

COMMUNITY FACILITATOR HANDBOOK



Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund





The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is a multi-donor fund established in 2009 to improve the lives and prospects of smallholder farmers and landless people in rural Myanmar. LIFT is working to ensure that Myanmar's rural economic transformation is inclusive.

Our activities lead to improved food security, and we help people to cope better with shocks and setbacks. We promote agricultural commercialization, climate smart agriculture, financial inclusion, business and skills development, and targeted nutrition support for mothers and children. We fund a migration window to make migration safer, and to connect workers to new economic opportunities and jobs. We use evidence to encourage greater public and private funding, and to inform the development of rural policies that will improve the lives of poor people.

Welthungerhilfe is one of the largest private aid organizations in Germany, independent of politics and religion. It was established in 1962, as the German section of the "Freedom from Hunger Campaign", one of the world's first initiatives aimed at the eradication of hunger.

Acknowledgement

We want to express our gratitude to the leaders of the Village Development Committees for sharing their learning experiences on how Community Based Organizations are being managed. We also want to thank the Community Facilitators and staff of WHH for their inputs on how they teach, facilitate, coach and support for the organizational development of the aforementioned Village Development Committees.

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Foreword

Community facilitators are like good party hosts and are crucial in projects!

Community facilitators network and connect community members to each other. They facilitate and seed discussions, encourage all to participate, and are key to ensuring that events and community activities are engaging and vibrant. Above all, community facilitators build trust and effective working relationships with community members on behalf of projects and organizations, creating energy and motivation!

With the task of coordinating programme implementation in the communities that they work with, community facilitators act as an essential bond between the rest of the project team and the communities. They train and coach the leaders and members of community based organizations on a variety of topics and issues, improving participants' knowledge, attitudes, and technical skills to effectively plan, implement, and manage their own activities. Like a "jack of all trades", community facilitators have to be strong and guiding without being dominant, able to mediate and to help resolve conflicts, be people-oriented without forgetting their assignments. By their actions, community facilitators model good facilitation skills to all community leaders and community members too.

In the Welthungerhilfe-implemented Delta Rise Project the community facilitators encompass the largest number of staff in the team. They collaborate and network with community members at the village level as well as with the technical experts and associates of the project. Regrettably, they can receive inadequate recognition or respect for their efforts, or can be easily blamed on occasions when things do not work out. But, they are undoubtedly crucial to the project's operations.

Let us remember, the community facilitators' task is not an easy one, and let us especially respect, value and admire their work!

Susanne Scholaen
Welthungerhilfe, Head of Project
8.11.2017

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I. COMMUNITY FACILITATOR

The Community Facilitator facilitates the process of organizing and strengthening the Community Based Organization (CBO). She/he teaches and coaches the leaders and members in improving their knowledge, attitudes, and technical skills to effectively plan, implement, and manage their project activities. She/he coordinates the program implementation of her/his organization in the communities she/he works with. She/he assists in the monitoring and evaluation of the activities of implemented projects and the performance of the CBO as an organization.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF A COMMUNITY FACILITATOR

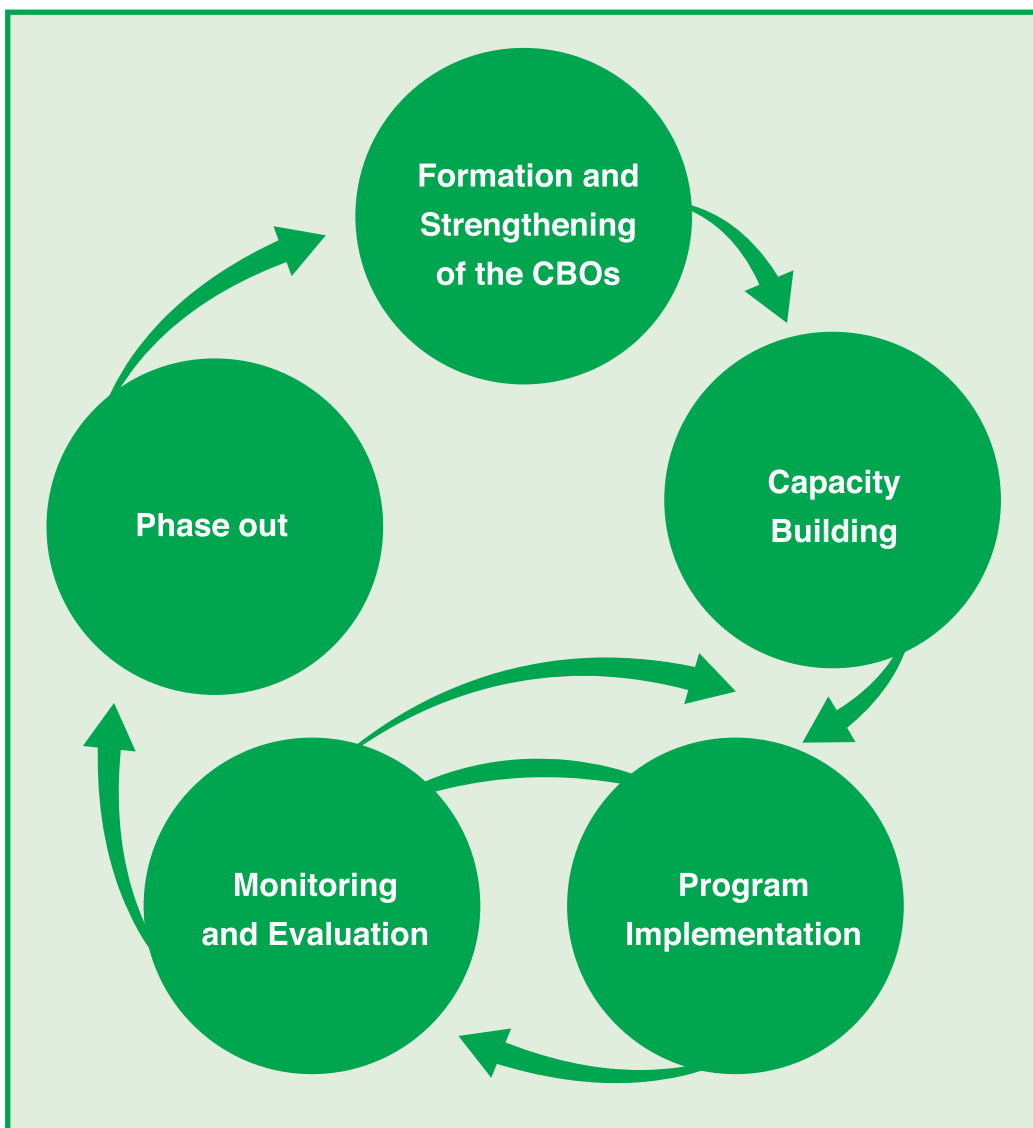


Figure 1. The Responsibilities of a Community Facilitator

လူမှုအခြေပြုအဖွဲ့အစည်း (CBO)



Community Based Organization

Community Based Organization is an organized group composed of elected leaders and members who work together for the improvement of their socio-cultural economic, institutional, political, and environmental conditions.

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FORMATION OF THE COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION

THE STEPS IN FORMING THE CBO

1. Learning about the community

- A. Establish a contact person in the village.
- B. Have a courtesy call to the local authorities and the other key people.
- C. Introduce oneself, the organization one's work with, the purpose of the visit and the goals and objectives of the work.
- D. Walk around and talk to people to gain a better understanding of their surroundings and their socio-economic status.
- E. Collect information on the income and productivity on livelihood activities and the likelihood for improvements.
- F. Understand the community's political and institutional structures, problems, and opportunities for development.

