

QUANG NGAI RURAL
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM
(RUDEP) - PHASE 2

Capacity Building Annual Report 2006-2007



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ANNEX

Annex 1: Capacity building events in 06-07

Acronyms

ATL	Australian Team Leader
BBS	Basic Business Skills
BPSC	Business Promotion and Service Center
CBS	Capacity Building System
CBT	Competency Based Training
CCG	Commune Contact Group
CECEM	Center for Community Empowerment
CP	Capacity Profile
CRD	Center of Rural Development
DCG	District Contact Group
DEC	District Extension Centre
HH	Household
DDO	District Development Officer
PEC	Province Extension Centre
PMU	Program Management Unit
PDA	Participatory Development Adviser
PFLAP	Participatory Forest Land Allocation Process (PFLAP)
RUDEP	Quang Ngai Rural Development Program
SDRC	Social for Social Work Community Development Research and Consultancy
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
VSCF	Village Saving and Credit Facility
WU	Women's Union

Summary

The RUDEP 06-07 training program was established from the training needs assessment (TNA) results. There are 12 District Contact Groups (DCG), 23 Commune Contact Groups (CCG) and RUDEP staff who participated in the TNA. The capacity profiles of each target group were utilized to identify the training needs of individuals in RUDEP, DCGs and CCGs.

A total of 846 training needs were identified: 96 needs from 12 DCGs, and; 750 needs from 23 CCGs .

A Capacity Training Program was developed based on the results of TNA, covering all necessary training requirements. The activities included training courses, study tours and workshop/meetings which were organized and implemented throughout the year. All training courses were competency based with pre and post test evaluations to determine participants knowledge and skills both before and after training.

A total of 1,592 participants (RUDEP staff, DCG, CCG, village leaders, service providers, et cetera) contributed to capacity building events for RUDEP in 2006/07. These events consisted mainly of training courses and study tours; 70 training courses and 11 study tours respectively. Training courses were facilitated by trainers from RUDEP and/or trainers from centres in: Ha Noi - Business Promotion & Service Center (BPSC); Ho Chi Minh City – SDRC; Son La, Thai Nguyen University; Da Nang - Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Quang Ngai - Province Political School; and private consultants.

Please note that this report deals with the institutional capacity building associated with RUDEP and does not include the farmers and households training conducted through the economic and social activities funded by RUDEP.

1 Introduction

The Annual Report outlines all RUDEP Capacity Building Activities, under Component 3. The Capacity Building Annual Report 2006-2007 (1 July 06 - 30 June 2007) will contain:

- An analysis of the main capacity building events conducted by RUDEP, such as training courses and study tours
- Course competency assessment results (pre-test, post-test)
- Lessons learnt

1.1 Quang Ngai Rural Development Project

RUDEP is a rural development program financed jointly by the Governments of Australia and Vietnam. Its goal is to contribute to rural development, governance and poverty reduction in selected communes in Quang Ngai Province.

The programs purpose is to empower poor households (HHs) in selected communes of QN Province. The project works towards improved livelihoods and sustainability, through increased incomes within the risk framework of poor people. The primary beneficiaries targeted by RUDEP will be poor HHs and poor HH groups in each selected commune. The Program is based on three key components: Participation, Focused Capacity Building and Savings and Credit facilities.

In 2006-2007, there were 23 RUDEP communes belonging to 12 Districts: Son Hai, Son Trung and Son Giang, Son Ha District; Tinh Tho, Son Tinh District; Duc Phong, Mo Duc District; Nghia Tho, Nghia Son, Tu Nghia District; Hanh Phuoc, Nghia Hanh District; Pho Chau, Duc Pho District, Binh Minh, Binh Son District, Son Mua, Son Bua, Son Tay District, Tra Hiep, Tra Lam, Tra Bong District, Tra Trung, Tra Lanh, Tay Tra District, Long Son, Long Mai, Long Hiep, Thanh An, Long Mon, Minh Long District; Ba Nam, Ba Le, Ba To District.

