Trainers' Training Manual on Policy Advocacy

A Collaborative Project of the Viet Nam Farmers' Union (VNFU) and AsiaDHRRA

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TRAINERS' TRAINING MANUAL ON POLICY ADVOCACY

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Foreword

This training manual was developed as a guide in facilitating the training course on Constructive Engagement and Policy Advocacy under the project entitled: "Building capacity of VNFU leaders and staff on policy advocacy" funded by AsiaDHRRA, a member of Agricord.

The training manual is intended to guide and assist trainers and facilitators in building capacities of farmer leaders and staff of farmers organizations in constructive engagement and policy advocacy and help influence government to issue, legislate and implement policies, programs and investments that response to the needs of small farmers.

Policy Advocacy is a key task of VNFU as mandated by the 6th Congress held last July 2013. This training manual is expected to help VNFU in implementing capacity building interventions on policy advocacy at all levels of the organization.

Nguyen Dinh Xuan
Director
International Cooperation Division (ICD)
Vietnam National Farmers Union (VNFU)

Foreword

A transparent, accountable, and effective governance always requires constructive engagement/active participation of the civil society groups and the communities. In the previous experiences of AsiaDHRRA and its member-DHRRAs, community empowerment is seen not only by the community's capacity to own and manage their productive resources but is also signified by their representation in the policy and decision making bodies; hence, ensuring that their voices are heard and their development agenda are registered and/or prioritized. As an end result of policy engagement, we hope to see more effective participation of farmers and civil society organizations in public programs.

This training manual has been developed taking stocks from the rich experiences of the DHRRAs and other partners in constructive engagement. It hopes to assist thousands of the Vietnam Farmers Union (VNFU) members and staff in strengthening their membership bases, enhancing their leadership capacities, and, increasing their knowledge on policy advocacy. AsiaDHRRA encourages the use of the toolkit, which should be viewed as a living document that could be enhanced according to various experiences of partners, not only by the VNFU, but of other partner-farmers/fishers organizations in Vietnam and other countries in the Asian region.

We thank the VNFU for their generous and dynamic cooperation in this endeavour; and, for the opportunity to walk through, in partnership, with their organization as they pave new ways for active participation at different levels in the formulation, amendment, monitoring and implementation of policies that have impact to them. We thank VietDHRRA for the guidance and accompaniment, and AgriCord for the financing support.

Marlene Ramirez
Secretary General
AsiaDHRRA

About this Manual for Trainers

For decades, the inception, design and implementation of public agricultural development programs is exclusive only to government and donor experts and public services institutions. Farmers are not part of the process and were simply regarded as mere beneficiaries of these programs. These public programs often resulted with very little impact on farmers lives and livelihood, because the targets, strategies and methodologies did not respond to the priorities and possibilities of farmers to make appropriate use of the services and outputs that these programs offered.

Today, many bilateral and multilateral development institutions and an increasing number of governments as well, are convinced of the need to involve farmers' organisations during the conception, formulation, design and actual implementation of agricultural development programs as these institutions believed that farmers are the ones that are best placed to channel the specific views on their specific needs and aspirations.

Farmers participation in the inception, formulation, design and implementation of public agricultural programs depends on the political willingness of government, donor agencies and public institutions to get farmers on board, develop and effectively participate (not merely being consulted) in key aspects of public

agricultural programs. But the major challenge to succeed in farmers' involvement and participation in public agricultural programs is at the level of the Farmers' Organizations themselves.

Most of the farmers organizations in Southeast Asia are young and consequently still weakly organized to be a reliable partner for both the governments, donor organisations and other development partners. Farmers organisations still need to fulfil a number of requirements that include, among others, good governance (how are the leaders elected, the accountability of leaders to their members) how well is the organisation and resources being managed), in terms of actual performances and track record, in terms of public credibility and transparency and in terms of representation and level of cooperation between and among individual farmer organisations (how would farmers be represented, what categories of farmers does each farmer organisation represent).

Policy advocacy is vital in influencing government agricultural policies and public agricultural programs. It helps to inform members of the legislative bodies and government bureaucracy about what works at the community level as well as keeps the pressure for the issuance and/or legislation of appropriate policies that provide favorable policy environment for farmers participation in public programs.

This manual was developed through the project with VNFU entitled "Building VNFU leaders and staff capacity on policy advocacy and constructive engagement" which was implemented by the International Cooperation Department of the Viet Nam Farmers Union (VNFU) under the leadership of Mr. Dinh Xuan, ICD Director.

This training manual was based on the results and analysis of training needs expressed by VNFU leaders and staff on a series of training needs analysis sessions. Included are training course modules in participatory training and skills in managing training workshops which incorporate technology of participation framework, tools and methodologies. These are new to VNFU as an organization.

Acknowledgement

AsiaDHRRA would like to thank Ms. Marides Gardiola, external expert on capacity-building and policy advocacy, for leading the team to develop this manual with the contributions of Ms. Marlene Ramirez and Mr. Florante "Nonoy" Villas who also coordinated and provided advice services to VNFU on the implementation of the project. Ms. Lany Rebagay of AFA who took part as resource person in the initial conduct of training workshop in Phase 1.

AsiaDHRRA would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Vu Ley Y Voan, Nguyen Thi Viet Ha, Leu Thi Minh Hue, Hoang Thi Quynh Hoa, Hoang Thi Mai Huong, and Pham Thi Huong Giang of ICD for their support in the development of this training manual and training assistants, namely: Nguyen Hong Son, Le Van Khoi, Pham Tai Thang, Nguyen Tuan Anh, Tran Cong Thuan, and Nguyen Thi Viet Ha, who patiently provided valuable help to the participants and trainers.

Contents

List of Acronyms

AFA	Asian Farmers Association for Sustainable Rural Development
ANSA	Asian Network for Social Accountability
AsiaDHRRA	Asian Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia
ConEng	Constructive Engagement
CSA	Collectif Strategies Alimentaries
ID	Identification
NGOs	Non-government Organizations
PPT	Power Point Presentation
SLEs	Structured Learning Exercises
SRD	Center for Sustainable Rural Development
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VietDHRRA	Vietnam Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas
VNFU	Vietnam Farmers Union

Introduction

With its over 10 million-strong presence in key sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, VNFU has sought to create significant impact on the lives of its members through various programs since its formation in the 1930s. These programs aim to enhance capacities, defend legitimate rights and interests, organize service activities and provide support to improve production, business and living conditions of the VNFU membership across national, provincial, district and commune structures.