2. Identifying the potential leaders

- A. Call for a meeting with the village officials and other key persons.
- B. Talk to them on the CBO formation, the what and why there is a need for such an organization.
- C. Explain how CBO in other villages play a role in village development.
- D. Provide facts and figures from successful CBO from the neighboring villages to convince potential leaders for the formation of a CBO.
- E. Make a schedule for a community meeting.

3. Conducting the community meeting

At this stage, the Community Facilitator will repeat what were said during the meeting with the local officials and key leaders. The difference is that the participants are the villagers who are the potential leaders and members of the CBO. Once again;

- A. Introduce oneself, the organization, the goals and objectives of the work and the formation of the CBO.
- B. Talk about the CBO's formation, the what and why there is a need for such organization in the community.
- C. Explain how the CBO in other villages play a role in village development.
- D. Provide facts and figures from successful CBO's of neighboring villages to convince potential leaders for the formation of such in their village.
- E. Invite CBO leaders from other villages and let them talk about their experiences on how they improved their socio-economic development.
- F. Make a schedule for another meeting for the election of the CBO leaders.

4. Electing the CBO leaders

- A. Suggest the idea of electing 6 - 7 leaders to lead the CBO.
- B. Present the different leadership positions and give the overview of the corresponding responsibilities that come with each identified leadership position.
- C. Conduct the election of the leaders.
- D. Announce the new set of leaders.
- E. The newly elected Chairman presides the first CBO meeting.
- F. The newly elected Secretary records the proceedings.
- G. The Chairman closes the meeting.
- H. The Chairman schedules the first official meeting of the CBO.

5. Assisting in the Organizational Structure's development of a CBO

- A. Assist the newly elected leaders to develop the CBO's organizational structure.
- B. Help on the formulation of the duties and responsibilities of the leaders and members.
- C. Help in the formulation of the rules and regulations of the CBO.
- D. Assist in the conceptualization of the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives.

The CBO's Organizational Structure

The organizational structure is the guidance to all the members to have official functions and relationships that governs among them. The structure provides clarity of whom to report to on different situations and to know clearly who has the responsibilities for what. A typical village organizational structure is composed of elected leaders such as the: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Accountant, Auditor and then the Members. In most cases, the leaders are also responsible in the management of all the activities. Other organizations opt to have more positions and create subcommittees for lead programs.

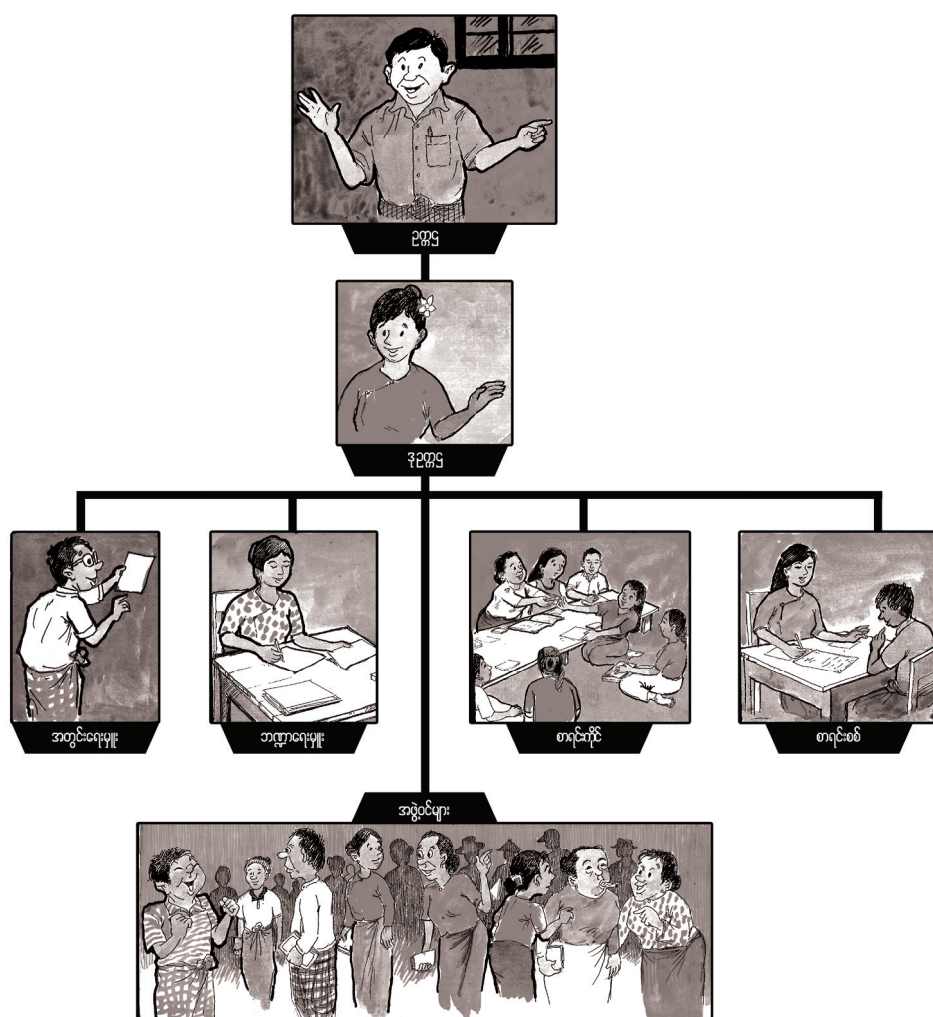


Figure 2. A Typical Community Based Organisation's Organizational Structure

The Roles and Responsibilities of Leaders and Members

The clarity of the roles and responsibilities of the leaders and the members and on how they effectively perform these functions can lead to the success of their organization. Role is defined as the position of a leader assumes or the part she/he participates in a particular operation. Responsibility, on the other hand, is the specific task or duty that the leader is expected to do as the function of her/his role. Table 1 shows an example of the roles and responsibilities of leaders and members of a CBO.

POSITION	POSITION
Chairman	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Calls and presides the CBO meeting. 2. Officially closes the meeting and or on any important discussions. 3. Summarizes the progress of all projects' and VRF activities during the monthly meeting and the general assembly. 4. Reminds the borrowers to pay on time. 5. Supervises livelihood projects supported by VRF. 6. Links and networks with the local authorities, other NGOs, private and government sectors, and other enterprises. 7. Calls for emergency meeting as need arises. 8. Makes the final decision after deliberation with members on important loan regulations and other sensitive issues. 9. Attends and joins trainings/workshops, informal classes, project visits, etc. 10. Reports the progress of CBO activities to government authorities.
Vice- Chairman	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acts the role and responsibilities of the Chairman when she/he is absent. 2. Acts the role and responsibilities of the Secretary when she/he is absent. 3. Coordinates closely with the other elected leaders.
Secretary	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepares the meeting agenda of the CBO. 2. Informs the CBO members on the time and date of the monthly meeting. 3. Writes the minutes of the CBO meeting. 4. Presides the meeting when the Chairman is absent. 5. Prepares a summary report of the CBO's activities for the Chairman to give to the local authorities, once required.