RUDEP has been structured into three phases:

- Phase 1: Program design and initial capacity building (1 year, completed October 2002).
- Phase 2: Program implementation in target communes (5 years, starting in October 2002).
- Phase 3 : Expansion of successful activities (4 years).

1.2 Capacity Building Component

The capacity building component is one of four main components of the Program. Activities of this component include training, workshops, study tours and audiovisual materials. These training activities are determined through Training Needs Assessment (TNA) which utilises Capacity Profiles (CPs). These profiles are based on the skills and competencies of RUDEP staff with a focus on participatory methods for the TNA. The training program is developed as a result of the TNA (see TNA report 2006 – 2007) and all training courses are competency based using pre and post test evaluations to measure the knowledge/skills of trainees before and after training.

2 Competency based training system

2.1 Training Needs Assessment (TNA)

The Training Needs Assessment is a process that identifies who needs training and in what work areas. The 2006–2007 TNA used a similar process based on the 2005–2006 model; focusing on the needs of District Contact Group (DCG), Commune Contact Group (CCG) and Program Management Unit (PMU) staff. The TNA was conducted with 12 DCGs, 23 CCGs and PMU staff in March, April and May 2006 (refer 06-07 TNA report).

There were 846 training needs identified, focusing on 8 main work areas:

- Management
- Governance
- Community Development
- Support Commune Development Planning
- Business Planning
- Participatory Training
- Project Management, and;
- Technical Works.

The training program was developed based on these results and the implementation of training courses completed.

2.2 Training Course Design and Contents Proposal.

Subsequent to the development of the training program, a series of training courses for different target groups was organized, starting with the design of the contents for each training course, in one of two ways:

- Improving and updating existing courses if they remained relevant to the needs of RUDEP, or
- Designing new courses

Each training course has been instituted with very clear objectives through:

- referring to the “Capacity Profile”
- stating the required level of competency that is “after the training the trainees are able to “do”, and
- illustrating how trainees will demonstrate their competency

The contents of each training course were designed with relevant target groups, timing, number of participants, etc, and the “proposed contents” were sent to different potential service providers to negotiate, contract and deliver the training.

2.3 Evaluation of training courses

In the “proposed contents”, there are 4 factors:

- Objectives of the training course;
- Reference is made to the “Capacity Profile” to identify, and later measure, the skills/knowledge that trainees covered;

- Competencies are basic indicators to measure levels of trainees increased knowledge/skills during the training, this result being determined from the pre and post test evaluation and;
- How trainees will demonstrate their competency. This relates to the results of the ex-post evaluation to measure what and how they apply what they learnt to their current work.

Three levels of evaluation are useful for training:

1. The evaluation of reactions has been used at the completion of a course, monitoring the participants' response regarding the relevance of training content, trainers, venue and course materials. This is useful information for improving future training.
2. The pre and post test evaluations are applied before and after the training course; each trainee has a duty to complete these tests during the training. The 4 levels of competency used in RUDEP:
 - § Level 1: 0-33% correct answer – critical
 - § Level 2: 34-67% correct answer – concern
 - § Level 3: 68-95% correct answer – consolidating, and
 - § Level 4: 96-100% correct answer – competent.

The results indicate any trainee who falls in levels 1 to 3 is considered “not yet competent”, otherwise, level 4 is considered “competent”.

2.4 Results of 06-07 training program

2.4.1 Implementation

Comparing experiences from 05-06, in 06-07 RUDEP continued to:

- Invite individual participants to attend training courses
- Derive the list from the TNA results,
- Send official invitation letters to participants 5-10 days prior to training courses
- Organize training separately for commune staff of lowland and upland communes to cater for differences in education levels of the participants.

2.4.2 Progress of implementation

Up until 30 June 2007, there were 70 training courses conducted, both inside and outside Quang Ngai; 11 study tours organized for RUDEP staff, DCGs, CCGs and service providers covering different topics relating to key areas of the Program, as identified from the Capacity Profiles.