In recent years, VNFU has geared its strategies towards more participation in the formulation, amendment, monitoring and implementation of policies that impact agriculture and rural farmers. The leadership of the farmers' union recognizes the need to strengthen and mobilize the role and capacities of its complement of 15,000 fulltime and 200,000 part time staff in achieving significant strides in policy advocacy. Thus, a capacity building project has been conceptualized to address that need and consequently, stimulate an organization-wide learning process that can be sustained internally not only among VNFU staff but most especially with farmers are the grassroots, commune and district levels.

After a successful run of workshops in different districts, VNFU seeks to expand the coverage of the training by developing trainers who can train at the local level of VNFU membership. Thus, this Training of Trainers will be conducted.

For this phase of the project, done in partnership with AsiaDHRRA, VNFU aims to develop the training competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) of at least 35 trainers who will be tapped to train its national and provincial staff who are involved in policy advocacy for agriculture and rural farmers' upliftment.

Specifically, the following objectives are expected to be achieved:

1. Develop the orientation and skills of VNFU trainers on participatory principles and approaches to learning;
2. Enable the trainers to demonstrate facilitation skills on the Policy Advocacy Training Modules that have been developed from the previous phase;
3. Equip VNFU leaders with some fundamental knowledge on policy advocacy;
4. Develop training materials that are relevant and appropriate to the context of farmers and VNFU;
5. Strengthen the capacity of some VNFU staff in managing and evaluating training activities; and,
6. Forge stronger cooperation and mutual understanding among VNFU, SRD and VietDHRRA.

Course Outline:

Module 1: Participatory Training

Session 1: Basic Training Concepts
Session 2: Principles of Adult Learning and Popular Education
Session 3: Training Methods
Session 4: Facilitating Structured Learning Exercises
Session 5: Facilitating Role Play
Session 6: Familiarizing with the Training Manual and Practicum Assignments

Module 2: Constructive Engagement and Policy Advocacy Skills

Session 1: Preliminaries
Session 2: Peak Moments in Collaborating and Cooperating with Government
Session 3: Agricultural Context and Challenges: Imperatives for Policy Advocacy
Session 4: Policy Making Processes in Vietnam
Session 5: Experiences in Constructive Engagement
Session 6: Policy Advocacy: Definition and Basic Steps
Session 7: Basic Advocacy Skills: Identifying Issues and Goals
Session 8: Basic Advocacy Skills: Analyzing Targets
Session 9: Basic Advocacy Skills: identifying Strategies and Tactics
Session10: Basic Advocacy Skills: Developing and Delivering Key Policy Messages

Module 3: Skills in Training Management

Module 1: Participatory Training

INTRODUCTORY SESSION

1. Objective of the Session

To collectively create a conducive learning atmosphere in which they have leveled off on the objectives, methodology and mechanisms of the 5-day training

2. Duration:

1hour

3. Content Outline:

- Opening Ceremony
- Welcome Remarks
- Introduction of participants and training team
- Program overview
- Host team formation

4. Materials Needed:

- PPT #1 on Orientation Session, which includes: Welcome logo, course objectives, topics, schedule and host team tasks

- Supplies kit with each kit containing: manila paper, 1 set of colored art paper, 1 tube of paste, 1 pair of scissors, 4 colors of permanent markers, masking tape

5. Process:

a. Welcome Rites and Remarks:

The host organizers will formally welcomewill formally welcome the participants to the 6-day course and explain the background as well as objectives of the capability building program (15 mins)

b. Introduction/ Sociogram:

- Facilitator will engage the participants in a lively introduction game where s/he will ask them to group themselves according to the following characteristics: age, bracket, civil status, number of children, years of service as community facilitator, province or origin, etc. For each round of grouping the group will be asked to identify themselves through a particular way (15 mins)
- The final grouping will be the venue for the participants to have more in-depth sharing on their symbols of peace. Each participant will draw his/her symbol on a sheet of paper and explain group mates. Together with that they will be asked to share their expectations for the course in terms of their HOPES and FEARS (30 mins)
- The group will come up with a collage of the peace symbols, hopes and fears and come up with a group name (15 mins.)
- The symbols, group name and expectations will be shared to the big group (15 mins.)

c. Program Overview:

The facilitator will share the course objectives, methodologies and mechanisms for day-to-day management of the training

e. Host Teams Formation:

Teams will be formed based on the introductory groupings, and, assigned to perform daily tasks of time management, energizers, recap, etc. The schedule of host team assignments will be posted on the wall as a reminder.

Session I:
DEFINITION/PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

1. Objectives of the Session:

a. To discuss the nature of training;
b. To differentiate training from education;
c. To identify the different types of training.

2. Duration:

30 minutes

3. Process:

a. Free Association

- Participants will be asked to share the words, phrases or sentences which come to their mind when they hear the word TRAINING. As many words/phrases are given as possible.
- The resource person writes these on the board and asks the participants to elaborate on the meaning of each word/phrase.
- The resource person will attempt to cull out the salient ideas from the participants' sharing and sum these up into a definition of TRAINING.

b. Discussion on Definition of Training

- Training is A PROCESS OF LEARNING where in PEOPLE undergo a SERIES OF CHANGES TO DEVELOP THEIR KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES EFFECTIVELY TO INTERACT with THE ENVIRONMENT.
- NEED for TRAINING- There is a need for training when:

    1. There is a DISCREPANCY/GAP between actual performance and desired level of performance.
    2. When the person is expected to do a job in the near future but his/her present competencies are not adequate for the person to perform the job effectively.

3. When the potentials of the person are not well harnessed and the management wants to contribute to the person's personal growth.

- DIFFERENCE from EDUCATION

1. To TRAIN is to "inform by instruction, discipline or drill" to teach so as to make fit, qualified or proficient." TRAINING is short-term specific and keyed to set of identified and measurable skills, knowledge, orientations, experiences and perspectives, linked to a particular job task, project or organizational need.
2. To EDUCATE is "to provide schooling for; to develop mentally and morally by instruction." EDUCATE is more comprehensive and seeks to develop the complete person in terms of psycho motor, affective and cognitive skills. Provides knowledge, skills and values needed for successful living with the culture, plus the ability to deal effectively with new data and changing condition.

- APPROACHES in the TRAINING

1. FORMAL TRAINING – which methods include lectures, case studies, simulations, films, and field visits.
2. ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING- which methods include coaching, guided delegation, job rotation, mentoring and secondment.
3. ACTION LEARNING/EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING- which methods include a mix of formal training with techniques like process observation, force field analysis, Delphi survey, etc.
4. ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – which methods include support groups, professional associations and study circles.