POSITION	POSITION
Treasurer	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeps the financial records of the CBO. 2. Has full responsibility and accountability of the CBO funds. 3. Disburses the money to member-borrowers. 4. Receives the loan repayments. 5. Keeps loan and repayment records. 6. Knows the amount of money in the cash box. 7. Can request to open the cash box when emergency fund is needed. 8. Is always ready for financial audit. 9. Keeps the CBO's bankbook.
Accountant	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeps the financial records (balance sheets, income statements, cash flow) of the CBO. 2. Regularly balances the VRF's and CBO accounts. 3. Reports the balance sheet during monthly meetings and on CBO's general assembly. 4. Keeps loan and payment records. 5. Records the minutes of the CBO meeting when the Secretary is absent. 6. Is always ready to present the records to the Auditor.
Auditor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Audits regularly the financial records of the Treasurer and the Accountant. 2. Crosschecks the financial records of the Treasurer and Accountant. 3. Shares the audit findings to the CBO in every monthly meeting. 4. Shares discrepancy findings immediately to the Chairman.
Members	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are required to attend the monthly meeting all the times. 2. Pay loans on time, if they have loans from VRF. 3. Implement the livelihood activities in profitable, appropriate and sustainable ways. 4. Work together with others on community development activities. 5. Participate actively in CBO discussions. 6. Share successes and failures on livelihood activities during meetings. 7. Have farmers-to-farmers discussions on farming and other community activities.

Table 1. Roles and Responsibilities of Leaders and Members

Rules and Regulations

The rules and regulations are bylaws for the leaders and members to obey, abide and follow. These are the guidelines for the leaders on how to govern and on how the members perform to contribute to the success of the organization.

A Sample Village Development Committee Rules and Regulations

1. Membership is voluntary.
2. A membership fee is required.
3. The members must pay the annual fee.
4. Only one family member of a household can become a VDC member.
5. The VDC leaders are selected through a democratic election by the members.
6. The election of leaders is done yearly during the general assembly.
7. The term of elected leaders is one year.
8. The on-farm and off-farm income generation activities created are geared towards achieving the vision, mission and goals of the community.
9. VDC management is participative.
10. VDC owns and manages the Village Revolving Fund (VRF) in a transparent manner.

The Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives

The Vision is like a big picture on the organization's future. It is like a road map that gives direction on where to go.

Mission tells about the reason for the organization's existence. It is a general statement on how to achieve the vision.

Goals are statements of the activities to accomplish and the strategies to use for implementation.

Objectives are the specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bounded actions to achieve the goal.

A Sample Vision, Mission, Goals of Hpyar Thone Su VDC

Vision

All the villagers are working together on social, economic, institutional and environmental development activities towards a progressive community.

Mission

The households obtain the capacities and skills to improve their living conditions through appropriate livelihood activities using the available resources in sustainable ways.

Goals

1. Be a self-help and self-manage VDC with members being truthful, transparent and accountable.
2. Be empowered to be able to discuss advocacy issues like; health and nutrition, gender awareness and climate change..
3. Acquire more profitable income generation activities by using appropriate materials, technologies and resources.
4. Improve farm products by applying appropriate farming technologies.
5. Attend capacity building activities to improve the knowledge and skills on income generation and other livelihood activities.
6. Have access to up-to-date market information.
7. Establish a village revolving fund.
8. Provide easy access to credit for members to fund their livelihood activities.
9. Perform the needed development activities in order to achieve the mission and vision.

STRENGTHENING AN EXISTING CBO

1. Gain everybody's trust in order to help improve the CBO's performance.
2. Consult the leaders and talk to the members on why they think their organization is inactive.
3. Seek ideas from the key leaders on how to strengthen a CBO. Their opinions matter and their support is needed.
4. Call for regular CBO meetings. Make suggestions. Develop working strategy together. Use participatory planning tools such as; SWOT analysis, Problem tree analysis, Conflict management, Action planning and Prioritizing of project activities to strengthen the CBO.
5. Review the rules and regulations and the responsibilities of leaders and members whether these are being followed.
6. Help the leaders and members understand that it is for everybody's interest to have stronger and functional leaders. All the decisions taken for a given situation must be fair for the benefit of the whole group.



ရှေ့လုပ်ငန်းစဉ်များ

စီမံခန့်ခွဲမှုသင်တန်း

စာရင်းကိုင်သင်တန်း

ဝင်ငွေ ၊ ထွက်ငွေ

ဝင်	အမည်	သုံးစွဲ

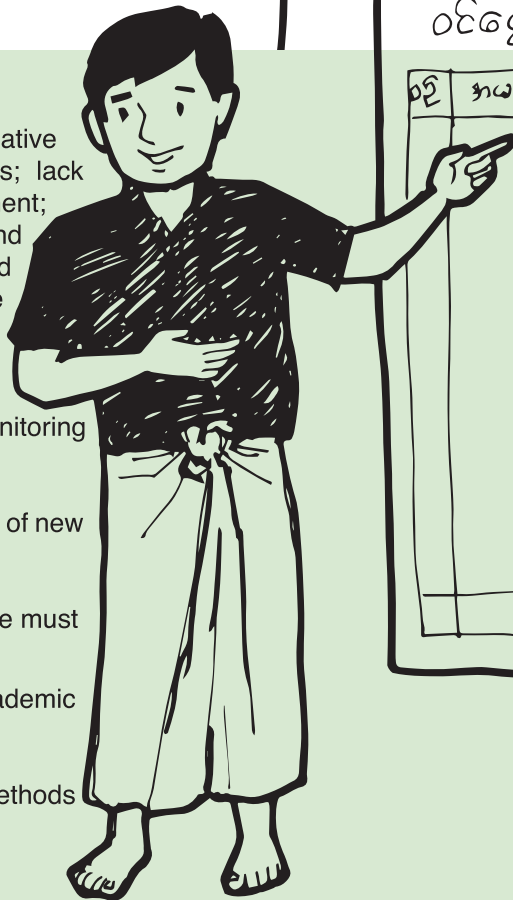
7. Address immediately any negative issues such as: lack of clear goals; lack of accountability; mismanagement; corruption; personal jealousy; and conflict of interests once seen and detected. These actions will lead to the decline of motivation and participation of other members.

8. Explain the importance of the Monitoring and Evaluation.

9. Conduct a participatory preparation of new action plans for implementation.

A Community Facilitator to be effective must possess certain qualities such as;

- professionalism and formal academic qualifications
- technical knowhow on extension methods and community development
- group management
- leadership qualities
- ability to work with people; people-oriented
- manage conflict in a participatory manner
- participative problem solving skills
- communication and facilitating skills