2.4.3 Level of Participation

Table 1: No of participants in Capacity Building events 06-07.

No	Events	People attended
1	Training course	1,144
2	Study tour	235
3	Workshop/meeting	213
		1,592
	Total	

There was a total 1,592 people who attended workshop/meetings, training and study tours in the 06-07 (account for 80% of people invited). This is an ideal figure with an average of more than 20 people attending each training course and a maximum 20 people participating in a study tour.

Of the 1,592 participants in capacity building activities in RUDEP, 961 people were DCG/CCG members with 241 women (25%) and 720 men (75%). This percentage is acceptable as the number of women in the DCG/CCG list is limited and unbalanced.

2.4.4 Results of implementation

Details of the events of the 06-07 training program are attached in Annex 1.

All participants undertaking a RUDEP training course undergoes a pre and post test evaluation. Figure 1 gives percentage competency in trainees knowledge/skills before and after the training. The results of the pre and post test evaluation are divided into four levels of competency; level 1 (critical), level 2 (concern), level 3 (consolidating) and level 4 (competent).

Figure 1: Pre-test and post-test results of all DCG/CCG training courses

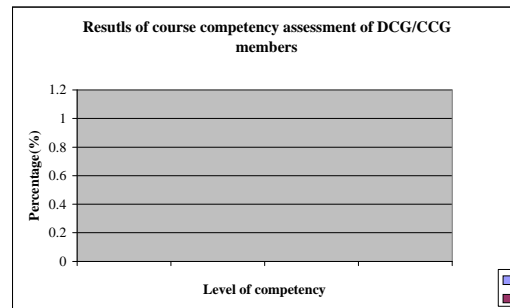


Figure 1 outlines pre-test results:

- 27% of trainees were at a critical level of competency (0 – 33% of questions correct; 0 – 3 marks);
- 55% of trainees were at concern level of competency (34 – 67% of questions correct; 4 -6 marks);
- 18% of trainees were considered as having a consolidating level of competency (68 – 95% of questions correct; 7 –9.5 marks);
- 0% of trainees were considered competent (96– 100% of questions correct; 9.6 -10 marks);

The majority percentage of trainees fall within the critical and concern level of competency (82%). This is indicative of what was identified in the TNA as essential and correct training requirements. In 06-07, many people from villages had the opportunity to participate in training courses. This is a “facilitator source”, that actively supports the implementation of program activities, however fails to provide sufficient training.

Figure 1 shows post-test training results:

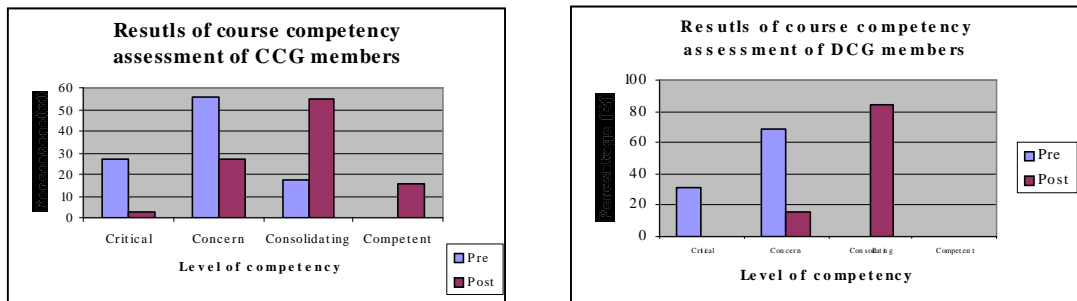
- 2.5% of trainees was considered as having a critical level of competency
- 27% of trainees was considered as having a concern level of competency

- 55% of trainees was considered as having a consolidating level of competency
- 15.5% of trainees was considered as competent

Figure 1 post test results clearly demonstrate increased knowledge/skills of the trainees after training. Although only 15.5% of trainees were considered competent in the post test evaluation, there was a general upwards trend from the pre test. There were higher levels of competency within levels 1 & 2, while levels 3 & 4 also showed significant increase in staff numbers.

