
No. ____/2001/HTCT

RECORD OF THE WORKSHOP

LEARNING ABOUT ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT: THE SIAS, THE MDFSRDI AND RESEARCH NETWORKING IN VIETNAM

Place: FSR&D Institute's hall

Date: 8-9/2/2001

Number of participants: 23

Objectives:

1. To present and share with SIAS staff the rationale, objectives and research questions of the Evaluation of organizational capacity development project
2. To learn about the ideas, interests and efforts that the staff of the SIAS has related to organizational capacity development
3. To learn about the contribution of the Farming Systems and Natural Resources Management Networks to the organizational capacity development efforts of SIAS and the MDFSRDI.

Dynamics: The workshop brought together staff from the MDFSRDI and from the SIAS in Ho Chi Minh City, both members of the two network projects supported by IDRC. The workshop dynamics consisted of both plenary sessions and a variety of small working groups sessions. Six exercises (designed prior to the workshop) were used as guiding questions (the exercises were "distilled" from the ECD ISNAR project objectives and from the evaluation questions of the MDFSDRI-CBNRM case study). Results of each exercise were presented, reviewed and discussed in plenary. At the end of day one, the facilitators presented the Lusthaus et al. model of organizational performance assessment and "their" theory of action concerning the OCD efforts of the MDFSRDI. Participants expressed that both models were very useful for understanding organizational capacity development. The workshop was closed with an evaluation and the planning of next steps, in particular an effort to also learn the points of view of the other two stakeholder groups involved in the R&D work of the MDFSRDI and SIAS, the farmers and the government staff at the local level.

Contour of the workshop:

Date: 8 February

8:00-8:15: Welcome and introduction of participants (Le Thanh Duong)

8:15-8:30: Introduction to the workshop goals and dynamics (Le Thanh Duong)

8:30-9:30:

Exercise 1 (plenary, with the use of cards): Brainstorming about the meaning of capacity development. What does capacity development mean for you? What are the key words that come to mind?

Answer:

Individual development	Organizational development
Training Improvement of skills Specialisation Training people with a new capacity Knowledge improvement Understanding of) Research methodology Attitudes Being) Dynamic Evaluation (skills) Attention skills Practice	Management (at large) Management of human power (resources) Management of money Planning Organisation Implementation of activities Infrastructure Packages (networking) Attracting funds

Observations: each participant wrote one or more card(s) which were posted on a board and then grouped together as far as possible, using the two broad categories of individual and organizational capacity development. A broad definition of organizational development resulted.

9:30-9:50: Coffee break

9:50-11:30:

Exercise 2a (in 2 small groups: staff working mostly in the office, staff working mostly in the field): SIAS, its vision and mission. What are the most important capacities that the SIAS should have or develop to be able to do good work (to accomplish its mission)? What should the various SIAS staff do (directors, administration, and researchers), to make sure that it is able to achieve its mission ?

GROUPS 1 & 2: SIAS

WHAT SIAS STAFF SHOULD DO?

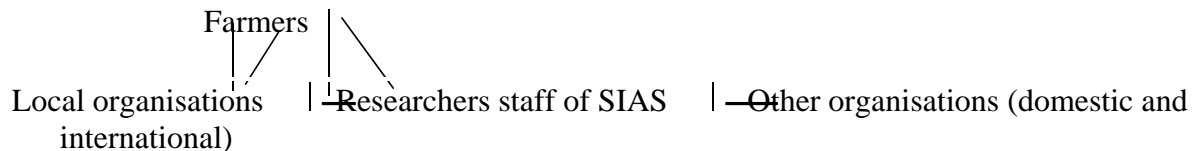
I. DIRECTORATE:

- Manage well the on-going R-D projects and enhance the transfer of technologies
- Design and plan the short -term and long run R-D and TOT
- Develop and improve the co-operation with local/international R-D institution local/central government authorities, enterprises and especially farmers
- Improve organisational structure, develop human resources
- Manage well and improve R-D facilities
- Manage well the budget and other supports
- Improve information flows
- Improve living standard of staff
- Define clearly objectives of research projects
- Have clearly- assigned duties and perform well their tasks
- Learn and study other subjects rather than their own interests, i.e., communication skills, foreign language, economics ...
- Have a good relation/ co-operation with other researchers/farmers

The above capacities were then further grouped, analysed and elaborated in 7 key ones:

MOST IMPORTANT CAPACITIES SIAS SHOULD HAVE & DEVELOP?