Session 2:
PRINCIPLES OF ADULT EDUCATION AND POPULAR EDUCATION

1. Objectives

a. To discuss how learning is facilitated in training
b. To help the participants look at what they have learned and how they learned it

2. Duration:

2 ½ hours

3. Process

a. Activity

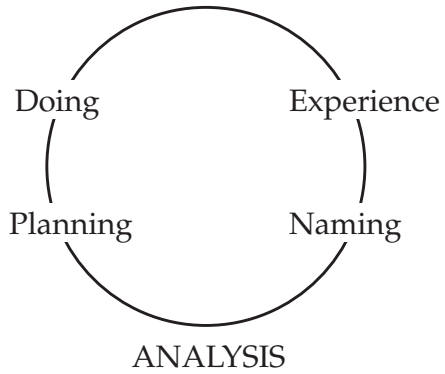
- Participants are asked list down top 3 major things that they have learned out of school, that are important to them, and that affect their daily life. These should be things, which they can remember learning.
- Choose one of them and think through carefully the whole process of how they learned it.
    1. Why did you learn it?
    2. Who helped you learn it?
    3. What was the relationship between you and the person who helped you?
    4. What was the situation in which you learned?
    5. In what way did you learn it?
    6. Can you remember anything that made your learning easier or more difficult?
- Sharing in Small Groups
- Presentation of Group Sharing
- Synthesis

b. Summary:

Resource person summarizes the results of group sharing into: PURPOSE, PEOPLE, SITUATION, METHOD, CONTENT, as the ELEMENTS in LEARNING.

- The 5 key principles of POPULAR EDUCATION will be presented as follows:
  - No education is ever neutral.
  - Relevance – (link between emotion and motivation to act) issues of importance now!
  - Problem Posing
  - Dialogue
  - Reflection and Action
  - Radical Transformation

SPIRAL OF ADULT LEARNING



c. Discussion on the PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING.

- Learning is an experience activated by and occurring within the learner.
- Learning is a discovery of personal meaning and relevance.
- Learning is (sometimes a painful process).
- Learning is a consequence of experiences (learning from the past).
- Learning is a process that is highly unique and individual.
- Learning is the richest resource in the learner's self (knowledge as power).
- Learning is a cooperative and collaborative process.
- Learning is an emotional and intellectual process.
- Learning is an evolutionary process (Action-reflection cycle).
- Learning by doing or experiencing is captured in Confucius' statement:
  "I hear and forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand."
- Also in this:
  People remember 20% of what they hear,
  40% of what they hear and see
  80% of what they discover for themselves.

Session 3:
TRAINING METHODS

1. Objectives

To identify the different training methodologies, their advantages and disadvantages

2. Duration:

30 minutes

3. Process:

a. Activity

The resource person asks the participants to write on idea cards the different methods they have used in training

b. Discussion

The Resource Person discusses each of the methods according to uses, advantages and disadvantages.

Session 4:
FACILITATING STRUCTURED LEARNING EXERCISES (SLES)

1. Objectives

a. To explain the importance of structural learning exercises as a creative pedagogical tool in education and training which uses the inductive method of learning
b. To enumerate the steps and processes in running SLE's

2. Duration:

2. 45 hours

3. Process:

a. Activity: SLE on Communication

1. The participants will undergo an actual SLE which the resource person would facilitate. This will later serve as basis for culling out learning on the above mentioned objectives.
2. Participants are instructed to break into 3 groups and, without using verbal or body language, go to a place in the room which they want. (5 mins)
3. In the same groups, the participants will share on the following points:
    - What happened?
    - What did you feel about the exercise?
    - What did you observe about other pax?
    - What are your insights on this activity?
4. The resource person processes the observation, feelings and insights of the participants by sharing the trends, patterns and dynamics.
5. The results are synthesized so that generalization can be made about the activity to real experiences in everyday life. SLE's are made practical.
6. The facilitator helps participants apply generalizations to actual situations in their daily life.

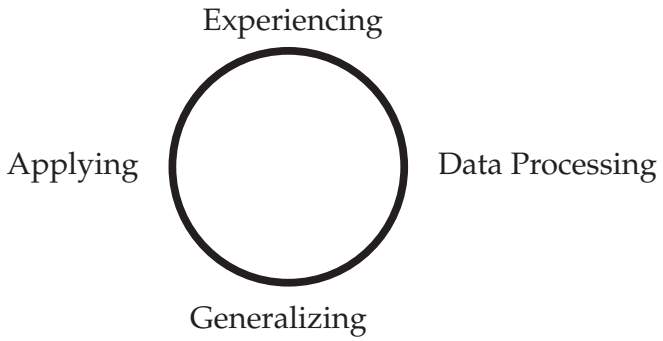
b. Linking Talk

The facilitator ends the activity part of the session and leads the participants to the next activity, which is the cliniquing or lecture on the SLE. This is done by asking the participants what processes were undergone.

c. Lecture Discussion

From what was drawn up, the facilitator presents the learning cycle in SLE's:

The Experiential Learning Cycle



- EXPERIENCING- the "doing" or "experiencing" part of the cycle is often associated with games or fun that involve either self-assessment or interpersonal interaction. The objective of the "experiencing" part is for the participants to generate data from a common experience through which learning or discovery could take place.
- DATA GATHERING – aims to assess the intellectual and cognitive levels of the participants through sharing of what they saw and how they felt after a fame or activity is commonly experienced. The methodology used for publishing is coming up with questions of "what" and "how" such as:
  - what happened?
  - what did you observe?
  - how did you feel?
  - how were you affected?
  - what are your insights?

- PROCESSING – this is the systematic examination of commonly shared experiences. Participants analyze trends, patterns and

dynamics through the observations, insights and reactions shared. Focus should be made on the trends and dynamics gleaned from the data and not on the meaning behind.

- GENERALIZING – the results are synthesized so that generalizations can be made about the relevance of the activity to real experiences in everyday life. SLE's are thus made practical. Participants are able to relate the activity they have experienced to similar situations in their personal lives and to the world outside. At this stage the facilitator may provide input by bringing in theoretical and research findings to augment the learning. In this manner, the learning that has been discovered inductively to a given conceptual framework. The experience in the structural learning exercise is validated by comparing it to experiences in real life.
- However, providing input should not encourage dependence on the facilitator as the source of knowledge. It is important therefore to go into the next stage.
- APPLYING – the facilitator helps the participants apply generalizations to actual situations in their everyday life.

d. Lecture –Discussion: What is SLE?

- SLE is a method which utilizes the principles of group dynamics and follows the inductive process as a learning approach.
- It helps trainees to look back on any experience, reflect on its impact or meaning, gather insights from it and allow these insights to lead into action.
- The creative use of SLE's contributes significantly in making the inductive method an exciting form of learning and provides a framework through which this method is facilitated.
- This demands from the speaker-facilitator full and unified grasp of theories and concepts, and the capability to formulate creative activities through which these concepts and theories can be drawn.

e. Lecture-Discussion: Advantages and Disadvantages of SLEs

- Advantages
  - Effective in changing behaviors. It develops the trainees' sensitivity to people's behavior and creates-awareness on how these affect personal and working relationships.