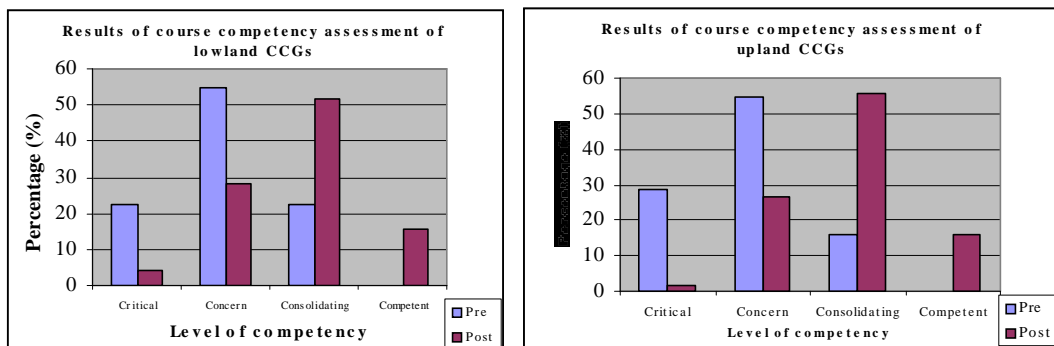
Of the 70 training courses organized in the year 06-07, there was only one course designed for 18 DCG members.

Figure 2: Course competency assessment of DCG/CCG



A comparison of course competency assessment results between lowland and upland communes was done to distinguish the varying levels of competency of their knowledge during the training.

Figure 3: Course competency assessment - lowland and upland communes.



The analysis demonstrated varying levels of competency between upland and lowland communes, with the lowland responding better to training.

There was a significant increase in the knowledge of lowland communes, where up to 68% of trainees were considered as having consolidating (52%) and competent (16%) levels of competency. Comparatively, in the upland communes 72% of trainees were considered consolidating (56%) and competent (16%). The remaining 28% of trainees from upland communes fell within the critical and concern level of competency, lower than 4% in comparison to the lowland communes.

With 961 participants at the DCG/CCG training, 241 were female (25%) and 720 were male (75%).

Figure 4: Course competency assessment: male and female trainees

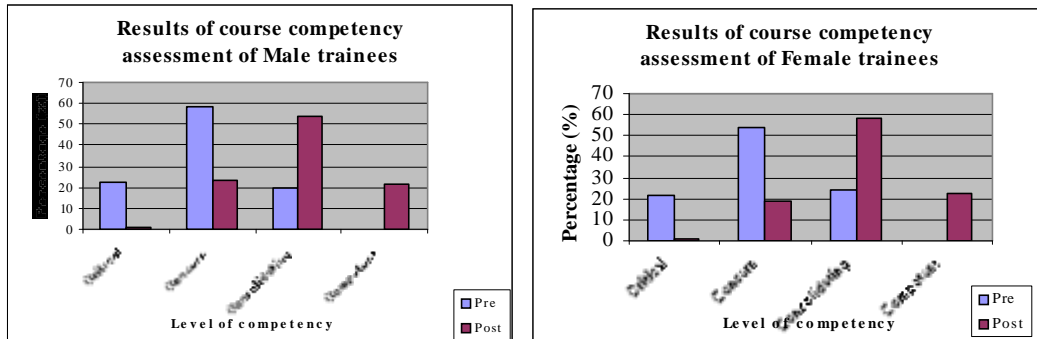


Figure 4 illustrates there is no significant difference in the course competency assessment results between male and female trainees.

In 06-07, many members of upland CCGs participated in training courses, especially village leaders from both lowland and upland communes. They are experienced in working and mobilizing their community to actively participate in RUDEP activities. In the training courses, they were shy and unfamiliar with new training methods, however progressively responded quickly to new training activities. Figure 2 highlighted that there is not much difference in the course competency assessment results between CCGs and village leaders.

