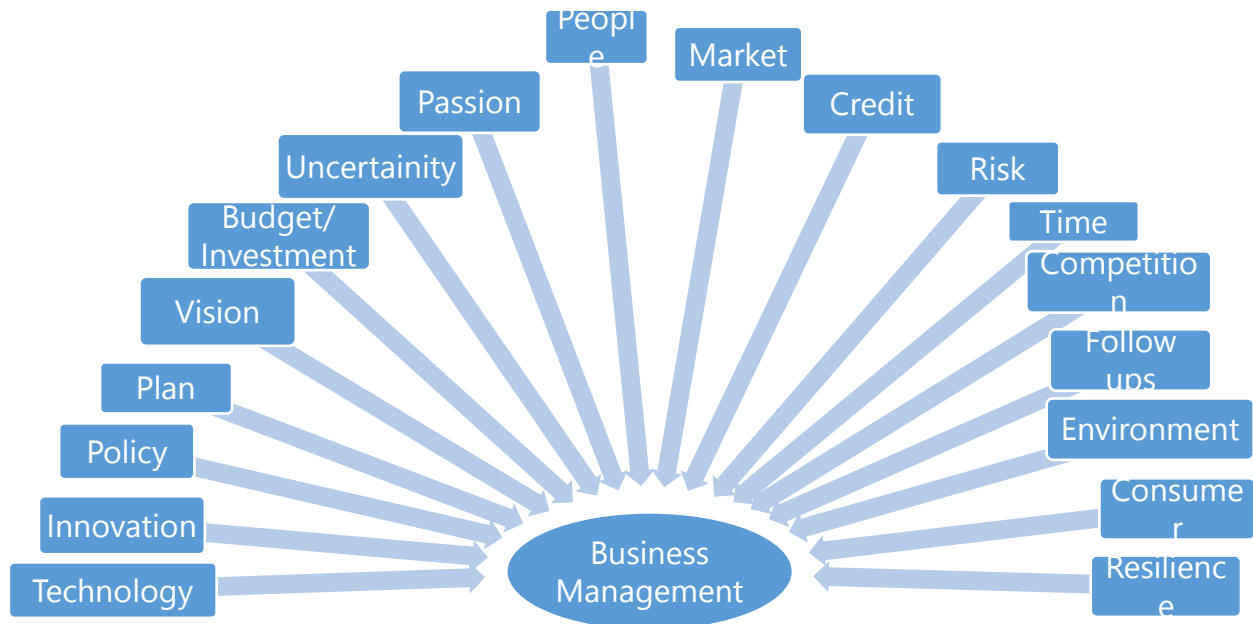


Fig 1: What is needed for a business.

Society for Assistance to Fisherwomen (SAF)

Society for Assistance to Fisherwomen (SAF) is an agency under Kerala government that works for the social and economic empowerment of fisherwomen in Kerala, through its multifarious and integrated developmental programmes. SAF was established in 2005 as a charitable society under the State Fisheries Department. SAF assists fisherwomen – both individuals and their Self Help Groups (SHGs)- to address common challenges such as livelihoods, poverty eradication and social development. The major emphasis of SAF lies in providing livelihood support to fisherwomen by promoting their self-employment ventures under its flagship programme 'Theeramythri'. SAF, under the Theeramythri programme, provides continued handholding and mentoring to the micro-enterprises and livelihood ventures that were established under the earlier Tsunami Rehabilitation Programmes. Besides sustaining and strengthening the existing enterprises, each year marginalized women from fishermen community are identified, trained and assisted to start new microenterprises for income generation. Theeramythri programme today occupies a central space in the lives of Malayali fisherwomen.



Fig 2: Opportunities under SAF.

Areas of management

- **Human resources:** The personnel or department of a business or organization, regarded as a significant asset in terms of skills and abilities.
- **Marketing:** The action or business of promoting and selling products or services, including market research and advertising.
- **Operations:** Concerned with designing and controlling the process of production and redesigning business operations in the production of goods or services.
- **Information:** It is of immense importance in business to gather, analyze and disseminate information regarding market, rivals, competitors, etc.
- **Financial:** The efficient and effective management of money (funds) in such a manner as to accomplish the objectives of the organization.

Basic management skills

- **Technical skills:** abilities an individual acquires through practice and learning.
- **Conceptual skills:** skills that allow a person to think creatively while also understanding abstract ideas and complicated processes. A person who has conceptual skills will be able to solve problems, formulate processes and understand the relationship between ideas, concepts, patterns and symbols.
- **Time management skills:** the process of organizing and planning how to divide your time between specific activities.
- **Human relations skill:** the process of training employees, addressing their needs, fostering a workplace culture and resolving conflicts between different employees or between employees and management.
- **Decision making skill:** the skill to take the right decision at right and there by solve the problems.

To sum up, the mere individual skills could be improved by proper trainings and can be turned out into a business activity. A business activity is a dynamic and an on-going process which continues to operate so long as there is an organized action for the achievement of group goals. It is to direct the resources and the efforts of the business toward opportunities for economically significant results.

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