

Subud Enterprise

PREFACE

- 1 ENTERPRISE
- 2 THE MISSION OF SUBUD
- 3 SES -- THE ENGINE OF ENTERPRISE
- 4 THE SUBUD ENTERPRISE BUSINESS MODEL
- 5 ENTERPRISE TIPS
- 6 AFTERWORD

ADDENDA

Notes (from Bapak's talks)

PREFACE

This paper is a follow-up to the 13th World Congress resolution that "WSA (The World Subud Association) develops a position paper that summarizes and embodies a common understanding of Bapak's advice regarding the meaning, importance and role of Enterprise to Subud. That WSA, guided by this understanding, review the activities of the membership and wings to determine what actions are needed in order that Bapak's advice can be realized more completely." The resolution was a result of Congress discussions about enterprise, the role of SES (Subud Enterprise Services), and the working paper – "The Future of SES" – prepared beforehand. It is based on extensive research of Bapak's talks from 1958–1987 and includes the source notes from which most of the text is derived.

The paper clarifies the different forms of enterprise in their Subud context. It recounts the mission of Subud and discusses the role of SES (Subud Enterprise Services) in fulfilling that mission. It suggests a formal model of the specific steps to establishing a Subud Enterprise (The Subud Enterprise Business Model), including the role of SES and other Subud entities in the process. The paper concludes with Enterprise Tips, an Afterward by the author and source notes from Bapak's talks.

The paper has been produced by Stuart Cooke with inputs from a wide range of members.

ENTERPRISE

Enterprise is any undertaking that comes from within.¹ It is carrying out in the world what one has received regarding one's innate talent or gift. It implies initiative and action.³

Openings, explaining Subud, helping members uncover their enterprise/talent, and advising members on how to do enterprises are among the primary duties of helpers.⁴

Through enterprises we can worship God in our work. We can learn how to distinguish between that which comes from inside versus the outside influences of our desires or will.⁵

Whatever our job, if it is in accordance with our nature, that is our enterprise. If we are a teacher, an artist, an accountant, a manager, a doctor, a farmer, that is our enterprise. If we own a business and the work of that business is in accord with our nature, that is an enterprise – an enterprise of a Subud member.* When a corporation or limited liability company has been established for the sake of Subud and a majority of its stock is owned by Subud members, and it is endorsed, sponsored, or recognized as such by the Subud organization, and contributes 15-25% or more of its profits to Subud and/or to social projects, that is a Subud Enterprise, spelled below with a cap 'S' and cap 'E', to differentiate it from "enterprises of Subud members."⁶ When Bapak spoke about "enterprises" or "enterprises of members" in the context of businesses which further the mission of Subud, he was generally referring to large, collective enterprises or "Subud Enterprises", as clarified below and in the source notes.

THE MISSION OF SUBUD

The mission of Subud is to bring peace and harmony to humankind through the latihan kejiwaan of Susila Budhi Dharma (Subud) and open the way for humankind to return to where he came from.⁶ That mission will only be achieved when large Subud Enterprises and the significant social projects they finance are well established across the globe.⁷ Only then will communities, governments and nations be able to see Subud for what it is. Only then will they be able to recognize its clear benefit to society.⁸

To that end, part of the brief of the helper/committee dewans (councils) – center, regional, national, zonal, and international – is to spur the development of Subud Enterprises by providing leadership. For helpers the tasks are to explain how enterprise is the proof or evidence of the carrying out of the latihan in this world, to explain what a Subud Enterprise is and how to do them, to test with members who cannot identify their individual talents on their own in order to provide direction for the flourishing of their latihan in their daily, working life.⁹

For committees the task is it is to kindle the enthusiasm of members to develop the Subud Enterprises we need, hundreds of them: in retail, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, animal husbandry, hi-tech – you name it;¹⁰ businesses which evidence the working of the latihan in this world through the way they operate, the way they treat their employees and the way they do business; businesses which can serve as a model of what has been called "capitalism with a human face;"¹¹ businesses which provide employment for members who have no work or are under-employed;¹² businesses which provide the

means for members to use and develop their talents, enabling them to actualize the harmony they feel in the latihan outside the latihan by working together. Subud Enterprises make it possible for members to express their concern for one another in their work – the kind of extraordinary trust, love, and support members experience on helper and committee dewans, preparing a congress, or participating in a gathering.¹³ It provides an environment which allows them to quicken the feeling of their latihan throughout the day and to correct one another in our work.