3 Organization of study tours

The study tour is a valued opportunity for RUDEP and Province/District/Commune staff to meet different people involved in various projects throughout Viet Nam; to discuss and share experiences in order to effectively implement development activities.

11 study tours were organized in 06-07. They were:

- ***Infrastructure, O&M study tour to Nghe An, Ha Tinh (Plan International Project):*** for DCG/CCG to view processes of implementation and management of infrastructure projects, in particular the mobilization of community to construct and monitor the project. This process has been applied in some RUDEP communes and effectively benefits local people.
- ***PAEM study tour to Son La Province*** PEC and DEC staff were mainly focused on the application of PEAM in demonstrations of different cultivation, livestock, forestry activities et cetera. The PAEM methods also applied in commune/village planning meetings. This could be implemented in Quang Ngai province with support from RUDEP.
- ***02 Income generation study tours to Tuyen Quang, Ha Giang; Phu Tho, Yen Bai*** for DCG/CCG/DEC to share experiences in implementation, management and monitoring of different income generation activities for poor farmers, using PAEM, farmer field school et cetera. These activities were implemented effectively by Northern Mountains Poverty Reduction Project. This provides an opportunity for the DCG/CCG/DEC to meet, agree and commit to providing improved services for the community.
- ***Savings and credit study tour to Giai Lai, Kon Tum*** for District and Commune WU to view the models and management of savings and credit facilities.
- ***Gender study tour to Soc Trang, Tra Vinh*** for Provincial members of the Committee for the Advancement of Women and District WU to increase awareness for both men and women and to develop gender action plans for Province/District/Commune WU. Creates an opportunity for both men and women to participate in social activities while assisting in the development of gender equity in Quang Ngai.
- ***Marketing study tour to Hoi An, Hue for Marketing Development Group.*** Members of this group participated in many marketing activities: the surveying of local markets, to analyze specific commodities in Quang Ngai and implement marketing strategies. This study tour built confidence in their approach to markets in central Viet Nam and encouraged them to share experiences and find outputs for local commodities.
- ***Bee keeping study tour to Da Nang, Quang Binh for RUDEP bee keeping groups.*** The group had the chance to learn how farmers in other provinces like Quang Binh perform this activity. Bee keeping practices and experiences were shared; technology, inputs, outputs and market for their products.
- ***Capacity building for Province Political School and District Trainers to Ha Noi (Helvetas project) and Cao Bang.*** This study tour was effective for the Quang Ngai Political School and District in the implementation of training programs for District trainers and commune cadres. The Quang Ngai Political School and Cao Bang Political School, cooperated with NGO projects and Districts to design, compile and organize training and capacity building activities for commune cadres. Focus was

directed on upland communes where the majority are ethnic minority people with very low education and distinct language barriers.

- ***RUDEP study tour to Nha Trang, Ha Long***: ensure RUDEP staff are comfortable and prepared to deal with the changes before the projects closure.

The study tours have been organized to increase awareness and challenge the behaviour of participants in the implementation of development activities, especially upland communes where physical geography is difficult and education level of local people is limited. They need to know that other provinces/communes/villages in Viet Nam have the same condition but they can do something for their people to contribute to poverty reduction through different activities for social and economic development, with support from different agencies or NGOs.

4 Service provider training

Many topics were organized for Province/District extension staff, with primary focus on Participatory Agricultural Extension Methods (PAEM) methods and its application in development activities.

Main training courses for Province/District in 06-07 include:

- TOT PAEM training
- TOT basic business and marketing skills (BBMS) training
- Form and manage Farmer Interest Group (FIG) training
- Sloping Agricultural Land technology (SALT) model training

The majority of training was conducted by a master trainer from Son La Province who is experienced in TOT training for extension staff. Most of the training materials used in RUDEP were developed by the master trainer on the Son La Province SNV project.

