

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE FROM UNICEF'S VIETNAM WATER SUPPLY, ENVIRONMENT & SANITATION PROGRAMME

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Abbreviations

AWP	Annual work Plan
BCC	Behavioral Change Communication
CERWASS	Center for Rural Water supply and Sanitation at central level
C-FU	Commune Farmers' Union
C-HC	Commune Health Center
C-WU	Commune Women's Union
C-YU	Commune Youth Union
D-CPM	District Centre of Preventive Medicine
D-DARD	District Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
D-DOET	District Department of Education and Training
D-FU	District Farmers' Union
D-WU	District Women's Union
FU	Farmers' Union at central level
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOH	Ministry of Health
MTR	Mid Term Review
NTA	Training Need Assessment
NTP I	National Target Program phase I
NTP II	National Target program phase II
O & M	Operation and Maintenance
P-CERWASS	Provincial Center for Rural Water supply and Sanitation
P-CPM	Provincial Centre of Preventive Medicine
P-DOET	Provincial Department of Education and Training
PEC	Primary Environmental Care
P-FU	Provincial Farmers' Union
P-WU	Provincial Women's Union
Q & A	Question and Answer
SEDP	Socio-economic Development Program
SSHE	School Sanitation and Hygiene Education
TOT	Training of Trainers
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Funds
VAPM	The Vietnam Administration of Preventive Medicine
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WES	Water, Environment and Sanitation
WU	Women's Union at central level

Abstract

Capacity development for local governments is one of the decisive factors for the success of decentralization and sustainability in any development programs. This is also true to Water, Environment and Sanitation (WES) Cooperation Program between the Government of Vietnam and UNICEF. In Vietnam, the Vietnamese Central Government gradually facilitates decentralization through promoting application of Decree No.71/1998/ND-CP dated 8th Sep. 1998, Decree No.07/1999/ND-CP dated 13th Feb. 1999 and Decree No.79/2003/ND-CP dated 7th Jul. 2003. These are the three grass-roots Democracy Decrees, shifting more responsibilities to

specialized ministries, state-owned business companies and local governments. In WES sector, the Democracy Decrees can be applied in all central and local counterparts. Central counterparts include Ministries and local counterparts include their vertical offices and more at provincial, district and commune levels.

At central level, they are the Vietnam Administration of Preventive Medicine (VAPM), belonging to Ministry of Health- (MOH), Center for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (CERWASS) and Department of Water Resources, belonging to Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development (MARD), Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), Women's Union (WU), Farmer's Union (FU). At provincial level, they are Center for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (P-CERWASS), belonging to Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Center of Preventive Medicine (P-CPM), belonging to Department of Health, Department of Education and Training (P-DOET), Women's Union (P-WU), Farmers' Union (P-FU). At district level, they are Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (D-DARD), Center of Preventive Medicine (D-CPM), Department of Education and Training (D-DOET), Women's Union (D-WU), Farmers' Union (D-FU). At commune level, they are People's Committee (C-PC), Health Center (C-HC), Women Union (C-WU), Farmer Union (C-FU), Youth Union (C-YU) and Schools.

UNICEF WES program has been designed to reinforce decentralization process with a focus on capacity development mainly for local governments and sometimes for central governments in technical area as well as management area to ensure successful and strong local ownership and sustainable water supply, sanitation and hygiene behavioral changes.

