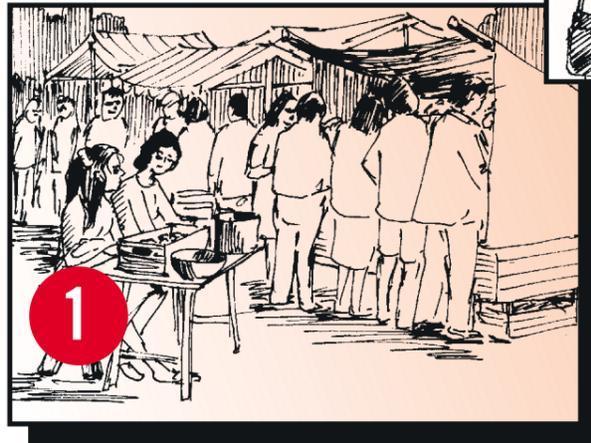# Marketing crafts

Three years ago Minda, Lena and Hasnah knew nothing about selling their craftwork. They all produced similar crafts and had difficulty selling them, as there were plenty available. One day they talked about their difficulties and decided they would go and get some advice from Minda's nephew, Ferdinand, who runs a stall.

MINDA: 'Look at this spoon! It's very nicely made.'

LENA: 'Why don't I make a mat like this?'

MINDA: 'But you don't know how to make mats in that way!'

FERDINAND: 'If you want to learn some new crafts, have you thought of going to the skill development centre? They provide training.'

3 If you want to make money from selling your crafts, first you need to learn about the people likely to buy your products. You need to learn…

- What products are popular and in demand?
- How much is the selling price?
- How many are sold in a day?
- Who is already making these products?
- How and where are they being sold?

Several weeks later in the skill development centre…

INSTRUCTOR: 'Its better to start with a craft for which you can use locally available materials and tools. Then you don't need a lot of money to start with.'

MINDA: 'In our village we have lots of coco-nut trees and my nephew told us that mats made from coconut fibre are selling well.'

INSTRUCTOR: 'Well, the centre here runs two-week classes where you could learn the skills to make them.'

Production cost calculation

1 Coconut ropes	60
2 Colour dye	90
3 Transportation to the market	+ 80
Total production cost of 10 mats	230

Cost of making one mat = 230 rupees ÷ 10 mats = 23 rupees

LENA: 'If we make 10 mats this will cost us 230 rupees in materials and transport to the market. That's 23 rupees for each mat. Now let's see how much we can sell them for to the market traders.'

HASNAH: 'We're learning these new skills fast. When we finish the course we are going to have to buy our own equipment. We'll need frames, tools and coconut fibre which will cost 3,000 rupees altogether. That's 1,000 rupees from each of us.'

Each trader offered a different price for the mats, one 28 rupees, another 30 rupees and another 33 rupees.

MINDA: 'How can you charge so much more than the others?'

TRADER: 'I only buy good quality crafts. I find customers don't buy crafts that are not well made. So I sell good quality crafts for good prices. That's good business.'

TRADER: 'These mats are very well made. When I'm checking for quality I check the size, colour, whether the design is good, how useful it is and how carefully made it is. And if it's unusual and creative that's even better.'

Quality check points…

- similar size
- good colour
- good design
- usefulness
- creativity

Profit calculation

group selling cost
33 rupees × 10 mats = 330 rupees

group selling cost 330 rupees
less production cost − 230 rupees
group profit 100 rupees

MINDA: 'Let's see how much profit we will make if we sell 10 mats to this trader. If we make 10 mats each day and he can sell them, in 30 days we will have earned enough to cover all the money we spent on buying equipment. After that everything will be profit – although we must save a little to replace equipment in the future.'

Now they often talk about how they can make their mats look more attractive with different designs or words. Their work makes a good profit because they work together well as a group and listen carefully to advice from experts.

MINDA: 'Now I can buy clothes for the family, some notebooks for my daughter and still have some money to prepare for the festival. By the way Hasnah, your coconut sweet balls taste very good. Why don't we try selling them too? I could make a container from bamboo leaves.'

This cartoon story can also be used as a role play with six main characters: Hasnah, Minda, Lena, Ferdinand, the instructor and the trader. Use the role play to encourage a discussion on the possibilities for developing new crafts and small enterprises. Plan to carry out simple market research on new products.

This material was adapted from the comic book 'Simple Marketing Skills'. With thanks to the Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) for their kind permission. (See page 14).