



Vietnam Women's Union Progress Report April to December 2004

Pilot Project - Methodology for Participatory Assessment



Background:

Kitchen environment, cooking fuel, household health is imperative in Vietnamese rural areas. Nearly 80% of Vietnamese population is rural people and 70% of whom have daily cooking needs that depend on biomass energy. Problems may arise in the coming years because alternative energy sources are either too expensive for poor people or difficult to popularize in rural areas. Meanwhile, most rural people are using traditional primitive cookstoves such as metal or stone tripod and tetrapod cookstoves. As recorded in the recently conducted surveys in Thai Nguyen, Bac Kan, and Nghe An provinces, 87,2-98,3% of the households are using traditional stoves with low efficiency (8-15%) and high emissions of pollutants



that negatively affect the health condition of women and children. The surveys also recorded that 70-80% of the fuels are products of women's and children's labor. This takes their time and worn-out their health.

In order to improve the above-mentioned situation, it is very important to disseminate improved cookstoves (ICS) and develop sustainability oriented ICS program. This will contribute to the effective use of energy and improvement of living and health conditions of rural housewives can be improved.

In middle 1990s, Research Center for Architectural Indoor Climatology and Environment (RCAICE)-Hanoi University of Architecture and Vietnam Women's Union, funded by ARECOP began to introduce and disseminate improved cookstoves in 16 northern-provinces. Although these kinds of activities have been small in scale, there has been appreciation of the results. ICS activities have been expanding with the participation and funding of provincial Women's Union and Department of Science and Technology. A national network linking agencies and organizations researching and popularizing improved cookstoves in Vietnam has also been established.

Vietnam Women Union (VWU) have been an avant-garde in disseminating improved cookstoves. During the last ten years VWU have cooperated with

RCAICE and IoE in organizing training courses on " Introduction and Dissemination of ICS", " MPA in improved cookstoves ", " ICS masons " and introducing ICS program to Hatay, Hatinh, Yenbai, Caobang, and Haiphong provinces, where fuel problem, forest protection, environmental protection and health and working condition of women and children have been improved by the programs. VWU has also been integrating ICS into the "National Goals of Rural Water and Sanitation Program", in several communes. Thanks to the efforts of those who have been devoting efforts to ICS, hundred thousands of ICS were build and accepted by rural people. However, comparing with the need of millions of families willing to have improved cookstoves, the number is still too small. This deserve to receive the help from government agencies, any organizations and individuals who are concerned with either environmental protection or humanitarian activities.

Attending Methodology for Participatory Assessment (MPA) TOT on ICS Programme in Chiang Mai, The VWU and Population Environment and Development (PED) with assistance from ARECOP - (1) organized MPA Training of Trainer on ICS for VWU staff from provinces, PDE, RCAICE project sites, (2) introduce new ICS technology/ types, (3) carried out MPA in 6 communes and IC dissemination.

Objectives:

- To introduce MPA to core staff members of VWU, PED, RCAICE
- To equip participants with methodology, skills and technology to help community improve their cooking practice and improve their cookstoves so as to enlighten the burden of women and girl
- To disseminate Improved Cookstoves using MPA, in 6 rural communes in 6 provinces.

A. Adaptation of MPA manual to Vietnamese context and field test:

The translation, adaptation and field test of manual was carried out from April to June 2004.

B. MPA training course on improved cookstove program

I. Introduction

In order to develop Improved Cookstove Program (ICSP) in Vietnam through mobilization of people's participation, Vietnam Women's Union cooperated with RCAICE and PED organized a TOT on MPA on ICSP in Hanoi from 1- 9 July 2004

II. Training objectives:

- To introduce to participants MPA on ICSP, what is sustainability in MPA, why are gender and poverty included in MPA;
- To equip participants with skills on using MPA tools and exercises in the training and community.

Training venue and date: 3rd floor Vietnam Women's Union, *Hanoi July 1-9, 2004*

The trainers: 3 Vietnamese, who attended TOT in Chiang Mai, Thailand with assistance and supervision of Christina Arstanti (ARECOP) and Mr. Amin Robiarto (an MPA Consultant from Indonesia).

Participants: 21 participants from VWU, RCAICE, PED, Institute of Forest and 4 provincial WU, 2 district WU and 2 Communal WU.