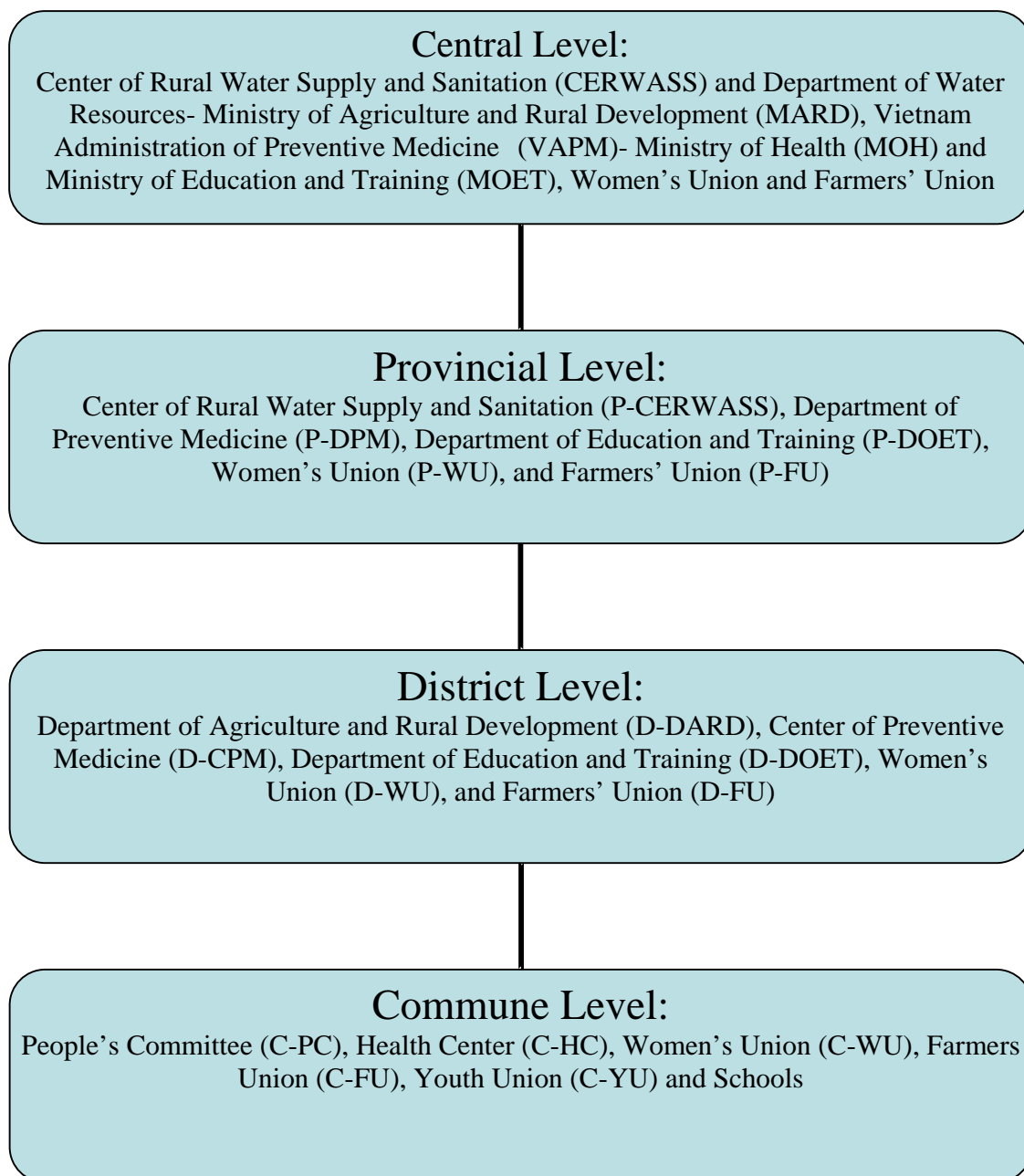
Following capacity development efforts have been undertaken thus far:

- Training Needs Assessment (TNA) for an overview of existing local capacities and knowledge and skills that need further improvements;
- Capacity Development: based on results from the training needs assessment, providing training/workshops on and study tours for update and new technical knowledge and skills, technologies, emergency, behavioral change communication (BCC), planning, project management, financial management, operation & maintenance, M & E, documentation, advocacy for more investment and for experience exchange and best practices sharing and learning;
- Promotion for application of what have been learned by the local governments: encouraging, monitoring and supervising the application of what have been learned;
Measurement of impacts/results of capacity development through periodic evaluation and on day-to day monitoring with local officials.

All those capacity development efforts have targeted main WES program local governments to achieve more investment, effective and quality program implementation and sustained outcomes at local levels.

Despite all above achievements, many challenges still remain in local capacity development of the whole sector in general and of UNICEF WES program in particular. Those are high staff turnover rate in government offices, non-timely updates with of new technologies and knowledge, limited resources invested in capacity development.

Chart Indicates UNICEF –WES’s Counterparts at Central, Provincial, District and Commune Levels



Note: In Vietnam, we have four official administrative levels. They are central, provincial, district and commune. In each level, there are specialized organizations, operating under supervision of its above vertical umbrella organizations and its same level People’s Committee.

In the coming years, WES program together with counterparts will continue investing more in local capacity development in its endeavor to address all the capacity development issues and to overcome challenges.

Background

There existed “democratic centralization” for so many years in Vietnam. Local governments depended totally on whatever decisions made for them by central leadership. Every year, local governments waited for top-down decisions, which impacted their lives, their local conditions. Therefore, good capacity for planning, management as well as technologies was not much required at local levels and hence, local governments did not pay attention to capacity development for their officials.

