



Improving awareness on Gender and Reproductive Health for rural communities in Vietnam

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Definitions and concepts of NGO

Non-governmental organisations constitute associations, socio-cultural funds, charity groups, non-profit organisations or other legally accepted types that do not belong to governmental area and that operate not for profit.

(Definiation of the World Bank)



Non-governmental organisation is voluntary-based organisation set up legally by individual or group of people in Vietnam who share the same profession, interest, charity, humanity, etc and contribute their knowledge, energy to act frequently for a common purpose, not for individual profit, under Vietnamese legal framework.

(Nguyen Ngoc Lam, 2003)



Main types of NGO/civil society organisations:

- ◆ Local NGO (local to make distinction from international NGOs).
- ◆ Charity organisations.
- ◆ Other organisations.
- ◆ Mass organisations that belong to the Fatherland Front.

(Nguyen Kim Ha, 2001)



Advantages of LNGOs:

- ◆ Able to promote community's utmost strength;
- ◆ Capable to access quickly small financial sources.;
- ◆ Effective in making use of professional potential.
- ◆ Open to build capacity for young staff.



Challenges that also become advantage of NGOs:

- ◆ Reputation should be kept all the time in every activity to survive and develop;
- ◆ Faithfulness and effectiveness should be the first priority in every work;
- ◆ Corruption should never happen, otherwise it will be an end of a LNNGO.



Some introduction on CGFED as a LNNGO, established in May 1993

Research activities:

- ◆ **Fundamental research on and application of issues relating to Gender, Family and Environment (interaction of natural and social environment)**
- ◆ **Methodology: inter-disciplinary among social scientific area; gender perspective; ;comprehensive gender analysis**
- ◆ **Expected output: Research results will be realiable foundation for policy making on Gender and Development, Gender equity and equality.**



* Training activities:

- ◆ Target group: communities, especially in rural areas.
- ◆ Training of trainers: researchers, lecturers, Women's Union staff; key persons at grass-root levels, local motivators, etc.
- ◆ Training matters: Knowledge on gender issues in relation with other various issues, for instance Gender and Environment, Gender and Family, Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, etc.



Improving awareness on Gender and Reproductive Health for rural communities in Vietnam:

Community Development Approaches:

- ◆ **Bottom up approach**
- ◆ **Participatory approach**
- ◆ **Multi-disciplinary and multi-purpose approach**



Following action principles of development projects

- ◆ **Response to the need and expectation of the community;**
- ◆ **Follow the procedure of community development (awareness raising, capacity building);**
- ◆ **Facilitate community in management at lowest levels;**
- ◆ **Emphasize gender issues and ensure gender equity and equality;**
- ◆ **Pay attention to the poor population and ethnic minorities;**
- ◆ **Support only not take over community tasks;**
- ◆ **Ensure effectiveness and sustainability, etc.**



Training activities to contribute to community development:

Case of project on

“Improving knowledge on Gender and Reproductive Health for Families in Rural Vietnam” implemented in Bac Giang, Nam Dinh, Phu Yen and Ho Chi Minh City (2003-2006).



Target groups of training:

- ◆ **Key persons in the community (local authority, mass organisations, health centre, population motivators, teachers, mass media, etc.)**
- ◆ **Parents who have children at adolescence.**
- ◆ **Adolescents.**



Training Objectives:

- ◆ Improving quality of life in sexual and reproductive health.
- ◆ Enhancing awareness on sexual and reproductive rights.
- ◆ Increasing gender equity and equality.
- ◆ Changing attitudes toward central issues in sexual and reproductive health among women, men and youths.
- ◆ Contributing to strengthen family stability in confronting impacts of development process.



Methods and types of training:

- ◆ *Participatory methods.*
- ◆ *Training courses to be designed according to certain target groups.*



Content and materials for training:

- ◆ Developed with direction of research results and use of training references both Vietnamese and International.
- ◆ Prepared by a group of specialists on Gender and RH.
- ◆ Designed to be appropriate to each target group.



Results:

- ◆ 60 local key persons have been trained to be human resource for project sites (to carry out training activities, develop and manage family clubs, disseminate information on Gender and Reproductive Health, etc.)
- ◆ 100 local staff have been trained on Gender and RH, as well as project management and M&E skills.
- ◆ 160 adolescents at 8th and 9th grades have been equipped with knowledge on adolescent reproductive health.
- ◆ 800 parents of adolescents have been trained on Gender and Reproductive Health.
- ◆ Parents and adolescents have been attending family clubs sharing knowledge and skills relating to gender and reproductive health.
- ◆ New programmes on radio at district station has been developed.
- ◆ Mass media (TV, newspapers) has been introduced about project activities and supports the training with information on the targeted issues.



Expenses for training:

- ◆ **Each training course organised in Hanoi costs 70 to 80 millions VND (5-day course with 20 participants)**
- ◆ **Training at project sites:**
 - **Training course facilitated by CGFED experts (for local key person and adolescents) costs 25-30 millions VND per course**
 - **Training course facilitated by local trainer (for parents) costs 5-6 millions VND per course.**



Lessons learned from training activities:

- ◆ Training activities response right to the need of local people.
- ◆ Build up sustainability of the project.
- ◆ It appears effective to improve awareness on Gender and RH through direct communication in correlation with indirect communication for communities, especially poor and difficult ones.
- ◆ Base-line research information is very essential for success of training activities.
- ◆ Gender-sensitiveness approach in training makes its comprehensive view on RH and brings about behaviour change of participants.
- ◆ Training activities can never be isolated from other activities of the project. There should be a inter-supportive relation. Intervention activities will improve the effect of training activities.



Conclusion:

- ◆ **Gender approach and gender sensitiveness is very important in project as a whole and in each component of it.**
- ◆ **Participation of the community is very essential for success of the project.**
- ◆ **Depending on certain situation of the community to apply flexibly appropriate approaches and action principles in development projects.**



Recommendations:

- ◆ **Communication and information on LNGO should be expanded and disseminated on mass media.**
- ◆ **Government should provide financial support (through programmes, projects) for LNGOs to contribute effectively to community development.**
- ◆ **It is expected that Government can soon puts NGO Law in place, so organisations of civil society can operate within an enabling legal framework.**