4. Relationships



5. Organisation - management - monitoring - evaluation

- Divide into specific groups of researchers
- Assign concrete tasks / responsibility and benefits
- Exchange regularly information and new findings
- Control and evaluate regularly the whole process

3. Finance

- Obtain funds from many sources (domestic and international sources)
- Manage and spend reasonably and clearly
- Support educational training

4. Infrastructure and equipment

- Equip well laboratory, experimental sites, means...

Example: SIAS research capacities improvement, the purchase of laboratory equipment:
Project support by MOSTE

Duration: 95-2000

Upgrade 2 laboratories: soil -fertilizers and animal nutrition feedstuff.

- + Mard approved these 2 labs as national labs.
- + New equipment accelerates basic research
- + Improve the physical / chemical properties analysis
- + Help agricultural enterprises + farmers

5. Human resources management

- Good skills, updated and improved knowledge, good ability in communication and setting up the relationship
- Have sensibility with real situation and demand
- Should have enough experienced researchers from various departments
- Planning project, achieve the goals
- Co-operation with: local authority, foreign organisations

6. Setting objectives

- Appropriate and suitable activities with plan and strategy of local government

7. Training and Extension

Example:

1. Participate in the project “Community-Based Natural Resource Management” (Co-operation with MDFSRDI)
2. Participate in the project “ Support activities for Dairy production development in South Vietnam,” in order to:
 - + strengthen capacities for researchers (from training courses)
 - + strengthen physical equipment (a dairy-training center was built)

II. ADMINISTRATION

- Assist the directorate to perform well the above -mentioned duties
- Assist research department/center to solve research problems
- Bridge the ideas and information between researchers
- Good relationships between many organisations and the Institute
- Support research groups to finish the mission successfully
- Good communication, foreign languages

Exercise 2b (in one small group): How does the MDFSRDI achieve its mission? What are the results of its activities in the short run, in the long run? Do the various donor-funded projects contribute to the achievement of its mission? If they do, how exactly? If possible illustrate the answers to these questions graphically.

1. How does the MDFSRDI achieve its mission?

search	aining	tension
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Human resource Development : before 1988: 1 Dr., 1 Master, 10 Bs, 1989-2000: 2 Drs., 12 Ms, 27 Bs Demand driven ice -> FS individual -> community Linkages: regional, national international Fund raising Research activities facilities, equipment	Human resource development domestic/oversea training short/long terms access to specialists Teaching methodology improvement: lecturing -> learning together problem- based learning training aids development curriculum development	Demand driven Linkages Appropriate methodology TOT Mass-media interaction Human capacity improvement trained learning by doing
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Observations: five key capacities were identified at the organizational level that form the basis for the three core activities of the Institute: fund raising, human resources development, methodology development (R&T&E), being responsive to demands, building linkages/networking

Examples:

1. Staff:

- In house training by internal experts or expatriate experts (Mr. Bob Wieber, Canadian Broadcasting Corp.)
- Participation in in-country training (IPGRI training in Hanoi, CBNRM Network training in Cantho and Dalat)
- Working by the side of expatriate colleagues (with Belgian colleague Nico Vronmant, Japanese professor H. Moumao)

2. Organisation:

- Seeking support from development agencies (IDRC, SAREC, MHO) or research institutions (IRRI, IPGRI, KUL ...)
- Collaborating with NGOs (SEARICE, Oxfam America, Oxfam UK, MCC, Bfdw)
- Soliciting assistance from embassies (British and Danish ambassadors)

2. Results of activities (performance)

mission	short run	long run
RESEARCH Rice Variety improvement Cultural practice	quality seed production 2 national varieties 5 local varieties LCC for nitrogen management N,P,K application Seeding rate	Development of suitable rice varieties for different agro ecosystems and demands Appropriate technologies for different agro