Until early 1980s, rural Vietnam had only two technical options existing for drinking water supply, which were dug-well and rain water tank and no appropriate hygienic sanitation facilities. Almost rural population used open pond water and rain water for drinking and open holes for defecation. None of the schools had appropriate WES facilities.

UNICEF started its Water, Environment and Sanitation program in such conditions in 1982. The program objective has been since to support the Government of Vietnam to improve water supply and environmental sanitation mostly in rural Vietnam. In 1982, UNICEF was the only one International organization, initiating rural water supply and sanitation sector with Vietnamese Government. In that context, for speedy improvement of the situation, for a long period from 1982 to mid 1990s, UNICEF worked jointly with government counterparts, focusing its resources on hard ware part, which was to provide supplies for construction of WES facilities for communities and schools. Attention was paid to the set up of Centre for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (CERWASS and P-CERWASS) at both central and provincial levels for WES program implementation, the development of HDPE pipe and hand-pump industries and transfer of international technologies to Vietnam. The existence of those industries has helped not only reduce total cost for facility construction and reduce dependency on imported materials, but also develop quite new industries for speedier situation improvement and somehow achieve sustainability in provision of materials for water supply.

The problem with top-down decisions that were not appropriate for localities was then recognized because they were made by leaders at central level, without consulting local people and without taking local realities and local knowledge into consideration. In early 1990s, after learning lessons from within country and good experiences from different countries, the Government of Vietnam confirmed that the “democratic centralization” was no longer effective for achieving sustainable development in the country. Hence the Government was then committed for decentralization. The commitment for decentralization is clearly shown in the 1992 Constitution and Communist Party Resolution. In this regard, decentralization is attached with administrative reform to improve capacity, effectiveness and efficiency of the administrative system.

At the same time, all International organizations including UNICEF working on development programs promoted local participation in all steps of programming to deserve their ownership, then obtaining sustainability. UNICEF has since switched its focus on soft ware part, which is capacity development to ensure the success of decentralization and sustainability in rural water supply and environmental sanitation. UNICEF again together with central government counterparts have committed sufficient resources in capacity development for local government counterparts, who have been equipped with necessary knowledge and skills for better performance in their direct role of planning, implementation, management (monitoring and supervision included) of programs in the new context of decentralization.

Practical experiences of local capacity development in UNICEF WES program

Issues

After the Government of Vietnam first initiated decentralization in mid 1990s, the Vietnamese leaders as well as other international organizations working in Vietnam realized that local capacity was not ready for such a rapid change. The local capacity could not match with immediate application of decentralization. Additionally, there was yet legal instructions for how decentralization was adapted and applied. This problem of weak capacity at local levels was facing all sectors, including water supply and environmental sanitation then.

Action

To facilitate the application of decentralization, gradually new legal instructions for encouraging active and quality local participation have been introduced for application. It was started with Decree No.71/1998/ND-CP in 1998, which promotes democracy at administrative offices such as ministries, its local branches and local governments (provincial, district levels); then followed by Decree No.07/1999/ND-CP dated 13th Feb. 1999, which applies transparency of business and encourages workers' practice of monitoring supervision of business operation in all state-owned companies; finally followed by Decree No.79/2003/ND-CP in 2003, which is about promotion of democracy at commune level that is the smallest administrative unit in Vietnam and which has the smallest voice among others. All three decrees mention improved capacity of officials and workers to ensure their quality participation in the implementation of democracy at local levels. Those decrees helped initiate a clearer recognition of needs for capacity development for provincial, district and commune officials and create opportunities for all voices heard and for all level participation. This indicates the government determination to obtain successful decentralization and also to attract more attention to local capacity development from international funded programs.

UNICEF's WES program only supports the application of two out of those three Decrees regarding capacity development. They are Decree No.71/1998/ND-CP and Decree No. 79/2003/ND-CP.

Operating in such conditions, UNICEF in collaboration with the Government of Vietnam has undertaken the following actions.

Training Need Assessment for capacity gap identification

UNICEF and other international organizations, which have been supporting Vietnamese Government, had been aware of and somehow addressed the need for capacity development for local counterparts. But since those two decrees coming into being UNICEF has started its stronger focus on capacity development. Before interventions of any new 5 year cycle, UNICEF initiated an overall training need assessment (TNA) to identify capacity gaps for further investment. The TNA might be conducted through a situation analysis at the beginning of each 5 year cycle or an assessment during Mid Term Review in the middle of the third year of the 5 year cycle. The TNA can also be reviewed at every annual review meeting by both Government counterparts and UNICEF.