Subud Enterprises will create the conditions where helpers and committees can do whatever they need to do and travel whenever they want to¹⁴; conditions where every member can go to latihan and attend meetings and congresses; where everywhere in the world there are large latihan halls, with accommodations to house members from other groups¹⁵; where Subud-sponsored schools can develop student talents, take care of the handicapped or the retarded, and provide free education; where Subud clinics and hospitals and homes for the aged or disturbed can help people inwardly as well as outwardly and helpers can realize their higher calling; where those served can come to the worship of God through helper professionals, for example, helper doctors or therapists who treat patients so that they not only get well, but become aware of the existence of something beyond themselves.¹⁶

THE SES -- THE ENGINE OF SUBUD

SES was established to help make Subud Enterprises possible, to help them get started and ensure their success.¹⁷ The idea was that while Subud has always lacked capital, it contains many experts: professionals in finance, real estate, agriculture, construction, management, etc. By bringing these experts together in panels, organized by discipline, they could assist center, regional, national, international committees, affiliate organizations, or any group of members to establish a large enterprise. They could help develop new business plans or transform existing smaller businesses owned by individual members. SES would vet the proposals and if approved, pass them on to committees for their approval. They in turn would pass them on to the membership for investment and support.

SES experts would supervise the enterprises on an ongoing basis. In effect they would be appointed to supervisory boards of the enterprises they helped establish to represent the membership at large and to ensure outside accountability, expertise, stability, and to ensure that they remain Subud-minded over the long term. In addition, until a Subud world bank was formed, SES would help identify financing sources.¹⁷

However SES never took form as originally envisioned. It didn't help launch a single Subud Enterprise. None of the large enterprises had any formal relationship with SESI (Subud Enterprise Services International). They only received ad hoc help from Subud experts, sometimes recommended by SESI or a national SES body. Towards the end of his life Bapak was still suggesting we implement what we had been voted upon in previous congress resolutions.¹⁸

THE SUBUD ENTERPRISE BUSINESS MODEL

The Subud Enterprise business model that emerges from Bapak's advice is a limited liability company or corporation created to fulfill Subud's mission in this world. It is established for a social purpose as well as for profit. It is a business where the capital comes from more than a few members, employs many people, and a majority of the voting stock is Subud-owned.

The business stipulates in its corporate filings that a minimum of 15-25 percent of its profit (stock or dividend payments or other form) is to be contributed to Subud – a local center, a region, a national or international committee, to MSF, Susila Dharma or a combination thereof.¹⁹

It is to be noted, also, that while Bapak stressed the importance of oversight of our Subud Enterprises he did not suggest the exact form that such oversight should take, only that STS (now SES) should supply it (see footnote below)

Committees and helpers – local, regional, national, international – are charged with initiating such ventures: committees by encouraging members to form working groups to come up with good ideas, decide on a given venture, and prepare a business plan; and helpers to explain the meaning and purpose of such enterprises, and to encourage and support their development. Any group of members or any committee –, SD, SICA, SYA, SIHA for example, are equally enjoined to initiate their own business ideas or for that matter, social projects, and then look to SES for assistance as needed.³⁰

If outside expertise is needed in the preparation of the business plan, SESI is there to provide it. Part of the role of SESI is to prepare a searchable, professional Subud membership database, from which additional experts, including panels of experts by discipline will be chosen.

In this model, when a business plan is complete, it is submitted to a national SES or the international SESI body for review and analysis. If the plan is approved, a recommendation for support will be sent to the committee concerned to assist the enterprise by encouraging members to invest (as allowed by law) and to support the enterprise in general. To gain approval one or more of the SES experts who advised it or other experts, at the business's choosing, will be appointed to the supervisory board.

Subud members should expect a normal return on their investment based on industry standards rather than a high or excessive return. If financing assistance is needed, SES will help until a new Subud World Bank comes into being. Any international business, by its nature, will be established with the long-term financial interests of Subud as a core rationale.

The author suggests a formal supervisory board should be created. In this case the corporate structure of the business contains an operating board and a supervisory board.²⁰ The operating board is concerned with the general management and operations of the company, while the supervisory board is there to add wider expertise, to represent the membership at large, to ensure accountability, to protect the name of Subud, and to ensure the business remains Subud-minded. As such, the latter need not be entirely composed of experts. In the case of international Subud Enterprises, the chairs, or appointees of SESI, WSA (World Subud Association) and MSF could sit on the supervisory boards.