B



CAPACITY BUILDING

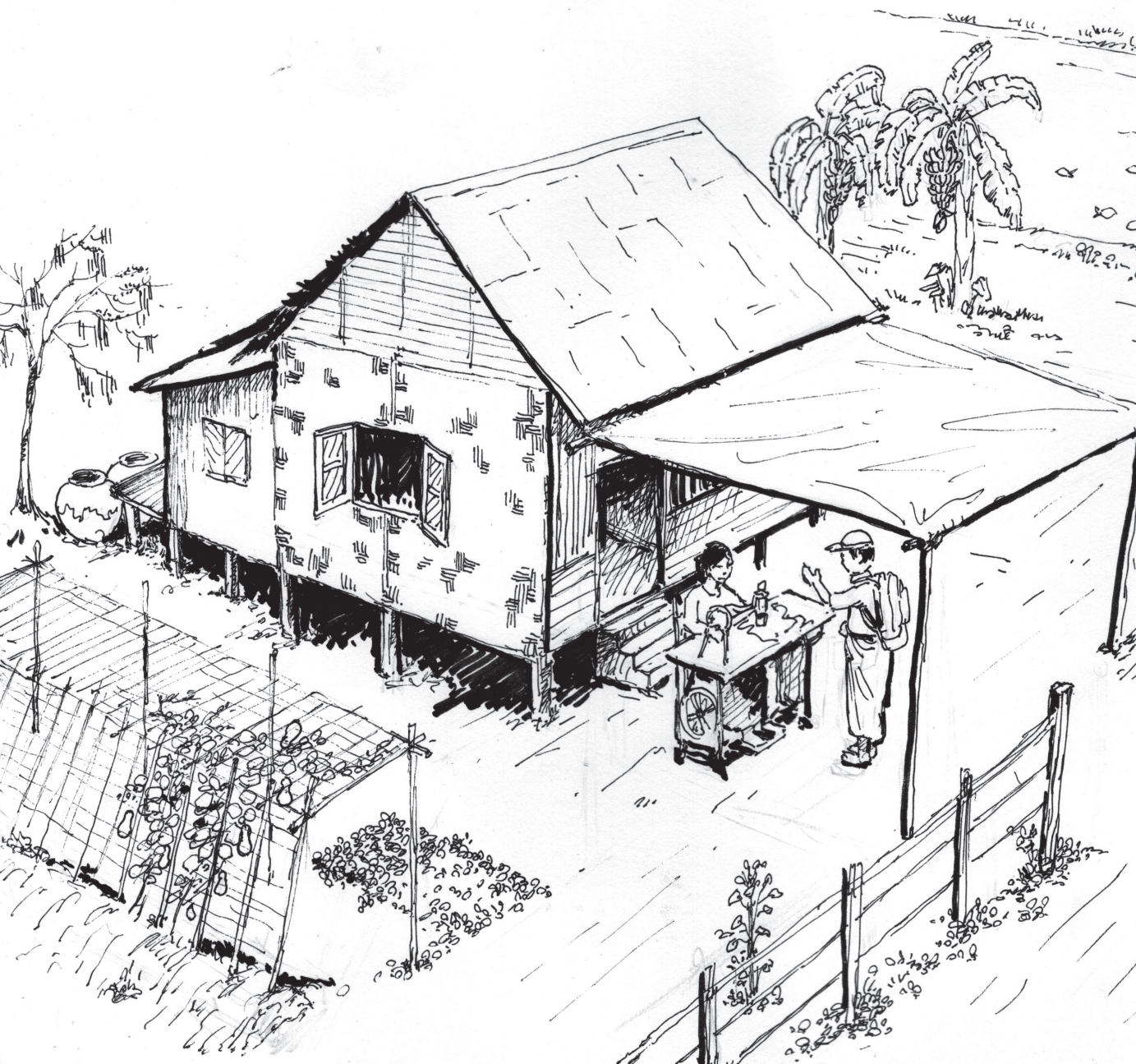


Capacity building is a teaching process that improves the attitudes, skills, knowledge and competences of the people in an organization. It enables them to plan, implement, and manage their project activities. It empowers the organization to network and link with government and non-government organizations and to lobby on other cross-cutting issues like; gender, healthcare, and environment.

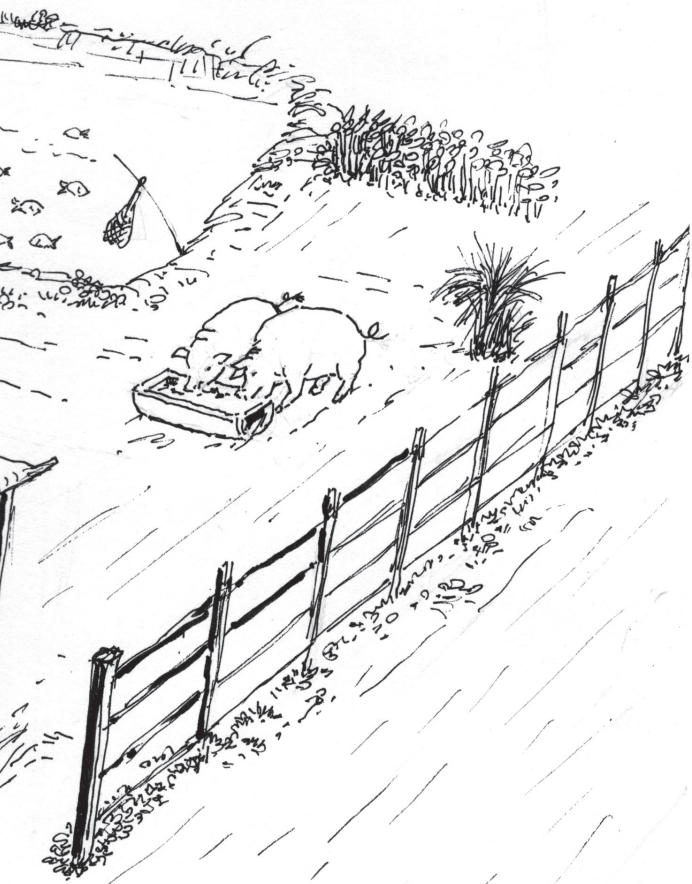
Capacity building is effective when a Community Facilitator uses a combination of extension methods that involve working directly with the people and uses other media for information dissemination.

Extension is the means to introduce the new knowledge and ideas to bring about change and improve the livelihood of people in the rural areas.

The Community Facilitators can use the following extension service to improve the capacities of the Community Based Organizations.



EXTENSION SERVICE



1 Home visit

Home visit familiarizes the Community Facilitator with the people in the community. It promotes open communication with other family members. It helps learn more about the family's situation. It builds-up confidence for better working relationships. Walking around and talking to people gain better understanding of the surroundings and the socio-economic status. It helps collect information on income and productivity on livelihood activities. It provides better overview on the village's political structure, problems, and opportunities for development.

2 Field visit

Field visit familiarizes the Community Facilitator with the farmers' fields. She/he can see the farms' conditions and the problems; gives specific advice or information; explains new recommended farming practices; follow-ups and observes results; motivates the interests among the farmers; encourages farmer-to-farmer discussions; and stimulates farmers' involvement in extension activities.

3 Meeting

Meeting is an arranged schedule of coming together to discuss the meeting's agenda. The Community Facilitator facilitates the flow of the proceedings to allow more members to participate in the discussions. The Chairman presides and discusses on the agenda and keeps the meeting focused on the main issues for discussion, decision-making and planning. The Secretary writes the minutes of the meeting.

4 Demonstration

Demonstration is a systematic presentation on how to do things. There are two types of demonstrations: Method demonstration is a step-by step procedure on how to prepare something (for example, "How to make homemade shampoo") while Result demonstration is to show new recommendation which is practical under the local condition (for example, "Compost-making utilizing animal manures and other farm by-products").

5 Field Day
Field day is to hold a method or result demonstration in a bigger audience. The purpose of a Field day is to introduce a new farm technology or a new farm implement. It is to stimulate the interest of the other farmers. There is a huge impact if the farmer plays an important role in running the event and explaining the purpose. It is ideal to hold the field day in a local farmer's field.

6 Exchange Visit
Exchange visit is an ideal method to motivate people to get involved in extension activities. It brings them together to discuss common problems and gets new useful experiences and first hand information from other areas. The travel creates common understanding among participants, on their commitment to new approaches, and they meet technical experts for further networking. Exchange visit is an effective method to foster learning among people and between organizations.

7 Farmer Field School
Farmer Field School is a type of group learning process where farmers are trained over an extended period using a combination of informal classes in a classroom setting and actual field activities. Farmer Field School is for example to promote Integrated Pest Management, which is to reduce the pesticide usage and increase the yields of the crops. It brings together the concepts of agro-ecology, experiential education, and community development.