The training need assessment and some research revealed three main issues in all local counterpart capacity: i) weak capacity in project program planning, implementation, management including monitoring and supervision, financial management and in all technical options is observed; ii) capacity in each locality is not equally weak, the more remote and the smaller administrative localities are the weaker capacity is identified; iii) fewer opportunities of capacity development for women than men are seen.

Unlike central level, at local levels including provincial, district and commune, weak capacity is easily observed because for a long period of time before early 1980s, there did not exist the need for further capacity development since local officials did not make their own decisions and did not work on their plans, instead central leadership made it for them and there was less competition for jobs. After graduation from one college or university, local graduates were easily appointed to positions in one of the government offices; no further training was attempted from both office and individuals then. For the office, college or university under-graduates were sufficiently qualified for performing their job in the appointed positions and for individuals, their job was always secured once they were appointed to the positions, then they could stay there for ever and even be promoted without requiring further training or higher education. So the capacity of local people is not as equally strong as central people.

Difference in weak capacity is clearly seen in different levels of localities, depending on its distance off from provincial towns or cities. This explains that the most distant locality is communes. Development has been obviously far less in remote areas. Living and working in those remote areas are considered disadvantaged regarding infrastructures and living conditions. The further their places are located the more difficult their work places and living conditions are. Even the officials and workers' trained skills are not fully utilized as there are no minimum required facilities and conditions for them to apply all their knowledge and skills. People's skills and knowledge are not frequently applied, they become incapable later. In such conditions, further training and higher education has been unsuccessfully promoted.

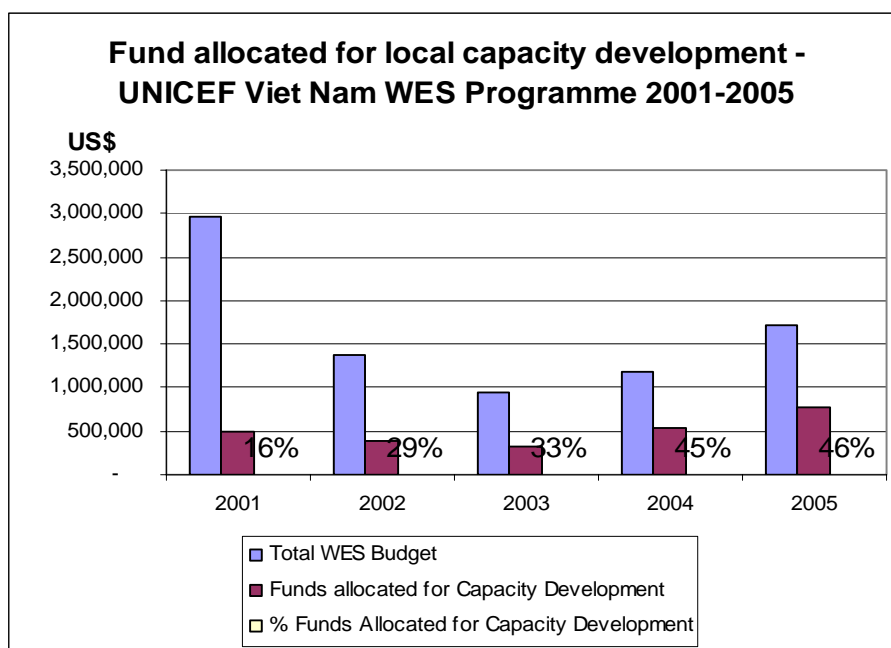
Women always have fewer opportunities for capacity development than men in Vietnam. Traditionally, especially in rural Vietnam, boys/men are more respected and therefore better treated than girls/women by their families, communities and even by their working offices. Girls are not as much supported as boys for their school education by their families. In addition, Vietnamese girls/women tend to sacrifice themselves for others. They always offer easier conditions to others at any time and at any places (at home, in the society). When they are still small, they have fewer opportunities, when they are grown-up, they easily give up opportunities because of their family and others' interests. Another reason might contribute to fewer capacity development opportunities for women, which is culturally job acceptance or job appropriateness for women. If a job is not considered appropriate for women, very few women apply for the job and certainly very few women have that job, making an unnecessary gender unbalance in that office. When the office has capacity development opportunities, yet smaller number of women is offered. Traditionally, health services are thought for both women and men, but water supply is for men. It is obviously seen that many women are working in local centers of Preventive Medicine, but only few women working in provincial CERWASS.

Taking the above analysis into consideration, WES program's component of capacity development for local government counterparts is designed in each 5 year cycle program document and implemented to address those issues by building up detailed activities in each annual work plan (AWP).

