



Cooperative Development in Indian Country

Presented by
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Overview of First Nations Development Institute

- Established in 1980
- Early work
- Partnerships
- Grant making
- Where we are today





First Nations' Mission

To assist Indigenous Peoples to control their assets, and through that control, build the capacity to direct their economic futures in ways that fit their cultures.



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Assets in Indian Communities

- The building blocks of wealth.
- Generate income, jobs and other benefits.
- Difference between rich and poor.
- Who controls the assets?

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Cooperatives as Institutional Assets

- Financial
- Physical
- Natural
- Institutional
- Human
- Cultural
- Social
- Political

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Strategies for Development

- **Control** - Increase participation and decision-making in the political process
- **Utilize** - Build management capacity to make better use of the asset, or use the asset more effectively
- **Leverage** - Use the asset to acquire additional assets
- **Retain** - Develop regulatory or legal infrastructure or systems of controls to better protect or keep the asset
- **Create** - Create or originate a new asset
- **Increase** - Achieve a higher return, or add value to the asset

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Education, Training and Leadership

- Maximize energy and resources allocated to delivery technical assistance and capacity building.
 - ✓ Organizational Assessment
 - ✓ Management Review Committee
 - ✓ Native Assets Research Center
 - ✓ Fundraising/Resource Generation

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Challenges – What’s Lacking

- Awareness
- Information
- Funding
- Technical resources
- Native control of Native assets

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Cooperatives in Indian Country

- Flathead Native Agricultural Cooperative, Ronan, MT
- Aloha ‘Aina Health Center, Kane’ohe, HI
- Wai’anae CDC, Wai’anae, HI
- Blackfeet Original Allotment Heirs, Browning, MT
- Tohono O’odham Community Action, Sells, AZ

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