Networking	planting density tolerant to water levels flood - prone rice ecosystems exporting rice development	ecosystems, farming systems and seasons
2. FSR&D		sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development (SARD)
Household socio-economics	Rice-fish (fresh + brackish water)	
Environmental economics	Rice-shrimp (fresh + brackish water)	
Networking	VAC, VACR, VACRB	
Resource Management	survey in various PRA- Eco zones National FS network Waremnet	
3. Biodiversity conservation and Development	Wetland ecology	
Rice germplasm	1 catalogue	
Root tuber	1552 local cultivars	Conservation, Evaluation,
Home garden	>3000 improve varieties+ 549	Utilization of rice and
In situ- conservation and development	upland rice 36 sweet potatoes 47 jam 0 taro 20 cassava	root crops- Documentation and improvement Community based PGR, conservation and development
TRAINING		
1. Rice		
2. Farming System/Extension		
3. Biometrics		
4. Economic Management	Undergraduate and graduate students	human resource
5. Project development and Management	extensionists and farmers local official and farmers	development at different levels
6. Training skills		
7. Seed selection		
8. PPB/PVS		
9. PRA		
EXTENSION		
1. Variety releases		
2. Cultural practices		
3. Rural development	Rice	

4. Sustainable farming system	LCC Women credit scheme Community development (UNDP, SIDA, ECCI, IDRC, IPGRI, CBDC....) Rice – fish, Rice-Shrimp VACRB systems	sustainable Agricultural Development in Mekong Delta
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9/2/2001: Morning

Exercise 4 (in 4 small groups, SIAS and MDFSRDI staff mixed): The SIAS, MDFSRDI and the Farming Systems and NAREM research networks. What have the FRS and NAREM Networks contributed to the capacity development efforts of the SIAS and the MDFSRDI ? How has this been done? Give at least 2 concrete examples

GROUP I: SIAS and FSRDI (mixed)

1. The FSR Network

MDFSI	SIAS
hardware	hardware

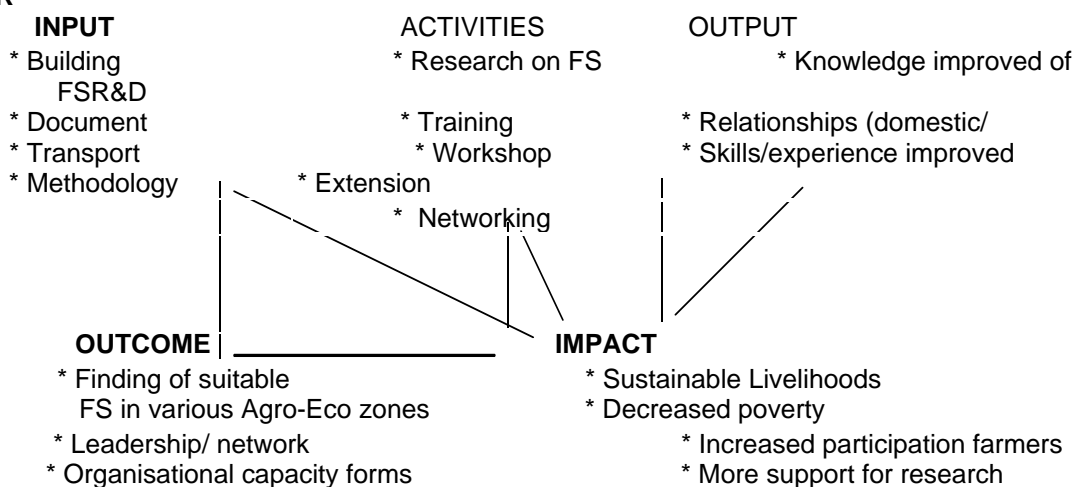
uilding (set)	motorbike (1)
motorbike	documentation
documentation	computer
computer	
ftware	ftware
orkshop (4-5)/exchange experts	orkshop/ exchange experts
research methodology	research methodology
n-job training (2 courses)	n-job training (2 courses)