What and how capacity has been developed for whom by WES program

In recent years, more resources have been allocated for capacity development of both technical and management aspects. Capacity development in technical and management issues for WES has been provided either through trainings or workshops or study tour visits for central, provincial, district and commune counterparts in line with their assigned task levels defined by government official documents.

The chart below shows annual increases in fund ratio allocated for capacity development of UNICEF WES Program.



Technical aspect: Trainings, workshops and study tour visits on following matters have been conducted for local counterparts: different technologies such as tube-well, improved dug-well, piping system, rain water jars, production of HDPE pipe and hand-pump, different hygienic latrine options, development of different technical latrine options for flooded areas, operation & maintenance (O & M), water quality testing, water quality test kit production, emergency preparedness and response, behavioral change communication/information education and communication (BCC/IEC) on primary environmental care, and update knowledge on water, sanitation and hygiene issues.

Management aspect: capacity development in planning, project management, financial management, M & E, documentation of lessons learned for advocacy or sharing, has been performed for years through similar approaches (workshops, trainings and study tour visits).

Every year, after the approval of AWP, UNICEF and central counterparts undertake all detailed activities for local capacity development as per our plan. The activities are implemented to gradually fill the 3 main gaps identified by the TNA.

More attention and investment are given to local counterparts in remote areas to bring their capacity up to the equal level with other parts of Vietnam. Flexibility and exception is always applied in favor of remote areas to increase their opportunities for their capacity development. More trainees are often sent to each training/workshop (each province sends 3 people, but remote province can send up to 5 people and additional 2 people must be from district level) if it is organized for all localities. Longer duration is applied for training/workshop conducted separately (3 day training applied for commune level in plain areas, but 4 day applied for mountainous areas). More people from lower level have been sent to training on the same topics (for example: in 2003 thousands of commune people were sent to the training on communication of primary environmental care vs. only 32 people from provincial and district level).

The table below shows big differences in numbers of trainees from Provincial/District and from Commune counterpart organizations graduated from the Trainings on Communication of Primary Environmental Care of three different years.

Year	2003	2004	2005
Number of Province/District Trainees	32	39	25
Number of Commune Trainees	1,730	1,753	1,993
Total Trainees	1,762	1,792	2,018

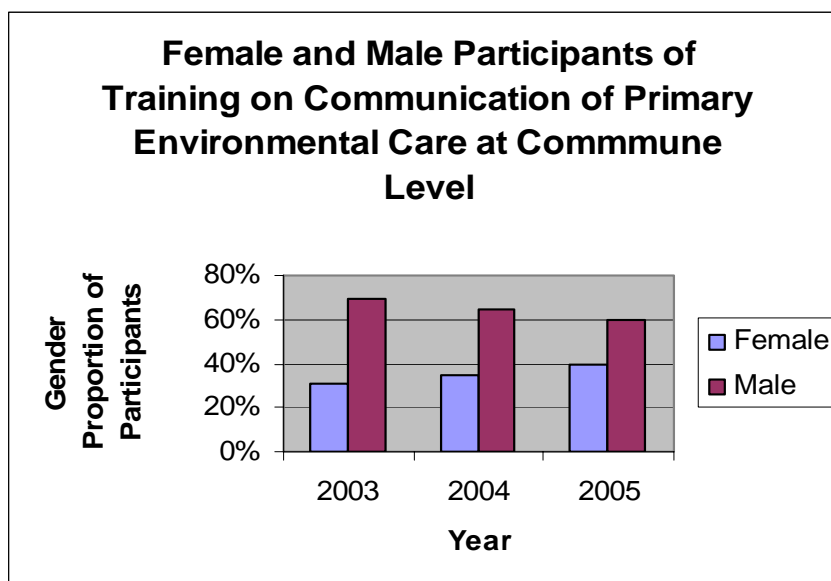
All remote area participants get payment for their actual travel expenses when they are sent to the training in other places whereas other participants get only partial payment from UNICEF programs. Re-fresh trainings are implemented in commune training and it is done every 3 months in remote communes while done annually in plain communes.



Re-fresh training on Communication for Primary Environmental Care for H'Mong Village of Lao Cai

Female participation in all capacity development activities is seriously taken care of by both UNICEF and central government counterparts. A norm has been officially set up between UNICEF and counterparts that the target of 30% female participant is encouraged to obtain at every training activity. UNICEF and CERWASS and the Vietnam Administration of Preventive Medicine (VAPM)/MOH promote and advocate for more women attending training events by different ways. Before the event, central counterparts remind local counterparts to send enough female participants. Number of female participants is monitored. Female participants are equally treated and respected at all events to encourage their high level of participation.