- Increases about how and why people at work behave as they do.
- Appropriate for trainees unused to long lectures.
- Encourages the trainees to think creatively.

- Disadvantages
  - Behavioral changes and reactions may not be captured if processing is poorly made.
  - Not suitable to professional trainees who generally have no inclination for exercises that sometimes require too much bodily movements.
  - Participants tend to pre-empt the topic if they have experienced the exercises. It is possible that they may influence the responses of their participants.
  - Not applicable for skills that are learned by doing which hands on techniques is still the best methodology; and for knowledge that requires a large-scale perspective, in which the lecture-discussion is the most effective.

Session 5:
10 HANDY TIPS IN FACILITATING

1. Objective of the Session

To summarize basic tips in facilitating learning processes

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

a. Discussion

- Resource person asks the participants on some handy and practical tips that they have learned from their previous facilitating experiences and summarizes these by writing on the board
- The 11 Handy Tips will be shared by the resource person

4. Discussion Points:

a. **Grasp firmly:** have a good grasp over the subject matter. Always be prepared and study the topics and methods well ahead of time

b. **Be Open:** Encourage an atmosphere conducive to learning and sharing of ideas and where everyone feels welcome and important.

c. **Watch for the Point:** By encouraging others to share and participate, the range of discussion may expand and deepen. Without a good grasp of the subject matter, the discussion may get watered-down and lose track. You should see the various points, the 'pros and cons', the 'what ifs', and other considerations. In the end, you should be able to summarize the discussion

d. **Know your Limits:** Know your own limitation and those of the participants. Have an idea of what is achievable and practical and what is not.

e. **Learn How to Count:** Be aware of how many participants are responding, how many are sleepy, how frequently they leave the hall and how many are no longer listening. This can help you decide whether it is time to adjust the discussion or process.

f. **Watch your Wrist:** Effective management of time is a skill and an attitude you should possess. Every person will have their own subjective view of time. A too tight or too rigid timetable would make a discussion seem like a military drill. On the other hand, too lax and liberal handling of sessions would make the discussion feel like a drinking party.

g. **Have an Artists' Touch:** Creative approaches and techniques encourage participation.

h. **Learn the Traffic Signals:** As an effective facilitator, you must know when to stop, wait a little, and go. You should be able to stop, look and listen throughout the discussion. Remember, a polite traffic enforcer is well liked by the public

i. **Learn How to Salute (learn how to respect and appreciate):** Remember to learn respect and the ability to recognize everybody's contributions. Practice humility; as a facilitator, you do not have the solutions. They come from the participants.

j. **Know your Left and Right (recognize your strong and weak points):** After every session, you should assess and evaluate. There is no perfect score in facilitation. There is always room for improvement

k. **Publish, Write, Draw for Everyone to See (use visualization techniques):** Make sure that the ideas, outputs, discussion points are visualized to reinforce learning, guide the flow of discussion and to give due recognition to the contribution of participants.

Session 6:

FAMILIARIZING WITH THE TRAINING MANUAL/ PRACTICUM ASSIGNMENTS

1. Objectives:

To be familiar with the Policy Advocacy Training Design and Modules resulting from previous sessions and prepare for a demonstration of a one-hour session based on the design

2. Duration:

4 hours

3. Process:

a. Introduction (5 mins) and explanation of mechanics of practicum
b. Preparation of presentation in teams (4 hours)

Module 2: Participatory Training

Session 1: Preliminaries

1. Objective

To surface their expectations and agree on the objectives, content, and methods of the training on Policy Advocacy

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

a. Opening Ceremony
b. Welcome Remarks by VNFU local leader
c. Introduction of participants
d. Sharing of Expectations
e. Colored Cards: As the participants arrive for registration, they will be asked to write on color-coded cards their expectations and post them on a whiteboard positioned near the door.
    - Orange cards: what they expect to gain from the training
    - Blue cards: what they expect from the resource person and training team

- Green cards: what they can contribute for the success of the training

f. Summary of expectations: Facilitator will summarize what the participants have posted on the board and presents them to the participants

g. Program overview: The objectives, content and methods that will be used in the training will be presented by the overall facilitator who will also relate them to the expectations shared by the participants.

h. Discussion:
   - VNFU is implementing the capacity building project to strengthen the role and competencies of VNFU staff in policy advocacy
   - The training will employ participatory, experiential learning processes around content areas that have been identified during the training needs analysis.
   - The session guides have been developed based on experiences from the 2 previous trainings that have already been conducted as part of the same project with VNFU and AsiaDHRRA

Session 2:

PEAK MOMENTS IN COLLABORATING/ COOPERATING WITH GOVERNMENT AND IMPERATIVES FOR VNFU POLICY ADVOCACY

1. Objectives

a. To share their experiences of peak (or best) moments in collaborating/cooperating with government
b. To discuss imperatives for policy advocacy in the context of Vietnam and VNFU in particular

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

Group Sharing: In their groups, the participants will be asked to share their peak (best) moment in cooperating/collaborating with government, particularly:

- what was the activity
- who were involved and
- what happened (result)

A facilitator will manage the discussion and a reporter will share what came out. The facilitator will write the answers of each group on the flipchart paper posted on the wall with a matrix.

Listening Triads (5 mins): sharing of-- Peak moments in Cooperating/ Working with government

4. Discussion Points:

a. Peak moments reflect what we consider as important, what is of value to us
b. Shared values within an organization foster commitment and pro-activity in individuals

c. Major issues and challenges of farmers
d. Initiatives pursued by VNFU to advocate and/or engage government to address major issues and challenges of farmers
e. Gains in working with government
f. Listening is a fundamental skill in constructive engagement

Session 3:

IMPERATIVES FOR POLICY ADVOCACY AGRICULTURAL CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

1. Objectives

To discuss the different imperatives for policy advocacy in the light of the current context and challenges in Vietnam agriculture

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

a. World Cafe:

1. Discussion in the small workshop where participants are seated around a table where flipchart paper is placed at the center. In each group, the flipchart paper will have the following questions:
    - What are the key issues that have not been addressed by policy?
    - What are the challenges and difficulties in policy advocacy?
    - What other organizations are involved in policy advocacy and what are their initiatives?
    - What is the mandate of VNFU in terms of policy advocacy?
2. After one round of discussions, the participants in each table will be asked to move to the next table in clockwise manner and answer the question written on the flipchart paper on the table. This will be done until they have gone to all the 4 tables and answered all the 4 questions. Facilitator summarizes what came out and links these with the next session.