NAREMNET

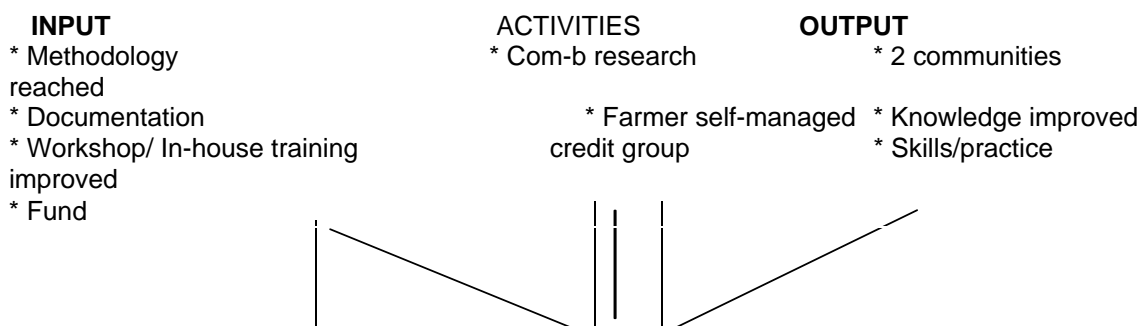
FSI & SIAS
CB- Research methodology (software)
Documentation (hardware)
Workshop/ in-house training (software)
Funds (hardware)

The group then designed its own theories of action for both networks:

FSR



2. NAREMNET



OUTCOME	IMPACT
* Better natural resource use (water, forest)	* Increased equity
* Better relationships with farmers	* Increased participation
* Farmer & local authority & Researcher under standing/relationship	* Less conflict
	* Decreased poverty

GROUP II: SIAS and FSRDI (mixed)

		MDFSRDI		SIAS
FSR	Training on FSR/E Methodology	Trainers: 6staffs Trainers: 8 staffs	Friendship(+)	Trainer: 4 staffs
	Workshop document	Knowledge ☺ Experience ☺ Management ☺	Close collaboration (+)	Knowledge ☺ Experience ☺ Project implemented
	Facilities Equipment	Building Vehicle&moto Computers Research	Net working (+)	
	Funds			
NAREM	Workshop (rotating)	Methodology enhancement Improvement of: + experience + relationship between FS &natural resources	Friendship (++) Collaboration (++)	+ Methodology enhancement + Improvement of experience & understanding
	Monitoring/evaluation	Management capacity ☺	Networking (++)	Management capacity ☺
	Funds	Research/Ext		Research/Ext

Group III: SIAS and FSRDI (mixed)

FSR Network's contribution

Items	Inputs ⇒	Activities ⇒	Outcomes ⇒	Impacts
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Human Resource	MDFSI: 10 SIAS: 7 Local techn: 12 Farmers: 25	Training : Method Technique Workshops Participatory res.	Knowledge Skills Linkages	Farm income increased Increased good farmers Good experts FSR
Finance	MDFSRI SIAS: \$30.000 140.000 USD	Res. activities Facilities/ equipment Management	Res. results Accounting skills	Sust. Farm. Systems Policymakers applying FSR approach
Technical	Experts Documents	Training Exchanging method	Knowledge Res. capacity Management capacity	Strengthening res. capacity Networking
Political support	Participation of local Govern. Money/equip	Res. activities Motivation	Understandin g in FS Good decisionmakin g	Good influence to Naremnet

NAREMNET's contribution

Items	Inputs	Activities	Outcomes	Impacts
Human Resource	MDFSI : 16 SIAS : 10 Local Tech : 12 Farmer : 40	Training Method Workshops	IDEM Farmers trained	Experts Increased income
Finance	MDFS : SIAS : 3330 M (VND)	Res. activities Management	IDEM	Equity increase
Technical	Experts Documents	Monitoring	Knowledge Management	Awareness (CBNRM)
Political supports	Personnel Money Motivation	Partic. management	Understanding in NAREMNET Good decisionmaking	

GROUP IV (mixed): EXPECTATIONS TO JOIN THE NETWORK

Given that the 4th group was composed of staff that had very little or no knowledge about the 2 networks, they were asked to answer the question: What would you expect from the networks if you were to join them?