The chart below indicates that the target of 30% female participant is achievable.



At the end of each capacity development event, a plan for application of trained skills and knowledge is always expected. Each participant or a small group of them have to develop a follow up plan of action, which reflects how the learned skills and knowledge are applied to speed up progress in water, sanitation and hygiene in their localities.



An International School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) workshop with Different Counterpart Participants from CERWASS/MARD, MOH, MOET, Provinces and different Sections within UNICEF – SSHE Workshop/Hanoi March, 2006

Target beneficiaries of capacity development events are thousands of UNICEF WES program counterparts including two main counterparts at central level, CERWASS of MARD and VAPM of MOH and Center for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, Center of Preventive Medicine, Department of Education and Training, Women Union, and Farmer Union at provincial and lower levels in all program focused areas. Sometimes, more beneficiaries are targeted in expanded localities if the knowledge and skills necessary and required for all localities since they endeavor to improve water and sanitation situation in rural Vietnam.

How the application of trained knowledge and skills is monitored, supervised and their impacts are measured?

After each capacity development event, WES program also includes activities to facilitate the application of what have been learned and the implementation of all appropriate activities put in their plan at the end of training. Funds are usually made available for them to design and implement training follow-up activities if appropriate.



A monitoring trip undertaken by a central counterpart and a commune health worker to document and explain what happened to the newly constructed latrine

When the local counterparts apply their trained knowledge and skills for their first times, they are usually monitored and supervised by either trainers or central counterparts or UNICEF colleagues to ensure the accuracy of knowledge and the correctiveness of skills towards achieving good quality outcomes. All important applied activities are noted in the supervisors' books for necessary follow-up actions. For those, who do not perform their skills and knowledge well, adjusted skills and knowledge are demonstrated for them again by the supervisors. And whenever there is similar training conducted, those are sent again for

training. And for those, who perform well, they are highly appraised and become good demonstration for other trainees.

Finally the impact of capacity development can be measured by evaluations. Recently UNICEF has carried out a separate evaluation on a Training of Trainers (TOT) in communication for primary environmental care (PEC). The PEC program commenced in 2002 and in keeping with most other UNICEF training approaches, adopted the 'cascade' model of training. The MOH organized and delivered a training of trainers program for provincial and district health officials on the content of the PEC program. This was then followed by training courses delivered by provincial and district health officials at local commune level. The participants at commune level are the designated 'motivators', selected individuals (normally members of the various mass organizations and hamlet health workers whose role is to communicate with the villagers and visit households, sharing the PEC information and motivating others to make positive changes to their lifestyles and living environments. The evaluation looked at all main aspects of the training, from preparation to follow-up activities, from TOT training to other trainings at commune level, from trainers to trainees and their follow-up activities, training materials and training course evaluation. Overall results of the evaluation are impressive. Success of the training is confirmed by the evaluator that "The report finds that the key to the success of the PEC training intervention lies in

- clear understanding of the overall aims and training objectives of the program
- active collaboration and willing cooperation between the UNICEF representative and the counterpart trainer
- substantial training experience and subject knowledge of the UNICEF representative

- the use of imaginative and participatory-based training strategies
- flexibility in planning the content and structure of the program
- the respect for and willingness to listen to the course participants”³

Other capacity development events of UNICEF last program cycle were eventually assessed in another UNICEF office wide training evaluation as one part of the program mid term review (MTR).

Recommendations from the evaluations are always implemented later in other trainings and other activities for further improvements in the capacity development component of WES program.

Outcome highlights of WES program capacity development:

Over a decade implementation of focused capacity development component, following highlighted outcomes have been achieved through UNICEF WES program. These outcomes have contributed to the program sustainability.

Technical aspects

Different technical options of water supply and sanitation applied widely in other parts of the world have been applied in Vietnam since 1982. HDPE pipe industry in Northern part of Vietnam was set up and has been in operation through UNICEF WES program, becoming the main supplier for all WES programs. Hand pump industry has been established and operated. From totally depending on outside products, for years Vietnam has been able to produce compatible HDPE pipes and hand-pumps to meet the whole country demand. Tube-wells, pipe gravity flow system and rain water jars are observed in almost all provinces of Vietnam. This is a good example of scaling up. Before 1982, nobody in Vietnam knew about those technologies. Those technologies were initially transferred to local counterparts by UNICEF program. Then other WES programs in Vietnam adapted it for replication and even individual households applied it for their homes.