III. Training method: Games, exercises, simulation of MPA tools, field applications of MPA tools .

IV. Proceeding for each day



Day 1 (1/7):

The training started with opening and introduction of the training by a Vietnam Women's Union Representative. In this part, participants familiarized with training goal, methods and objectives

2nd activity: The President of Vietnam ICSP Network (Arch. Le Van Thong) introduced network activities, its members and the achievement of the program through the country. He

expected the training would bring benefits for the sustainability of ICSP Vietnam.

Day 1 – Class Sessions

- Orientation to Training Framework
- Introduction of participants
- MPA theory
- MPA project cycle
- Sustainability in ICSP
- Participatory Approach.
- Equity - Gender and Poverty sensitive in ICSP



Day 2 – Class Sessions

Participants were introduced to MPA sessions and conducted simulation of the tools, according to project cycles. For the planning phase, the following sessions were introduced and simulated:

- Community data inventory
- Wealth Classification
- Social mapping
- Sampling for FGD
- Planning for transect walk
- Pocket voting

Day 3 – Class Sessions

Continued introduction and simulation of MPA sessions for project planning phase:

- Stove Web
- Three Pile Sorting
- Seasonal Calendar

- Stove option
- Community Review Assembly

Day 4 – Class Sessions

Introduction and simulation of MPA sessions for project monitoring phase:

- What is Committee Management?
- Management & decision making
- Review of service management
- Gender division of task and time

Day 5 – Class Sessions

Introduction and simulation of MPA sessions for project monitoring phase:

- Division of labour and contributions
- Voice and choice in decision-making
- Training Assessment
- Benefits, demands, value & cost

Day 6 – Field Practice



For the field practice, participants were divided into 2 groups to implement MPA in 2 villages (Ky Son and Tam Ky of Xuan Son commune, Son Tay district, Ha Tay province).

Participants arrived in the commune at 9 a. m. The program of the day was demonstration of ICS building technique. Facilitators from Ninh Binh ICSP introduced 2 types of ICS that are popularly used in the locality to all participants (design, cost, benefits and how to use). In the afternoon, they trained masons to build 2 ICS in 2 households as demonstration to villagers and MPA training participants. Participants record the process of building ICS.

Day 7 and day 8: MPA were carry out in 2 villages - Ky Son and Tam Son by training participants.



The following MPA sessions were applied in the field

- Community data inventory
- Wealth Classification
- Social mapping
- Transect walk
- Pocket voting
- Stove Web
- Three Pile Sorting
- Seasonal Calendar
- Stove option

In addition participants carried out sampling of village households for Focus Group Discussions and planning for transect walk.

Community Assembly was hold in Xuan Son commune with the participation of 80 participants from 2 villages, leaders and representatives of all concerning organization of the commune.

Day 9 - 10: Organizing of MPA data is a difficult part of the training and could not apply to local staff. The facilitators of the training decided a group of young, central - resident participants (from VWU - Huyen and Quoc Anh, RCAICE - Think, PED - Tung) worked on organizing and interpreting data with assistance from Amin.



This part gives us very good result, our staff learns how to organize and use data for ICSP and especially for further MPA in other villages.

C. Carry out MPA in 6 villagers

MPA were implemented by VWU staff in 6 villages in 6 provinces - Nam Dinh, Ninh Binh, Bac Giang , Bac Kan and Ha Tay (2 villages - Ky son and Tam Son). 240 villagers attended the 2 day MPA.. 6 community assemblies were organized and 6 plans of action were developed by communities.



MPA Result in 6 villages:

Unfortunately, we have trouble with the software provided by ARECOP.

D. ICS dissemination



After the assessment using MPA, Vietnam Women's Union provided support to 6 villages to organize training for motivators, masons, and IEC campaigns in 6 provinces to disseminate ICS and mobilize resources.

The results of ICS dissemination are:

- Training for motivators: 120 motivators trained
- Training for masons: 30 masons trained
- Broadcast a spot in local provincial television channels (Bac Kan, Bac Giang)

- Distributed Leaflets on ICS benefits, design, cost and how to use to 4 000 households
- Support of ICS demonstration and construction: 300 ICS built

E. Monitoring

From November 28 - 29, 2004, Vietnam Women's Union organized another event to coordinate monitoring implementation using MPA tools. This event was attended by 24 participants. During the occasion, the following MPA monitoring tools were practiced:

- Management & decision making
- Review of service management
- Gender division of task and time
- Division of labor and contributions
- Voice and choice in decision making
- Training Assessment.

Participants were divided into 4 groups and proceeded to conduct MPA and to observe ICS implementation in 4 villages.

Up to date, the project has built 120 ICS for demonstration in the 6 communes. 280 ICS in these villages have been built by people's contribution.