- Human resources improvement
- + Knowledge improvement: subject matter (non degree & degree training) and management (non degree & degree)
- + Attitudes
- + Strengthen practical experiences
- + Strengthen R&D skills and experiences

- Finance: provide funds to establish demonstration plots
- Establish linkages to other organisations
- Improve communication

V: Answers given by Dr. Vo Tong Xuan (director)

Dr. Vo Tong Xuan could not attend the 2nd day. However, he sent his answers to the exercises by e-mail. Concerning this exercise, he replied:

Contributions from FRS and NAREMNET:

1. Experiences in research and extension methods enriching our staff competence
2. Standardization of scientific research methodology at the nation-wide level
3. Getting to know more of our country, thanks to rotating annual workshop sites

How has this been done?

1. Through annual national workshops (in Cantho, HCMC, Thai Nguyen, Hue, Buon Methuoc)
2. Through international IDRC workshops (CBNRM) (in Hue in 1997, and in Guiyang in 2000)

Exercise 5a (one group of SIAS staff): Analysing the strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities of the capacity development efforts by the SIAS.
 What are the strengths and gaps in the capacity development efforts of SIAS ?
 What are the factors that influence the efforts of SIAS in capacity development, both positively and negatively?

STRENGTHS

- Motivation of staff.
- Multidisciplinary research team.
- Advantage of talented leaders.
- Dynamic.
- Flexibility.

WEAKNESSES

- Many young researches lack research experience.
- Bureaucracy.
- Short stage (periods) of basic research.
- Being updated about new information is a slow process.

OPPORTUNITIES OR CHALLENGES

- How to keep pace with other institutes in the region.
- How to increase funding sources.
- How to capture a larger study area.
- Strengthen international collaboration.
- Ideal working place.
- Improve professional knowledge.

THREATS OR RISKS

- Selfish leaders.
- Decreased human resources (staff leaving).
- Competent young researchers will leave SIAS (due to low salaries).

Exercise 5b (one group of MDFSRDI staff): Analysing the challenges and constraints of the capacity development efforts by the MDFSDRI

What are the factors that influence MDFSRDI's efforts in capacity development, both negatively and positively?

STRENGTHS

- * Man-power
 - Increased quantity of staff
 - Increased quality of staff:
 - Subject matter
 - Management
- * Good approach to research & extension
- * Good collaboration with international for funds, with local for implementation.
- * Infrastructure improved
- * "Honor" (staff proud of work and achievements)

WEAKNESSES

- * Man-power
 - Limitation of training programs <domestic>
 - Understandardized
 - Better knowledge and skills, technologies to cope with challenges
 - Weak human resources development plan

- Less opportunities for training, particularly degree training
- Less budget for providing training to extension agents and farmers' leaders.
- o Limited national financial resources

Research

- Policies on fundusing
- Lack of long-term planning
- Lack of fund for technology transfer

Institution

- Recruitment policy
- Viet Nam bureaucratic system
- Unfavourable agricultural policies
- Financial use
- Non-synchronized operations
- Limited collaboration among divisions and staffs

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Teaching

- Less lecturers having teaching skills
- Under standardized/updated curriculum

Facility

- Lack of laboratory/equipment

OPPORTUNITIES OR CHALLENGES

External

- Globalisation trend compelling Viet NAM agriculture to be more competitive
- Farmers must be in coop
- Large clientele
- Large-scale production
- Co-operatives

Internal

- Human resources improved
- Development of infrastructure
- More access to information
- More collaboration

- More projects approved

THREATS OR RISKS

External

- Globalisation of trade
- Development strategy
- Unfavourable agriculture policies
- Bureaucratic system:
centralization of funds control & use
- Short term benefit tendency (unsustainable)

Internal

- Better knowledge & skills
- Gap in human resources development
- Leadership (Institute)
- Limited financial resources
- Individual & organisational capacity