8 On-the-field Trial
On-the-field trial is the collection of new information in the farmer's field by conducting a comparative study. For example, a rice seed varietal trial wherein the farmer has to compare 3-4 rice varieties on what will provide higher yields, resistance to pest and diseases and drought resistance. She/he has to study and observe the plants regularly and keep records of all the farming activities, from the time of seed selection up to post harvest.

9 Agricultural Fair
Agricultural fair is the exhibition and marketing of products; like, vegetable, fruits, grains, seeds, farm animals, handicrafts, processed foods, farm implements and farm inputs. It provides the farmers a place to showcase their best products and also gives them opportunities to exchange/ share experiences with others. The venue allows them to meet potential buyers and processors.

10 Farmer to Farmer Approach
Farmer to farmer approach is a community-based approach that encourages community participation. It represents a farmer as the center of the extension approach. Farmer becomes the trainer wherein, she/he teaches other farmers on his farming knowledge and experiences. It provides extension services to a farmer by another farmer. It complements with the work of Community Facilitator to reach out to more women and men farmers particularly in remote areas.

11 Printed media

Printed media such as; publications, manuals, magazines, posters, flip-charts and leaflets, convey accurate and clear information. These are good sources of information that can be reread again. Printed media should be written in ways that are easily understood by the intended users. For example, The “New Day” - Farmers’ Gazette, is a quarterly publication in coordination with Welthungerhilfe. Farmers and some staff of Welthungerhilfe contributed and wrote on topics about agriculture and community development. The gazette also provides the farmers up-to-date farming related information.

12 Radio

Radio is a useful medium of information. Most households in the village have radios. The broadcast information will reach households directly and instantly. Urgent news or warnings are communicated quickly. Radio is best in spreading awareness of new ideas in agriculture to large numbers of people. It can be used to publicize extension activities. It can also share farmers’ experiences with others.

13 Training, Workshop, Training Workshop

Training is a process to provide information and instruction through lectures and presentations. It is the act of teaching and developing attitude and knowledge.

Workshop is a hands-on training program designed to teach practical skills, techniques, and ideas. It is usually done in a controlled setting that allows facilitation and participation. The number of participants is rather small, up to 20, usually with the same interest or work.

A Training workshop is a type of interactive training where participants carryout a number of training activities rather than passively listen to a lecture or presentation.

To make the leaders capable of managing the CBO as an organization and the members to manage their livelihood activities, they are encouraged to join trainings and to attend workshops to improve their technical knowledge and skills. Table 2 shows the list of suggested training workshops.

Topics	Purpose	Training Content	No. of days
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand the roles and responsibilities of the leaders. How to become effective leaders. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> What is a leader? Types of leaders. Roles and responsibilities of leaders. Characteristics of effective leaders. 	1
How to Conduct a Meeting	To conduct properly a meeting for effective communication, participatory ways in sharing ideas, to reach common agreements among members and to come-up and carry-out decisions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Agenda preparation. Meeting procedure. Recording the minutes. Functions of Leaders and Members during the meeting. 	1
Participatory planning development tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know the different participatory planning tools for community development. To be able to prepare the action plans in a participative manner. To prepare development plans in a participative manner. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Development context analysis tools (Village resource map, Village social map, Trend line, Venn diagram for institutions). Livelihood analysis tools (Farming systems diagram, Benefit analysis flow chart, Seasonal calendar, Daily activity clock, Resource picture cards). Stakeholders development tools (Problem analysis, Vision, Mission, Goal, Objectives Formulation, Venn Diagram for stakeholders, SWOT analysis, Conflict analysis). 	3
Village book	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know the baseline data of the community's socio-economic, institutional and environmental conditions. To compile all the gathered data into the village book. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> How to do village analysis? Baseline data gathering using Participatory planning development tools. Action planning. Preparation of development plan. 	3-5

Action Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop action plan strategy on how to turn the Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives become a reality. To describe the ways on how to meet objectives through detailed actions that describe how and when these will be taken. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is an action plan? 2. What are the criteria of a good action plan? 3. When and how to prepare the action plan? 4. Development of a practical action plan design. 	3
Project management	To know the basic concept of planning, implementation, management and evaluation of project activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is project management? 2. How to manage projects? 3. Identification of livelihood projects. 4. Implementation, management and evaluation of livelihood projects. 5. Budget preparation. 	3
Monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To know the concepts of Monitoring and Evaluation. To prepare performance indicators. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is monitoring and evaluation? 2. Preparation of qualitative and quantitative indicators. 3. Mainstreaming gender into the Monitoring and Evaluation. 	2
Gender and developmentt	To better understand what is gender in development and integrate gender into the action plan, development plan and M&E system.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is gender? 2. Gender mainstreaming. 3. Gender roles and gender relations. 4. Gender analysis 5. Gender indicators. 6. Gender equality and gender equity. 	2
Proposal Writing	To write clear ideas about the project, the objectives, management, implementation and the financial aspect.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Project proposal outline. 2. Content writing. 3. Budget preparation. 	1

Table 2. Training Workshops' Activities for CBO leaders and members



LINKAGING and NETWORKING

Linkaging and networking with government and non-governmental organizations are important roles of the leaders to improve the development of their community. CBO should be trained on how to communicate and negotiate their demands with the government and to link with other organizations who have the same interest as theirs.

Linkaging is to work with other organizations with a formal agreement, like working on the same development fund and implementing a common project. Linkages will help CBO to keep-up with the advances in development activities, can access to development funds, and can get wider range of up-to-date information from other organizations.

Networking is communicating with other people or organization, sharing of project ideas, learning from other's best practices and allowing to see things in a broader perspective. Networking is simply talking to people and making connections that provides opportunities to ask questions and receive feedback.



GENDER

Gender is a strategy to include the concerns and experiences of women and men as integral parts of any rural development plan. To understand Gender is to know the definitions of the terminologies commonly used.

Gender is defined as the socially constructed roles and responsibilities assigned to men and women in a given culture and location.

Sex is biologically determined, cannot be changed, and is universal.

Gender Roles are the tasks and responsibilities of men and women in a given activity. The gender roles are dynamic and will change over time and are influenced by age, class, religion, ethnicity and culture.

Gender Relations are ways wherein a society or culture defines the rights, responsibilities and identities of women and men in relation to one another.

Gender Awareness is to identify the gender roles and to understand how these roles affect the women's needs in comparison to men.

Gender Mainstreaming is assessing the outcomes of planned action for women and men. It includes gender-specific activities whenever women or men are in a disadvantageous position. Gender-specific interventions can target only women, or men, or both to enable them to participate and benefit equally from development efforts. Gender mainstreaming is to include the experience, knowledge and interest of women and men into the development plan. Gender mainstreaming into projects is only effective when Gender Analysis is done.



Gender Analysis is the study of the different roles of men and women to understand what they do, what resources they have, and what their needs and priorities are.

Gender Equity refers to the fairness in the treatment of women and men in terms of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities.

Gender Equality is placing women and men to have equal rights, wherein women have the right to own land and other resources, access to credit, education, job, have the right to vote, among others.

A Sample of Gender Analysis Tool

Daily Activity Clock

Daily Activity Clock is a participatory gender analysis tool to know who performs what, when, and why in a particular household during a typical day.

The comparison between the clocks of that of a woman and that of a man will tell who works the longer hours, who has the less activities, and who has more time for leisure, and sleep.