b. Discussion:

Sound reading and analysis of context is the foundation of the work for policy advocacy

Session 4:

CONSTRUCTIVE ENGAGEMENT (COOPERATING/ COLLABORATING WITH GOVERNMENT)

1. Objective

To cull out insights on constructive engagement from the experiences of the Philippines

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

a. Video Showing: Constructive Engagement in the Philippines
b. Resource Person led Discussion: Taking off from the previous session's discussions, the facilitator will introduce the concepts of constructive engagement, starting with:
    - Roles in constructive engagement (voice of the people – advocacy), partners for reform – program implementation of government project, proponent for change- implementing projects funded by the people of other people, fiscalizers to curb corruption- monitoring of projects)

4. Discussion Points:

a. Con Eng is different from advocating for social accountability from government; it is actually a range of processes that brings together stakeholders to act on a concern put forward by the public/ citizens in an organized fashion to produce reforms in governance for positive change.
b. It is not only for civil society organizations but citizens-based organizations.
c. It will involve dialogue between and among stakeholders or duty bearers.
d. Con Eng is the exercise of power by organized citizens, which must therefore result to the benefit of the common good.

e. It uses different strategies ranging from collaboration to confrontation. NGOs need to think about how to disengage from one strategy to the next, as they adapt to the situation. The use of these strategies is basically determined by: the kind of government they are dealing with, and the power/capacity of the citizens in doing constructive engagement

f. There are 2 opportunities for engagement:
   - Claimed Space is when NGOs and their communities initiate participation by claiming or taking advantage of the spaces (rooms) created by the State's legal framework. Most governments seldom proactively invite the people to enter these legally made rooms; NGOs take the initiative by playing active roles in using these rooms.
   - Invited Space. Government may also initiate spaces for participation by inviting NGOs to enter engagement rooms. NGOs are invited to give their inputs or to receive information on government policy. Government invites NGOs for various reasons, which include merely complying with law (regulation) mandates, obtaining information from NGOs or requesting NGOs significant involvement in policy.

g. The sustainability of participation rooms often depends on government as the inviter. Many are facilitated once by government but are not followed up after. In such cases, NGOs can decide to either keep or not keep these rooms, even if government leaves them. Some cases in Indonesia show that many NGOs maintain the spaces even after government leaves; these then become claimed spaces, instead of invited spaces.

Session 5:

UNDERSTANDING GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING IN VIETNAM: POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Objective

To explain the policy making processes in Vietnam as the political and institutional context for policy work

2. Duration:

1 hour

3. Process:

a. Human Tableau:

- Facilitator will ask the participants to write down on metacards the institutions that are involved in policy advocacy and post them on the board.
- After the cards have been posted, the facilitator clusters similar cards together and asks for volunteers who will take on the role of an institution among those posted on the board.
- The volunteers stick the card on their ID and are asked to go to the center of the hall.
- Each of the groups will have one representative who will arrange the participants at the center in a manner that would illustrate how the policy making processes are happening in Vietnam.
- After all the groups have done that task, the facilitator summarizes with the following points:
  - Different countries have different systems of policy making
  - To be able to work effectively with government, it is important for policy workers to become familiar with the bureaucracy or the policy making process in their country
- If there is a resource person, s/he can add inputs to what the participants have done.

Session 6:
POLICY ADVOCACY: DEFINITION AND BASIC STEPS

1. Objective

To come up with clear definition of policy advocacy and explain the different steps involved in it

2. Duration:

1.5 hours

3. Process:

a. Video Showing:

The facilitator presents the ANSA video showing the different approaches to policy advocacy being done in countries like the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia and Mongolia.

b. Debriefing:

- After the presentation, the participants will be asked to share in their groups: a) what they saw; b) how they feel; and, c) what they think.
- A representative from each group will be asked to share with the big group what came out in their small group discussion
- Synthesis: The facilitator picks up the points shared and links it to the succeeding session on Policy Advocacy
- Resource person-led Discussion: The resource person picks up the summary of the video debriefing and links it with his/her session, which will focus on: a) definition of Policy Advocacy; and,

b) Steps in Policy Advocacy.

4. Discussion Points:

a. Policy advocacy is a process; a series of well-defined and coordinated activities
b. Its aim is to influence policy, laws, regulations, programs of funding decisions and made by uppermost levels of public or private sector institutions
c. It is conducted at the local, national, regional and international levels
d. The 8 basic steps in advocacy enables us to answer the questions of: 1) what is the problem; 2) what policy or decision do we want; 3) who should decide on the policy or action; 4) what will we tell them; 5) how will we tell them; 6) who will influence the decision maker; 7) how the activity will be funded; and, 8) what is the plan to carry out the advocacy.

Session 7:

BASIC SKILLS IN POLICY ADVOCACY: IDENTIFYING ISSUES AND GOALS

1. Objective

To demonstrate skills in:

- Selecting an issue as the focus of their advocacy campaign
- Developing a clear proposal (policy or program) some of the basic steps in policy advocacy.

2. Duration:

2 hours

3. Process:

a. Workshop:

- Facilitator writes on metacards the 4 unaddressed issues that came out of the first workshop (day 1).
- Participants will be asked to form groups focused on the 4 issue (1 group per issue). They will select which issue they are familiar with and they can work on.
- The following guide questions will be answered in each group: a) what is the issue that needs to be addressed; and, b) what is your alternative proposal to resolve this issue?
- They will be asked to write their responses on flipchart paper.

b. Reporting:

- A representative from each group will present to the big group the results of their discussion
- As each group presents, the resource person will process and provide additional points.

4. Discussion Points:

The first 2 steps in any advocacy campaign are selecting the advocacy issue, and. developing the goals and objectives.

These pieces of the advocacy process make up some of the most challenging, analytical work facing an organization who wishes to do advocacy. Completing these steps require an ability to analyze complex environments and interrelated problems, discern a policy solution for a selected problem, envision a long term result and articulate a short term objective. These steps provide the foundation for an effective advocacy campaign. Without a clear articulated issue and well defined goals and objectives, the remaining steps of the campaign will lose focus.

Advocacy issue. An advocacy issue is the problem or situation that the organization seeks to solve or rectify or change through a certain policy action. That means, problems that can be addressed by the actions of institution and individuals representing these institutions. The advocacy issue must be widely felt by the organization's constituency.

A variety of policy actors identify issues for action using techniques ranging from the spontaneous generation of ideas to the cautious and deliberate study of issues. Research data can bring suspected or even unknown issues into focus and can provide a comparison among issues.