Training was designed in two parts; theory and practice. The purpose was to change the awareness and behaviour of trainees; and to improve skills and practices to work with farmers.

4.1 Level of participation in service provider training

Table 2: No of participants in training for service providers

No	Events	People attended
1	PAEM, BBMS, SALT, FIG etc	183 (57 Females, 126 Males)

In addition to training courses for Province staff, RUDEP provided the PEC with an opportunity to cooperate with the master trainer. Training for DECAs was organized so that members of PEC worked as trainer assistant. The training courses for district extension staff were completed, but the PEC trainers still need more time for practice to become good trainers in the future.

4.2 Course competency assessment results of service provider training

These trainings applied a similar evaluation system to all training courses in RUDEP. The pre and post test evaluation was used before and after training to evaluate the knowledge/skills of trainees during training. A total of 167 trainees completed the pre and post test evaluation.

Figure 5: Results of pre-test, post-test of service providers training

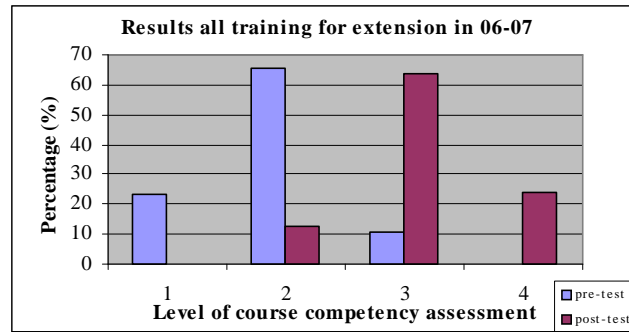


Figure 5 shows that pre-test and post-test:

- 23% of trainees were considered as having a critical level of competency in the pre-test instead of 0% in the post-test.
- 66% of trainees were considered as having a concern level of competency in the pre-test instead of 27% in the post-test.
- 11% of trainees were considered as having a consolidating level of competency instead of 56% in the post-test.
- 0% of trainees were considered as competent instead of 17% in the post-test.

In the pre-test results, nearly 90% of trainees who participated in extension trainings fell within critical and concern levels of competency. However only 13% of trainees were within the concern level of competency in the post-test. One surprising result was that the results of course competency assessment of Province staff was higher than District staff where in the past, District has always been higher. However, while the data show that the extension staff have the knowledge and ability to do participatory extension, in practice, they do not tend to use these skills when working with farmers. This shows that it is not easy to change the awareness and behaviour of these people and this change will need to happen over time through a process of working and there must be commitment from these staff to change.

5 Other training activities:

5.1 Basic business skill for VSCFs (Reflect method)

The major concern for VSCFs in upland communes is the illiteracy of many ethnic minorities, making it difficult for poor farmers to design a business plan and loan money from the fund for its implementation.

Action Aid Viet Nam has experience in integrating education with community development through Reflect Methods (Regenerate Freirian Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques). RUDEP contacted representatives of Action Aid in Ha Noi to discuss assistance in the implementation of this method with members of VSCF in upland communes.

6 upland communes were selected to participate in this activity:

- Ba Le commune (Ba To District)
- Tra Lam commune (Tra Bong District)
- Tra Lanh commune (Tay Tra District)
- Son Giang (Son Ha District),
- Son Trung (Son Ha District), and
- Nghia Son commune (Tu Nghia District)

The local facilitators are representative of Commune Contact Group (CCG), Women Union and members of VSCFs in the commune. They were trained in three courses:

- TOT – First training on Training of Trainer (use Reflect methods)
- TOT – Advance TOT, and
- Develop and use local training materials and M&E.

On completion of training, they go back to their community and train members of available VSCFs, training commenced in December 2006.

Many people from these VSCFs were satisfied, especially the ethnic minority who are predominantly in the illiteracy problem. Participating in this training, members of VSCFs not only learn how to analyze a problem in their production, but are also trained on how to read and write (if they are illiterate). This training is an integration of education into community development for poor people.