Steps:

1. You can start the activity by showing your own clock from the time you wake up, take care of the children, go to work and so on.
2. Explain that you also want to learn what they do in their typical day.
3. Make focus groups composed of women and men.
4. Let them draw a big clock in a manila paper.
5. Let them plot each activity following the times in the clock.

Questions to ask:

For Woman and Man - How her/his time is divided?

- Time devoted to household chores (cooking, cleaning, washing and ironing clothes, going to the market, etc.).
- Time devoted to farming and other livelihood activities (plowing, planting, weeding, fertilizing, watering, harvesting, care of the animal, marketing, etc.).
- Time to take care of the children (bathing, feeding, preparing them for school, etc.).
- Time for community activities.
- Time for leisure.
- Time for sleep.

The result will show on who does what, when and why on a typical day. It will also tell what are the usual tasks and responsibilities.

ADVOCACY on ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Advocacy is about influencing people in the government, its policies and structures to bring about change. It is about communicating and bringing environmental issues adversely affecting the community with those in power and persuading them to act swiftly for action. Advocacy is about building relationships with the local, provincial and national government institutions and by working together to solve a problem.

The conservation of the environment should also be included in the development plan. The Community Based Organization must be aware of the environmental problems like; climate change, pollution of the Delta tributaries, soil depletion and the lack of biodiversity that will impact livelihood activities.

If for example, the community lacks drinking water because of water pollution, the problem can be addressed through advocacy work at the local and provincial levels. It will involve the participation of the people in the community by asking them to stop throwing garbage anywhere. This can be done positively by explaining/educating them on the benefits of no pollution to the water sources. For the decision-makers, they can make anti-pollution campaigns and enact policies on: thrash segregation; compost making; recycling; prohibition of throwing plastic and other non-degradable materials to all the water sources.





STRENGTHENING THE VILLAGE REVOLVING FUND





The Village Revolving Fund

What is a revolving fund?

The Village Revolving Fund is a source of money as a start-up capital for livelihood activities in a form of credit. When the loan beneficiaries start paying back their loans, the original fund is replenished and that creates new loan opportunities to others.

Why a revolving fund?

Village Revolving Fund provides CBO members easy access to credit. It does not need collateral. It comes with a very low interest rate. The loan is within reach and is approved in a timely manner. The types of credits are for farm inputs for the farmers and startup capitals for small-scale business enterprises for the landless. The repayment of the principal and interest, goes back to the CBO. The revolving fund becomes its property, which is a motivation for the beneficiaries to pay on time.

Besides credit, some Village Revolving Funds offer Social Saving and Special Saving accounts. For example, the Social Saving is for emergency health fund, wherein the villagers can borrow money for emergency medical treatments. This type of credit is interest free. While the Special Saving is a saving's account wherein a member/depositor earns interest from his/her deposit, like what commercial banks offer.

Activities on Strengthening the Village Revolving Fund

The Community Facilitator will review and study the Capacities of the Leaders, Rules and Regulations, Sources of Capital, Loan Processing and Loan Requirements of the Village Revolving Fund. It is also important to analyze the revolving fund's profitability, types of decision-making made and the causes of the past failures. The results of the reviews and studies will be the bases for her/his recommendations for improvements.

1. Capacity Building for the Leaders of the Village Revolving Fund

To manage the revolving fund successfully, the leaders are encouraged to attend the training activities on; Revolving Fund Management, Proposal Writing, Bookkeeping, Accounting and Auditing. Table 3 shows the suggested training workshops' activities for revolving fund management.

Topics	Purpose	Training Content	No. of days
Village Revolving Fund Management	To properly manage the village revolving fund in a sustainable and transparent manner.	1. Rules and regulations. 2. Loan Requirements. 3. Loan Processing. 4. Financial records. 5. Fund management.	2
Simple Proposal Writing	To write clear ideas about the project, the objectives, management, implementation and the financial aspect.	1. Project proposal outline. 2. Content. 3. Budget information and preparation.	1

Topics	Purpose	Training Content	No. of days
Bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To properly manage the financial records and to know how to use the various financial record books. To better understand the roles and responsibilities of accountants. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roles and responsibilities of an accountant. 2. What the different financial records books. 3. Management of financial statements. 	2
Small Business Enterprise	To know how to manage small business enterprises in profitable and sustainable means.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is a small business enterprise? 2. How to manage the business in a profitable manner? 3. How to prepare a small business enterprise proposal? 	1
Accounting/ Bookkeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To properly manage the financial records and to know how to use the various financial record books. To better understand the roles and responsibilities of accountants. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roles and responsibilities of an accountant. 2. What the different financial records books? 3. Management of financial statements. 	2
Auditing/ Bookkeeping	To know the roles and responsibilities of auditors, understand the different auditing methods and to know the management of different kinds of financial records.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Roles and responsibilities of auditors. 2. Auditing methods. 3. Financial records management. 	2

Table 3. Training Workshops for the Leaders of Village Revolving Fund

2. Formulation of the Rules and Regulations

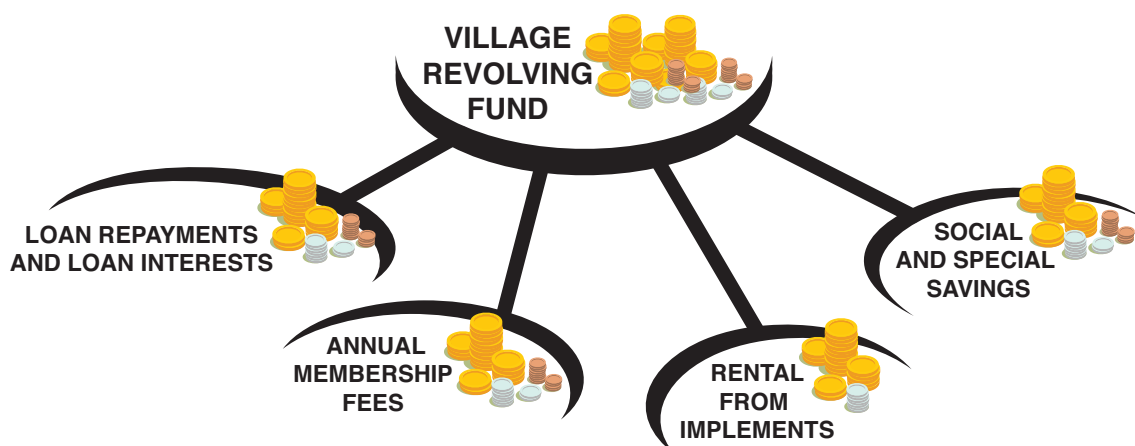
The aim of the rules and regulations of the VRF is to protect both the lender and borrowers' rights. To follow the rules and regulations is to fulfill the main objective of the revolving fund which is to increase the main capital to always have available money for other members to avail.

A Sample: Rules and Regulations of a Village Revolving Fund for the Borrowers

- Has a household in the village.
- Lives in the village.
- Attends monthly meeting at all times.
- Pays fine if absent consecutively on monthly meetings.
- Pays the annual fee.
- Helps and supports voluntarily in the village's development activities.
- Repays the principal loan with interest on the agreed due date.
- Fills-up the loan application form.
- Implements the project activities written in the application / proposal form.
- Abides and obeys the above mentioned VRF rules and regulations.

3. Capital Sourcing

Almost all community based rural organizations make proposals for grants from donor organizations for their project activities or get funding support as part of the donor's program. This is also true for acquiring sources of capital for revolving fund. In this case, it is the function of the Community Facilitator to assist the leaders in the preparation of the funding proposal and in the planning and implementation process. If the revolving fund already exists, the Community Facilitator helps and coaches the leaders for the proper management of funds. Below is a model on how revolving fund is acquired and managed.