In defining the advocacy/policy issue, one must understand the context of the issue. How does existing policies affect the issue? What are the policy gaps, if any? What aspects of policy (formulation, implementation or interpretation) should be changed? Who are the targets, allies and adversaries? What actions have been done by key decision makers on the issue?

It is important to analyze the key stakeholders. Who are they? What are their respective interests and positions on the issue? How will they be affected by the resolution of the issue? Can they be considered as allies and if so how can their support be secured? Can they be considered as enemies and if so in what way can they possibly affect the resolution of the issue? Up to what extent can they damage your advocacy?

It will be good to decide the position of your organization to this policy issue, as well as your policy proposals. This will be the basis for your advocacy goals and objectives

Advocacy Goals. An advocacy goal is the long term result (3 years at earliest) that the organization is seeking. The organization should envision how the policy environment will be changed as a result of their advocacy efforts. The advocacy goal is the subject of your advocacy effort. It is what you hope to achieve. It can be general; it can be your vision.

Advocacy Objectives. An advocacy objective is a short term target that contributes towards achievement of a long term goal. A sound objective is specific, measurable, realistic, and time bound. It is important to identify the specific policy advocacy body with the authority to fulfill the objective as well as the policy decision or action that is desired.

An advocacy objective aims to change the policies, programs or positions of governments, institutions or organizations. It is what you want to change, who will make the change, by how much and by then. Generally, the time frame for an advocacy objective will be 1-3 years.

It will be good to identify your minimum and maximum positions with regards to a certain policy issue, as this will help in your formulation of advocacy objectives.

For example:

Advocacy goal: land to the tiller

Advocacy objective: extension of the comprehensive agrarian reform law by the Philippine congress in June 2008

Checklist for Selecting an Advocacy Objective

1. Do qualitative and quantitative data exist to show that the objective will improve the situation?

2. Is the objective achievable? Even with the opposition?
3. Will the objective gain the support of many people? Do people care deeply enough about the objective to take action?
4. Will you be able to raise money or other resources to support your work on the objective?
5. Can you clearly identify the target decision makers? What are their names and positions?
6. Is the objective easy to understand?
7. Does the advocacy objective have a clear timeframe that is realistic?
8. Do you have the necessary alliances with key individuals and organizations to reach your advocacy objective? How will the objective help build alliances with other NGO leaders, or stakeholders?
9. Will working on the advocacy objective provide people with opportunities to learn about and become involved with the decision-making processes?

References;

1.Policy Project. Networking for Policy Change; An Advocacy Taining Manual
2. Sharma,Ritu. An Introduction to Advocacy

Session 8:

BASIC SKILLS IN POLICY ADVOCACY: ANALYZING THE TARGET

1. Objective

To demonstrate skills in:

- Identifying primary and secondary target audiences for their advocacy issue
- Analyze their interest in this issue

2. Duration:

1 1/2 hours

3. Process:

a. Workshop:

1. Participants will carry on with the previous group assignments and work on their identified issues.
2. The following guide questions will be answered in each group: a) who are the primary targets and stakeholders in the issue you have identified; b) what are their interests and level of influence on the issue.
3. They will be asked to write their responses on flipchart paper.

b. Reporting:

1. A representative from each group will present to the big group the results of their discussion
2. As each group presents, the resource person will process and provide additional points.

4. Discussion Points:

To increase the chances of success, the organization should study all the individuals and groups that may support the network's goals and objectives as well as those who oppose them. The advocacy campaigns audience include the primary/target and the secondary

audience. There are many kinds of policy audiences. The key to effective advocacy is focusing on audiences that can have an impact on the decision-making process.

Primary/Target Audience. The primary target audience are persons within institutions include decision makers with the authority to affect the outcome of your advocacy objective directly. These are individuals who must approve the policy change. These decision makers are the primary "targets" of an advocacy strategy.

Secondary Audience: These are persons who can influence the decision makers – the primary/target audience (e.g. In Philippine setting the Catholic Bishops greatly influence the President). The opinions and actions of these "influentials" are important in achieving the advocacy objective in so far as they affect the opinions and actions of the decision makers.

Some members of the primary audience can also be a secondary audience if they can influence other decision makers. For example, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education can influence each other's opinion. Therefore, they are both a primary audience ("target") and a secondary audience ("influentials").

Mapping your Audience. Once the target audience and influentials are identified, the organization must determine the level of support or opposition to be expected from them.

"Policy mapping" is a tool used to identify and learn about criticial audiences. The first stage of policy mapping is to list the "targets" and the "influentials" Ranking the "targets" by importance is extremely helpful in planning the advocacy strategy. If you are sure or you don't know, you will need to do some research. Identifying the important decision makers and audiences is a constant task for advocates.

The second stage of policy mapping is to chart what audiences know, believe and feel about an issue. Also, knowing what other issues an audience cares deeply about can be useful. If you can link your goal

to one of the issues your audience cares about, the audience is much more likely to support your effort.

A simple way of mapping audience is to list down who among them probably support, oppose or are neutral to your advocacy objective. Whether opposition is mild or strong, the organization should be prepared to address it in ways that are most beneficial to the achievement of the advocacy objective. The best advice is to be informed as possible about the specific issues and base of support and to pre-empt oppositional efforts with messages that anticipate and refute the opponents' arguments.

Many advocacy organizations often dedicate themselves to broadening their bases of support. The larger the number of persons and groups in support of the advocacy objective, the greater the chances of success. Networks can create coalitions with other networks or formal groups, expand their own membership, create alliances with other private sectors, and generate public and community support to enlarge their support base.

Finally, the organization cannot afford to forget the "undecided" or neutral parties. In some cases, the best investment of time and energy is to appeal to the neutral public. Public opinion can exert powerful pressure on decision makers.

Policy Audience Research. Once you have identified your primary and secondary audience, how can you learn what their opinion, attitudes and beliefs are about your advocacy issue and objective? Some audience research methods are:

a. Observation

- talk with people who are familiar with the group/individual
- gossip: this is especially helpful in learning what audiences really think about issues, their true opinion may be different from their "official" position.
- read speeches or other documents written by key organizations or individuals
- review the results of recent polls, surveys or focus groups

- attend open meetings where the individual or group will be speaking or participating

b. Surveys/Polls – generally used to learn about large audiences. Polls and surveys should be conducted by organizations that primary audience would find credible.

c. Focus Groups – give an in-depth perspective on what people think and why. This method is particularly useful in testing policy messages. In focus group discussions, limit discussion to a few, narrow topics. Also participants should come from a common background and share similar socio-eco-cultural characteristics, so that they will feel comfortable sharing their true feelings.

d. Interviews – Limit questions to a few topics and be sure that the people being interviewed are truly representative of your audience.