Similarity can be seen with suhlab latrines. The technology was transferred through UNICEF from India. Currently, those latrines are observed very easily in any rural parts of Vietnam because it has been recognized as one of the four hygienic latrine options by MOH and this option is very cost-effective.

BCC/IEC has become a strong part of WES program. This is an obvious indication of more emphasis given to soft ware component. Many counterparts at all levels benefited from different trainings/workshop on this, starting with trainings on IEC material development and on communication for WES issues.

³ Daragh Halpin, UNICEF Training Consultant (2004), WES Primary Environmental Care Training Program 2003 Interim Report



Home Visit Conducted by a Commune IEC Motivator to educate household members on water, sanitation and hygiene

One trainee institution has become a professional institution for IEC materials for WES, which is the Center for Health Education and Communication under MOH. Many trainees have played critical role in communication activities at commune level, convincing their communities improve hygiene practices. In local annual plan, IEC has been considered as an integrated and decisive part before any water supply constructions. Successful IEC activities could lay a good foundation for the success of construction, usage and O & M of the water system and sanitation facilities.



Children practice their hand washing at a Primary school in Thua Thien Hue Province

O & M has been strongly confirmed by all local counterparts after the facility construction has been handed to beneficiary communities. Operation and Maintenance Training is an essential part of any major infrastructural investment initiative. Assisting with major construction and plant installation projects is only one half of the picture, providing the necessary training and support to community members to operate and maintain the facility is the other half. After relevant trainings, many trained workers, who are based in the community, have been successfully running daily operation and maintenance, ensuring effective operation and

maximizing number of users of the systems if possible.

School sanitation and hygiene education (SSHE) has been promoted by UNICEF and all counterparts. Child-friendly designs for small children's school WES facilities have been applied. Many counterparts gained considerable knowledge and skills in SSHE by being sent to different trainings/ workshops. Awareness has been raised and behaviors have been changed. Recently, more emphasis has been paid to SSHE by the Government. One of the national target program phase II (NTP II on rural water supply and sanitation, period 2006-2010) stated objectives is to increase school WES facility coverage up to 100%.

Emergency preparedness has been paid more attention than response. This approach is confirmed more effective, contributing to smaller loss when emergencies occur. Counterparts have gained prepared skills through different trainings and workshops organized by UNICEF. With WES program, to be ready for emergencies, local counterparts focus more on preparation steps, keeping in their storage sufficient supplies as water filters, developing sanitation options for emergency situation.

Water quality testing capacity has been developed for provincial and commune counterparts with an attempt to set up community-based water quality monitoring system. A user-friendly water quality test kit with important indicator measurements was produced for community usage. Many community health workers, teachers and lower secondary school children have been trained for water quality testing. They can now test their water and know what to do if the water is contaminated



Installation of a piloted Water Flush Floating Latrine in one Flooded Commune of Dong Thap Province



Testing water quality right at community level by villagers

Management aspects

Provincial CERWASS, provincial and district health and education officials can develop good annual plan of action by themselves. They also perform well in the implementation of the plan and monitor and supervise activities happening at commune and village levels, ensuring the achievement of targets set in the annual plan of action. Local planning capacity has improved. For recent years, they have started making longer plan of 5 years, integrating WES issues to local Master Plan, which is called Socio-economic

development plan (SEDP). They take gender and child issues more seriously than ever before in the whole development plan. They also give more priority to their disadvantaged areas, providing them with more funds and more development opportunities.

Monitoring and evaluation capacity of both central and local counterparts improves considerably. Let's take an example of WES Mapper, a soft ware program developed to serve water and sanitation monitoring and evaluation purpose. It has been developed and applied in 15 out of 64 provinces of Vietnam and planned to be applied nation wide in 2007 or 2008. This soft ware program includes a set of indicators developed and agreed for use by all related Government counterparts. Once it is applied in the whole country, all water and sanitation data will be easily accessible.

More investment has been given to WES sector. This is the result of successful advocacy skills and absorption capacity including managerial and technical, which counterparts gained though joint WES program with UNICEF. From initial period of time, with UNICEF as the only one big donor in WES sector, Government has currently invested its own considerable funds in its National Target Program on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (NTP I) and been able to attract many other bigger donors to also invest in the sector. As a result, WES program at local levels has also received more funds from the government program (NTP I), which allocated for each locality depending on how much it can absorb with their existing capacity.