4. Loan Processing

To avail a loan from the revolving fund, the borrowers need to provide certain documents such as; Identification Card, Application Form, and Loan Contract, prior to the processing of their loan applications.

The following are the steps of the loan processing as practiced by most successful Village Revolving Fund Committees of Delta Rise Project, Welthungerhilfe.

1. The creditors organized themselves into a group of 2-5 members. The group members serve as co-guarantors, so that everyone in the group has the sense of responsibility to pay the loan. If one defaults, the other members in the group are responsible for paying his/her credit. The group's size depends upon the VDC regulations.
2. She/he must bring his/her household Identification Card.
3. A creditor fills-up the loan application form.
4. She/he submits the application to the VDC-VRF for approval.
5. VDC-VRF approves and prepares the loan contract.
6. Once approved, the creditor signs the contract.
7. After signing the contract, VDC-VRF gives the money.
8. The creditor receives the money.
9. She/She implements the livelihood project.
10. The VDC supervises and monitors the progress of the project.
11. The creditor pays back the loan with interest.
12. VDC receives the payment with interest.

THE LOAN PROCESS

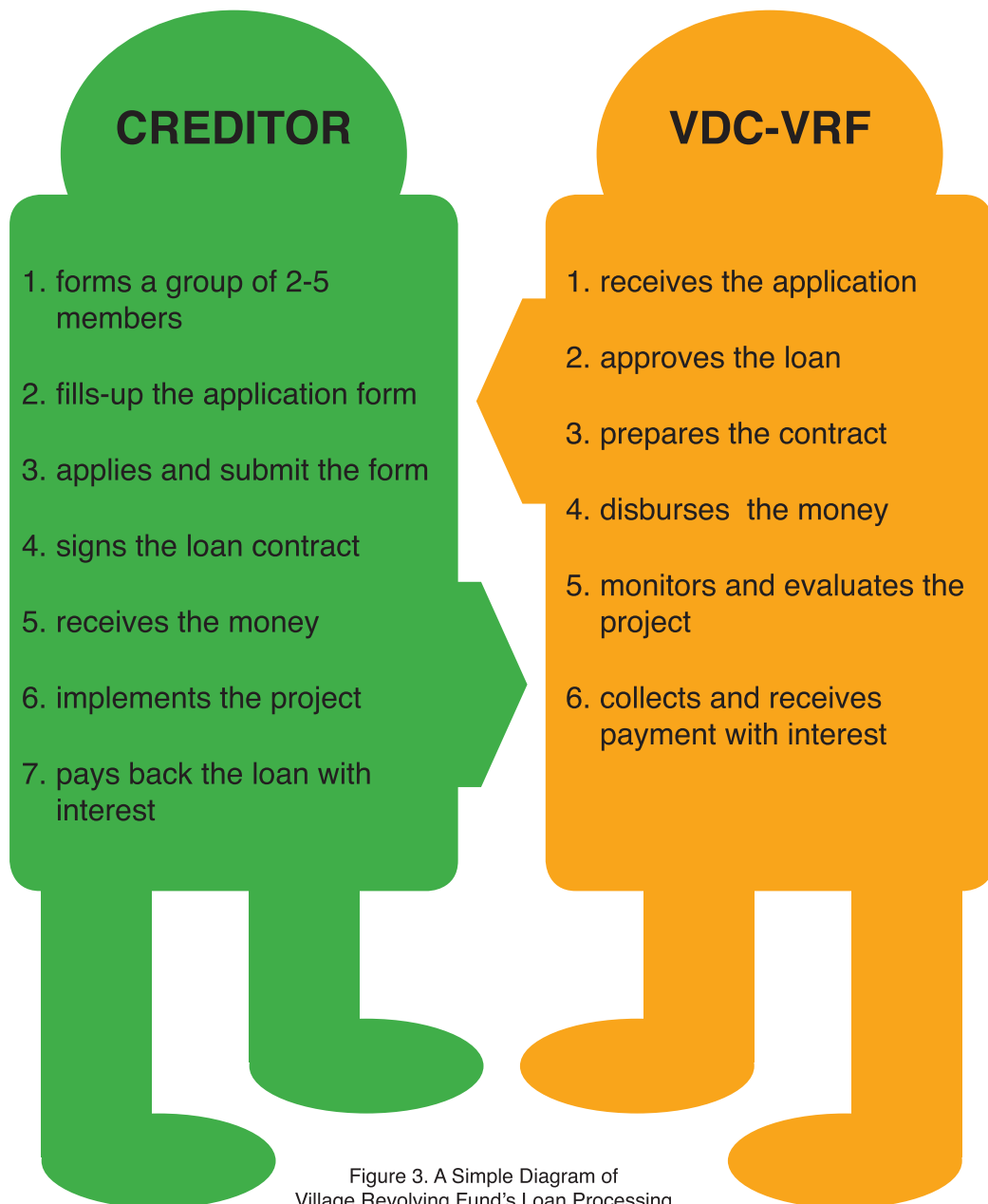


Figure 3. A Simple Diagram of Village Revolving Fund's Loan Processing

A Model: Village Revolving Fund Sourcing and Management

Rise Delta Project, Welthungerhilfe initially provided the VDCs farm inputs like; livestock, farm implements and machines, post harvest materials, rice storage buildings, off-farm income generation inputs, but not cash, as the source for its start-up capital.

At the start of the VRF, the farmers were allowed to borrow farm inputs in kind such as rice seeds, and fertilizers. The landless were dispersed with swine and ducks. After 5-6 months, the farmers paid 50%-100% of the farm inputs, depending on the loan agreement. For the animals, the conditions for repayment varied, depending on the VDCs regulations. Usually, the landless pay their loan 100% with interests. VDCs rented out the farm implements/machines to farmers, with rental ranges from 40,000MMK-120,000MMK.

As the VRF started to accumulate money from the members' annual fees, repayment of credits and farm implements' rental, VDC started to grant cash loan to members at 1-3% interest rate. The creditors must pay the principal loan with interest in a 5-12 month period, depending on the types of loan and the VDC regulations.

The types of loans granted to farmers are for the purchase of farm inputs (seeds, fertilizer, pesticides) and for other farm labor costs (rental of farm implements such as; hand tractor, seeder, thresher). While for the landless, the loans are intended for animal production, small-scale business enterprises, and aquaculture activities and fishing implements.



MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is defined as process to know what happened to the activities done that intend to promote changes. M&E is a tool to assess the performance and the overall progress of an organization.

Monitoring is a continuing process to check the progress of project's activities. It is a frequent form of reflection and once inconsistencies are found between the planned and actual results, corrective measures can be done immediately.

The objectives of project monitoring are to;

- 1) check the proper usage of the material and financial resources,
- 2) review and plan on a regular basis,
- 3) assess whether the activities are carried out,
- 4) identify problems,
- 5) assess the strengths and weaknesses,
- 6) make changes when needed, and
- 7) review the project's objectives.

Evaluation is a process to assess the performance and success of ongoing and completed activities. Evaluation aims to adapt planning strategies for future project activities. Project evaluation is usually conducted in the middle or at the end of the year or during the end of the project activities.

The objectives of project evaluation are to;

- 1) analyze the process of the project's implementation,
- 2) analyze the impacts or changes,
- 3) identify the problems,
- 4) identify the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities,
- 5) identify the lessons learned, and
- 6) make recommendations for improvements and/or for future project implementations.