Policy Map 1: What your audience know and think

Advocacy objective: ==========

Audience	Knowledge About issue/ objective	belief/attitude about issue/ objective	Issues that audience cares about
Primary/target			
1.			
2.			
Secondary			
1.			
2.			

References:
1.Policy Project. Networking for Policy Change; An Advocacy Taining Manual
2. Sharma,Ritu. An Introduction to Advocacy
3. KAISAHAN. Policy Advocacy Handbook. July 2002.

Session 9:

BASIC SKILLS IN POLICY ADVOCACY: ADVOCACY STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

1. Objective

To demonstrate skills in identifying and analyzing various strategies and tactics for advocacy

2. Duration:

1 1/2 hours

3. Process:

a.Workshop:

1. Participants will carry on with the previous group assignments and work on their identified issues.
2. The following guide questions will be answered in each group: a) what strategies and tactics will you use to effectively advocate for the identified issue.
3. They will be asked to write their responses on flipchart paper.

b. Reporting:

1. A representative from each group will present to the big group the results of their discussion
2. As each group presents, the resource person will process and provide additional points.

Session 10:

BASIC SKILLS IN POLICY ADVOCACY: DEVELOPING AND DELIVERING KEY POLICY MESSAGES

1. Objective

To demonstrate skills in:

- Identifying the elements of an effective advocacy message
- Developing and delivering an advocacy message

2. Duration:

4 hours

3. Process:

a. Workshop:

1. Participants will carry on with the previous group assignments and work on their identified issues.
2. The following guide questions will be answered in each group: a) what kkey messages will you use in advocating for the issues identified; b) how will those messages be delivered? What medium will be used?
3. They will be asked to write their responses on flipchart paper.

b. Reporting:

1. A representative from each group will present to the big group the results of their discussion
2. As each group presents, the resource person will process and provide additional points.

4. Discussion Points:

One of the most effective ways to build awareness about your issue and to generate support for your advocacy goals and objectives is to divide your audience into groups and develop a "message"to which each group will respond. The message should be tailored to your audience's interests.

An advocacy "message" is a concise and persuasive statement about your advocacy goal that captures what you want to achieve, why and how. Since the underlying message is to create action, your message should also include the specific action you would like the audience to take.

There are 3 main points about advocacy message development.

First, there should be ideally one main point communicated, or if that is not possible, two or three at the most. It is better to leave people with a clear idea of one message than to confuse or overwhelm them with too many.

Second, messages should always be pretested with representatives of target audience. For example, when you want to render an advocacy message to the President, pre test it to one who is supportive of your advocacy objective but can assess the message as if s/he was the President. S/he may offer valuable feedback about how the message is interpreted.

Third, the message should not only persuade through valid data and sound logic, but it should also describe the action the audience is being encouraged to take. The audience needs clearly what it is you want it to do.

Elements of a Message

a. Content – What ideas do you want to convey? What arguments will you use to persuade your audience? The content should specify what you want to achieve, why you want to achieve it, how you propose to achieve it and what action you want the audience to take.

1. Language- What words will you choose to get your message across clearly and effectively? Are there words you should and should not use?
2. Source/Messenger- Who will the audience respond to and find credible?
3. Format/Medium- which way will you deliver your message for maximum impact?

4. What is the most compelling format to reach your target audience? Examples of format medium include: face to face meetings, executive briefing packets, public rallies, fact sheets, policy fora, poster and flyers in public places, petition, public debate, press release, press conference. When choosing a medium, consider your audience, the costs, the risks, opportunity for visibility.
5. Time and Place- when is the best time to deliver the message? Is there a place to deliver your message that will enhance its credibility and give it more political impact?

Tips for Message Development and Delivery 1. Deliver a consistent message to an audience through a variety of channels over an extended period of time. Messages will not be absorbed by audiences and influence their opinions overnight-repetition is vital. Consistency is also crucial so do not change your message until it has been absorbed by the audience. Deliver the same message in different ways, using different words, so it does not become boring. 2. Make sure that your message is being delivered by a source that the audience finds credible. The messenger is often as important as the message itself. 3. Create a message that the audience will understand. Use the "language" of the target group. Avoid technical terms or jargon. If your message presentation uses charts, keep them clear, simple and easy to understand. Use words or phrases that have positive images, rather than terms that may have negative connotations. If you are delivering a message to key, top level decision makers, always make the message short, concise and persuasive. Message Development Worksheet: Sample Target audience	
Action you want the audience to take	
Message content	
format(s)	
Messengers	
Time and place for delivery	

Tips on Message Development Per Audience

1. Targets/Decision-makers- Messages to decision-makers should be short, concise and persuasive. Even if the decision maker is not a politician, it can be beneficial to communicate how your proposal enhances his/her political or social standing. Economic arguments are also good to be included. Policy makers would also like to know what action you want them to take and who else supports your proposal.

2. Other Advocacy Organizations- many advocacy organizations have neither the resources nor staff time to do the research necessary to support their propositions and arguments. If they have goals similar to yours, work with these organizations by offering your data and research findings for their use.

3. Broadcast Media and the Press – The media can be effective conveyors of information to all sectors of society. Therefore the information that the press and broadcast media report and how they treat issues can influence both broad public opinion and the thinking of individual decision makers. Media can include radio, television, newspapers, magazines, trade journals, or community newsletters.

   The press generally likes to know how a situation affects individuals and often reports "human interest stories"- they use someone's experiences as an example. The media is also interested in new, groundbreaking information or how an issue relates to a current happening.

4. General Public- The general public is an increasingly relevant and forceful constituency for policy change. Ultimately, the general public is the end-user of programs; therefore it is useful to direct advocacy messages to citizens. Messages to the general public should be also simple, clear, concise, persuasive and action-oriented. People often want to know how a program will directly affect or benefit them.

References:

1.Policy Project. Networking for Policy Change; An Advocacy Taining Manual
2. Sharma,Ritu. An Introduction to Advocacy
3. KAISAHAN. Policy Advocacy Handbook. July 2002.

Module 3:
Skills in Training Management

1. Objectives:

To discuss the elements that make a successful training

2. Duration:

2 hours

3. Materials Needed:

Idea cards, masking tape, permanent markers, etc.