ENTERPRISE TIPS

Some of the advice Bapak gave us about how to be successful is highlighted in the following bullet points:

Harmony

The need for harmony in enterprise is paramount. Without harmony, any enterprise will in all likelihood end in catastrophe.^{32,33}

Determination

In doing an enterprise it is necessary to use the full force of your will.³⁴

Courage

If you do not have courage, it's better not to try to start an enterprise.³⁵

How to Begin

Despite lack of knowledge or fear of the unknown, anyone can start an enterprise.³⁶

The Danger of Self-interest

The things needed to be successful are the same things you have to watch out for.³⁷

If You Fail

Failure is sometimes necessary for success and may be a blessing.³⁸

How to be More Successful than Others

Large or small, enterprises run by Subud members can be more successful than others, provided those running the business receive guidance from within, guidance which non-Subud people don't normally get.³⁹

How the Impossible Can Be Achieved

"But look at us," said Varindra Vittachi to Bapak, "We're not rich, we're not clever, we're just ordinary people. How can we accomplish these extraordinary things Bapak has told us?"

Bapak replied, "From here," moving his hand up and down in front of his chest.

AFTERWORD by the Author

I reviewed over four hundred talks for this paper, reading or listening to some 50 several times. It was not enough. The author, an avid reader of Bapak's talks since 1965, discovered how remiss he had been in not following the advice given to him many years ago by Sudarto, one of the three helpers who assisted Bapak in answering members' letters.

Sudarto said that every time Bapak gave a talk he listened to it three times – the first for his inner, the second for his feeling, and the third for his understanding. Years later, another helper said the same thing, only differently. The first time he listened out of curiosity, the second for his feeling, the third for his inner, and a fourth for his understanding.

In addition I was careless. I misinterpreted too much of what was actually being said. I learned from preparing this paper that herein, over my lifetime, lay essential inspiration I did not take full advantage of; freely available support to receive more clearly, to improve my work, my behavior, and the work I did for Subud work. Support that explains how the two can become one.

In my quest to listen anew, to see what was actually said about enterprise, I learned to my surprise how enterprise, in all its forms, and Subud Enterprises in particular, were a dominant theme of the message, a message I had missed completely. I learned how integral enterprise is to Subud. How without enterprise, in my view, we are not receiving in the full sense of the term. I learned how when the talks are listened to, even many, many times, there is always more; how with repetition and open feeling, one finds layer upon layer of understandings, and discovered it was limitless. How within the talks, in and between the lines, there are deep proofs of the reality of Subud, proofs that resonated in my inner-feeling and gave real evidence of where all this comes from. I truly need to listen.

I have consciously not quoted Bapak in the text because my view is that it is essential to absorb Bapak's talks in such a way that the content becomes incorporated into one's being, so that, as intended, it becomes a normal part of one's experience. Only then can the content become an authentic part of one's self and not merely a quoted reference. However, there is one quote which puzzled me to the very end of what was a six month journey writing and rewriting this paper. It comes from a talk given to a group of members at Wendhausen Castle, a large, magnificent space for latihan, which members in Germany rented for many years. As the talk is unpublished, the full transcript is included in the Addendum. At first I had no idea what it meant. Now I think I understand it a little, but not well enough to find my own words to express it. So here it is verbatim:

And to look now at enterprises, this project that Bapak has undertaken, that Bapak has started in Kalimantan. If you calculate in the ordinary way what is the capital needed for that, actually it is hundreds of millions of dollars, but Bapak finds that Bapak cannot look at it in that way because Bapak has been ordered to do this by the power of Almighty God. Bapak has been told that Subud will never be great, Subud will never spread throughout the world unless Subud members truly undertake large

enterprises. And the fact that this is possible for us is proved in a small way by the S. Widjojo building. Because many people said to Bapak at that time it's impossible to build that building, not only people in Subud Germany but people in England and all over... and this is the secret, that what Bapak has received is that Subud can become great in the world, can become successful, providing that all Subud members become truly Subud-minded, which means that you don't distinguish anymore between yourself and Subud, between your needs and the needs of Subud, so that the three become one. It's a trinity – I, Subud, and Almighty God. "I" am I and "Subud" is all the brotherhood – in other words "Subud" is the effort which we make in this world, and all of this is protected and guided by the power of Almighty God. So that "Subud" is actually our effort, the effort that we make in the outer world.