Village Revolving Fund Monitoring and Evaluation

The Village Revolving Fund's financial records are relevant sources for the monitoring and evaluation on all the revolving fund transactions, such as the following:

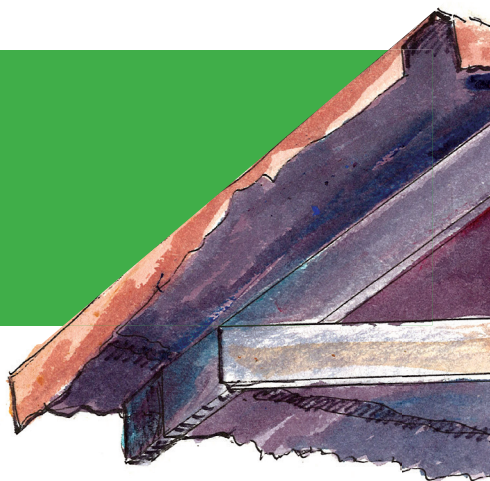
1. The financial audit reports by the Auditor.
2. The financial reports by the Chairman, Treasurer and the Accountant during the monthly meeting.
3. The monthly reports of the Secretary.
4. The posting of the latest balance sheet in the announcement board.
5. The loan records found in the members' household Identification cards.
6. The opening of the cash box during the monthly meeting.
7. The monthly reports of the Community Facilitators.

The Treasurer and the Accountant have all the financial records. The financial records are the balance sheet, income statement, and the cash flow statement.

The balance sheet contains the revolving fund's assets and liabilities.

The income statement is the report on the CBOs income, expenses, and profits.

The cash flow reflects the changes in the balance sheet. It shows the cash-in and cash-out of the revolving fund. Example financial records are; individual's record book, cash book, general ledger, monthly meeting's record book, bank books and the account ledgers.





A Sample Monitoring and Evaluation Tool: Spider Web Diagram

Spider Web Diagram is a participatory M&E tool to assess on how well a project is progressing to reach the planned targets or how the capacities of an organization change over time. It is done in group discussions among the project's beneficiaries with the assistance of a project staff. The changes are indicated by perceptions of the group.

The Steps in making the Spider Web Diagram

1. Identify the issues.
2. Draw the cross dotted lines.
3. Mark the level of change.
4. Evaluate the perceptions.
5. Draw the spider web.

The Spider Web Diagram is used to evaluate the current annual performance and to compare it from the performance of the previous year.

The main issues for the performance evaluation are for the following concerns:

1. Is the management of the village revolving fund transparent?
2. Are record books and cash books used systematically?
3. Are the rules and regulations formulated and are these being followed?
4. Is there an increase of money in the VRF, as compared to the previous year?
5. Can the VDC manage and monitor the income generating activities?

The rating will provide the leaders on what actions to do to improve its performance as an organization and what measures to undertake to improve the revolving fund activities.



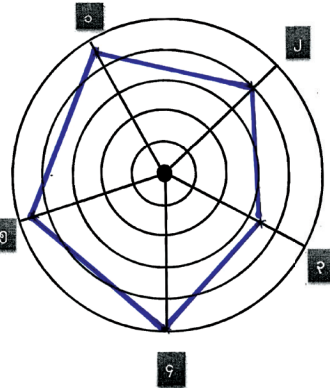
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နေ့စွဲ: ၂၀၁၉ ခုနှစ်

ကျေးရွာအမည်: မင်းယု

ကျေးရွာအုပ်စုအမည်: မောင်နှမကျေး

စဉ်	အဖွဲ့၏ လုပ်ငန်းများ	ရမှတ်					
		၁	၂	၃	၄	၅	၆
၁။	ကျေးရွာရန်ပုံငွေနှင့်ပတ်သက်ပြီးပွင့်လင်း ထင်သာခြင်းသဘောရှိခြင်း					✓	
၂။	မှတ်တမ်းနှင့်စာရင်းစာအုပ်များကိုစနစ် တကျထားရှိအသုံးပြုခြင်း					✓	
၃။	အသင်းအဖွဲ့စည်းမျဉ်းစည်းကမ်းများကို ရေးဆွဲလိုက်နာခြင်း				✓		
၄။	ကျေးရွာ ရန်ပုံငွေများကို တိကျစွာ စုဆောင်းခြင်း အသုံးပြုနိုင်ခြင်း						✓
၅။	ကျေးရွာဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးလုပ်ငန်းများတွင်ပါဝင် နှိုးဆော်ထိန်းသိမ်းကြိုတင်နိုင်ခြင်း					✓	



ပူးပေါင်းပါဝင်ဆွေးနွေးသူ (၂၂) ဦး

မှတ်တမ်းပြုသူ: မ.ညိုအိုဝင်း



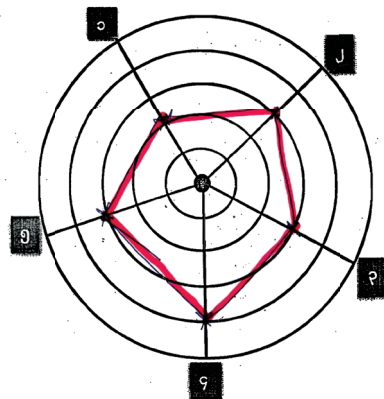
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နေ့စွဲ: ၂၀၁၉ ခုနှစ်

ကျေးရွာအမည်: မင်းယု

ကျေးရွာအုပ်စုအမည်: မောင်နှမကျေး

စဉ်	အဖွဲ့၏ လုပ်ငန်းများ	ရမှတ်				
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၁။	ကျေးရွာရန်ပုံငွေနှင့်ပတ်သက်ပြီးပွင့်လင်း ထင်သာခြင်းသဘောရှိခြင်း	၃၆				
၂။	မှတ်တမ်းနှင့်စာရင်းစာအုပ်များကိုစနစ် တကျထားရှိအသုံးပြုခြင်း			၃၆		
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၄။	ကျေးရွာ ရန်ပုံငွေများကို တိကျစွာ စုဆောင်း ခြင်းအသုံးပြုနိုင်ခြင်း				၃၆	
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ပူးပေါင်းပါဝင်ဆွေးနွေးသူ (၃၆) ဦး

မှတ်တမ်းပြုသူ: မ.ဝင်းမျိုး

E



PHASE OUT

Phase out is the time when the Community Facilitator already starts to withdraw from the village because the goals and objectives of CBO are achieved. It is seen that CBO has the knowledge, skills and capacity which can sustain the existing operation, expand and initiate new projects. The CBO has now the sole responsibility to manage their financial, material, human, and natural resources. Once the CBO has met significantly the indicators for success, it is time for the Community Facilitator to turn over his/her organizing, facilitating and coaching roles to the leaders. The indicators of success are the following:



1. Community Based Organization can plan, manage, implement, and monitor all its project activities.
2. Sustained-membership participation.
3. Well-trained leaders and capable members. The elected leaders and the members perform their roles and responsibilities accordingly.
4. Incomes of members are improved.
5. The development activities are geared towards the accomplishment of the vision, mission, goals and objectives.
6. CBO is capable to do networking and linkaging with other organizations.
7. Gender mainstreaming into all development plans.
8. If there is a revolving fund, the central fund increases and offers higher loans and other services.
9. Loan beneficiaries successfully reinvested their money on income generating projects.
10. All the financial reports are properly recorded, audit and audit reports are done regularly and the management of funds is done in a transparent manner.

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