After more than 5 months implementing BBS training for VSCF (using reflect methods), 22 VSCFs in six communes achieved good results. There are 60-70% of illiterate people in these VSCFs who now possess basic reading and writing skills. The remaining 30-40% can not read and write due to:

- Did not participate in BBS training, even if they are VSCF members
- they are old and don't want to learn, however, still participated in BBS training, activities, group discussion, et cetera.

- unfamiliarity with holding the pen and writing.

There is a substantial gap between communes in the percentage of VSCF members who can read and write. Tra Lam and Ba Le have lowest results with approximately 60% of VSCF members being illiterate and unable to read, write and do basic calculations.

As a result of BBS training they can:

- read and write their names and members of their families
- calculate from 1 to 50
- read and write 1 sentence and short paragraph
- read and write names of equipment and animals around them
- especially, confidently sign a loan application instead of signing by pressing their fingerprint.

The account of one woman from Lang Na I – Son Trung commune after participating in BBS training:

“ My name is Tha – Dinh Thi Tha. Before participating in the BBS training, I can not imagine how my name looks like, just hear what people call my name. But now, I feel very happy that I can write my name correctly, it is Dinh Thi Tha, and I also can write names of my husband, my children and other words. I can recognize number from 1 to 20, I can calculate (addition, subtraction) with small numbers from 1 to 20. Although, I can not read many words at the same time, I am still very excited about this training. I need more time to practice, but the important thing is that I have good chance to learn with my members in VSCF, share experiences in livestock production, cropping and sit together to discuss problems in life”.

Other members of the VSCFs in six communes have the same thinking and experiences from participating in this training i.e. they feel interested and learn many things. Those who were illiterate now have the chance to learn how to read, write and calculate, the others have the chance to discuss and share experiences in production and other issues. This is the most effective way to increase awareness in their life on many aspects such as health care, environmental protection, children education et cetera.

5.2 Cooperation with Quang Ngai Political School to build capacity for District trainers and organize training for upland commune cadres.

Early 2006, RUDEP contacted the Political school to conduct training courses for upland commune staff. This is a government training centre with members participating from Province/District/Commune level in Quang Ngai Province. Trainers in the Department of Governance and Law of the Political School were trained, using participatory training methods. The Political School trainers delivered training for commune cadres and village leaders and it created a good feeling amongst the trainees.

The next step is contacting the leader of the Political School to discuss a training/capacity building program for upland District people who will then become “resource trainers”. This is also a preparation step for RUDEP 3 where budget will be provided to support P135/2 in upland areas.

6 Conclusion and Recommendation

- The training and capacity building activities of 06-07 were organized for all members of CCG, in particular, village leaders. They are the main facilitators in the community and contribute to the success of RUDEP's activities however, are less likely to participate in capacity building activities. They were hopeful that RUDEP would provide further opportunity to participate in training, capacity building activities.
- The cancellation of training for the DCG and adjusting the budget for training from DCG to CCG members and village leaders was a quick and correct decision. Low attendance at DCG training events was a waste of time and money and the demands of CCGs and village leaders are large.
- Besides topics/contents of training that support the implementation of RUDEP's activities, RUDEP's scope extends to training CCGs to "Governance". Although, most participants had some training in this area at the Political training, focus was on theory, with limited time allocated for practice, therefore, trainees were excited in the modules of this training.
- All members of CCG and village leaders have the opportunity to participate in training, capacity building funded by RUDEP. It should be extended to all members of the CPC, so that whenever changes in commune personnel occur, it will be of less effect to the operation of the commune and RUDEP.

Limitations

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The methodology adopted and sources of information used by URS are outlined in this report. URS has made no independent verification of this information beyond the agreed scope of works and URS assumes no responsibility for any inaccuracies or omissions. No indications were found during our investigations that information contained in this report as provided to URS was false.

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Annex 1

06-07 training program