4. Content Outline:

- Stages in the Conduct of Actual Training
- Things to consider in each stage
- Composition and roles of training team

5. Process:

a. Introduction (5 mins)
b. Activity (25 mins)
    - Participants will be divided into 4 groups with each group being given a set of idea cards
    - Facilitator instructs the groups to write the different stages in the conduct of an actual training activity on the idea cards. For each stage, the group members will also identify

the things to be done and the roles of each training team member in those activities

c. Presentation of Outputs (30 mins)
   - Each group will report their outputs for 5-10 minutes
   - The facilitator will take note of common points and differences and come up with a synthesis

d. Discussion (45 mins)
   - Facilitator discusses inputs on the stages of facilitation and the things that need to be considered in each stage, as well as the roles of the members of the training team

STEPS IN ORGANIZING AND RUNNING TRAINING PROGRAMS

You have just been assigned training coordinator of the "Capacity Building Program on Policy Advocacy for VNFU." Your task is to conduct an echo seminar of what you have learned in the "Training of Trainers".

As the training coordinator, you know that only adequate preparation can ensure the success of your training program.

The UNICEF Guide on "How to Organize and Run Training Workshops" outlines a number of task to be done before such workshops are held.

The following are the steps to undertake in organizing and running training programs.

WELL BEFORE THE TRAINING PROGRAM
It is said that if a training program is to be properly coordinated, 6 months lead time is highly recommended – with absolute minimum of 3 months. Less that this, it is likely that the training program will have design and administrative difficulties.

Deciding To Hold the Training Program
Perhaps the first task to be done is decide on whether to hold the training program or not. Deciding to hold the training program would depend on the following:

- A needs assessment of prospective participating offices: Is the training program really needed by the participating offices? Will they benefit from it?
- An assessment of the training participants: Is the training program really the answer to improving the abilities of the participants?

Or will another format such as on-the-job training be more appropriate?

- Resource persons: who is available to be part of the training team?
- Funding: What will be the approximate training costs and where will the funds be obtained? Is the anticipated benefit worth the projected costs?
- Timing: Is the timing appropriate for the training program? What is the workload of the prospective participants? When and for how long might the participants and training staff be reasonably expected to be away from their offices?
- Training venue: Where can the training program be held? Will the venue affect the design? Is transportation to and from the venue easily available?

Adapting the Existing Training Package

If the training program is one for which a training module has already been repeated, like in this case, the design may need to be adapted to meet certain local requirements. In adapting the design for local needs, the following will have to be considered:

- The needs of the participating offices: There may be a need to incorporate certain information that can help participating offices improve their child survival and development activities.
- An assessment of training participants: Profile of the participants will tell us if certain modifications on the design of the training program will have to be made. For example, if the group is basically young group, dynamic exercises might have to be injected. -- This would mean introducing some modifications in the methodology of the training program.
- Resources: Resources prescribed in the training module may not be available. For example, audio-visual tools to be used such as overhead projectors are not available in the area. A substitute audio-visual tool may be used such as flipcharts. Likewise, more appropriate locally made films and audio-visual materials may be substituted.
- Training venue: In some cases, the training venue chosen may not be suitable for the type of methodology used in the training package, thus modifications will have to be made.

Adapting the design should result in the following:

- finalization of the training objectives
- modification of the training schedule
- adjustment in module/session objective and content
- revision of materials
- selection of an appropriate training venue
- identification of the training team

Choosing the Training Team

Training staff will be composed of trainers/facilitators, and support staff. Resource persons may also be invited to be part of training team.

As the training coordinator, it is your responsibility to select the training team. Training staff and resource persons can come from your respective offices or from inter-agency units involved in child survival and development activities.

Since transportation costs is rather expensive, when choosing members of your training team, try as much as possible to the training site. For example, if your training program is in Sulu or Tawi-tawi, choose a training staff from those areas. Likewise, if there are available resource persons in the area, tap them instead of inviting Manila-based resource persons.

When choosing trainers/facilitators and resource persons, the key word under all circumstances is QUALIFIED. Qualifications to consider are:

- ability as a dynamic , interesting trainer
- expertise in the content area
- academic background
- willingness to work within the framework
- outlined in the training design

Usually, 3 support staff members, a documentation officer, a clerk-typist and an administrative/finance assistants

e. Application (10 mins)
Facilitator evokes from the participants the implications of the roles and tasks in the preparation of the training activity

f. Synthesis of Session
Key Learning Points:

- The success of the training depends mostly on how well it is managed.
- There are different things to consider in the preparations and actual conduct of a training activity
- The training team members should complement each other in accomplishing the various roles in the training activity

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About Asiadhrra

AsiaDHRRA traces its earliest roots to the 1974 Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia Workshop (DHRRAW) held in Thailand. It is a regional partnership of eleven (11) social development networks and organizations in eleven (11) Asian nations that envisions Asian rural communities that are just, free, prosperous, living in peace and working in solidarity towards self-reliance. To achieve this, the network's mission is to be an effective

- Promoter and catalyst of partnership relations, creating opportunities for genuine people-to-people dialogue and exchange;
- Facilitator of human resource development processes in the rural areas; and
- Mobilizer of expertise & opportunities for the strengthening of solidarity and kinship among Asian rural communities.

AsiaDHRRA works through DHRRA members, with farmers' organisations, and other CSO partners in 11 countries specifically in Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. It plays an important role in the Asian region as catalyst and co-convener of CSO platforms and mechanisms for more effective engagement and cooperation with regional organisations such as ASEAN, FAO, ADB and relevant multi-lateral and bilateral agencies. AsiaDHRRA sees the importance of connecting national and regional grassroots voices with global policy making processes and vice versa recognizing that development issues are interconnected and that reform is most compelled if with a strong demand from those that are directly affected by public policies and programming.

About VNFU

Established in October 14, 1930, the Viet Nam Farmers' Union (VNFU) is an organization committed to gather, encourage, and educate its members to bring into full play their initiatives, to actively learn how to improve their capacity in different facets; represent, take care of and defend the legitimate rights and interests of their members; organize activities to provide services, advice, and support for members to improve production, business and living conditions.

VNFU carries out the following major activities:

- Participate in formulation, amendment, dissemination of policies, laws, and legal support for farmer members.
- Organize the transfer of scientific and technological progresses to farmer members.
- Create capital for farmer members, especially the poor ones to develop production and business...
- Support to develop the collective economic forms among farmers such us farmers' mutual interest groups, cooperatives,...
- Provide vocational training and job assistance for farmer members.
- Provide training for staff at all levels.
- Organize activities to introduce and promote products for farmers to get access to markets.
- Organize input and output services to support members.
- Participate in building rural infrastructure.
- Organize and implement rural environment protection activities.
- Organize social, sport, and cultural, agricultural tourism activities to prevent and control social evils as well as restore and develop traditional culture and occupation.

At present, VNFU has over 10 million members working in various sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fishery, salt-making, handicraft and small industry, services. VNFU has nearly 15.000 full time staffs and over 200.000 part-time staff working at all levels of VNFU.