Moreover, special Government programs that include more investment on water and sanitation have been implemented in all remote areas (program 135 and 134) to ensure their speedy development. This result has been achieved by the influence of not only UNICEF program, but also other development programs implemented jointly between donors and the Government of Vietnam.

Confidence in local counterparts has been built up because of their improved capacity. At many workshops, they claimed their equal participation with central counterparts and in few circumstances; they performed better than central counterparts. Is it very impressive when seeing a very concise and solid power point presentation performed and followed by an intensive Q & A session by provincial counterparts at an international conference? Some of our local counterparts can perform it well.

Challenges

Although, many achievements have been shown, challenges still remain in WES capacity development for local counterparts. Below is highlighted challenges facing WES sector.

Staff changes usually happen in local government counterpart offices. Trained staffs leave and un-trained new staffs come. This cannot be avoided if government office does not apply incentives for those long term committed staff.

New technologies and new knowledge are created so fast in the world today that both our counterparts and UNICEF staff cannot easily update it in a timely manner through program implementation. People need updated as fast as possible for fast application of new technologies and knowledge through different communication channels (internet, books, individual exchange and programs) so that they do not depend on the program.

Limited resources for capacity development from Government are always observed. Government counterparts depend almost on international funded programs for capacity development for their local levels with a reasonable explanation that government funds are borrowed with interest, it is difficult for them to put borrowed funds in capacity development, which is with "invisible" results. UNICEF will continue convincing the Government for bigger investment in this regard.

Language barrier is another constraint for local counterparts to obtain more exposures to new technologies and knowledge by themselves. Individual counterparts need to have their own plan to improve their English or other foreign language skills.

Future Plan

In the next 5 years and beyond, local capacity development is one of seven key results of UNICEF program as a whole and WES program in particular. We in partnership with the Government of Vietnam and other donors continue capacity building for counterparts, repeating some important trainings, organizing internal and external study tour visits, conducting workshops to introduce and promote application of new technologies and updated knowledge.

Having faced with a challenge that insufficient resources have been invested in capacity development for local governments by the Central government, priority of UNICEF program needs to be given to following trainings for local counterparts in the future:

- Results based management, improved M & E for quality data and data used;
- Hygiene promotion for behavioral change and school water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) for even stronger focus;
- Water quality and arsenic mitigation/water safety plan including water quality testing for counterparts' further improved skills;
- Further O & M for sustaining facilities;
- Model development and application for demonstration and scaling up;
- Policy development, research/study skills for policy influencing and advocacy

UNICEF continues its commitment and to convince its government counterparts to invest more in local capacity development.

To become more independent in looking for opportunities for their own capacity development, both government counterparts at central and local levels have to improve language skills for this purpose. Individual learning plan of languages and new technologies and knowledge need to be always expected and promoted by their office leadership.

Conclusion

UNICEF WES program has become one of the joint Vietnamese Government's longest programs. UNICEF has always been by Government's side for the overall improvement of rural water supply, sanitation and hygiene situation, and eventually for improvement of community people's health status, including children and women's. Since the Government's promotion of decentralization, UNICEF program has gradually helped local government counterparts obtain impressive achievements in capacity development of both technical and management aspects, contributing to the increased water supply and sanitation coverage from 21% and 13% in 1990 to 70% and 25% in 2005 respectively.

Since the start of UNICEF WES program in 1982 in Vietnam, thanks to the program efforts in capacity development for local Governments, new industries of HDPE pipe and hand-pump were developed and have been since in operation to serve WES sector. Various technologies for water supply and sanitation facilities have been introduced and applied. CERWASS and P-CERWASS were set up and have been effectively operating in the country. Many Government officials of

both central and local counterpart offices have improved their technical and management knowledge and skills to perform their daily responsibilities in the endeavor to increase sustainable clean water and hygienic sanitation coverage.

Although such achievements have been obtained, challenges still remain in the WES sector regarding human resources such as low Government's investment in capacity development, Government employee high turnover rate, out-of-date technical and management knowledge and skills, low capacity at local levels. Hence the need for more efforts be mobilized for and put in capacity development for Government counterparts at all levels in the coming years.

In our UNICEF current WES program, we will continue working jointly with government counterparts at all levels and other donors to address all remaining gaps and challenges in WES sector capacity development for the achievement of both successful decentralization and WES program sustainability. UNICEF will focus our resources in building capacity for provincial, district and commune officials, especially in disadvantaged and remote provinces, districts and communes. Various aspects of technique and management such as hygiene promotion, school WASH, water quality, result-based management, O & M... remain key activities of the capacity development component in our UNICEF WES program for the period 2006-2010.

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