

**ORIGINAL
ENGLISH VERSION**



MODULE 1. REPORT

REVIEW OF EXISTING OPERATIONAL MANUALS AND COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES



**POOR COMMUNES LIVELIHOODS
AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM
(P-CLIP)
Grant No.:TF053742**

**Department of Local Economies
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**POOR COMMUNES LIVELIHOODS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM
(GRANT TF053742)**

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TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBPP	Community-Based Participatory Process
CBRIP	Community-Based Rural Infrastructure Project
CDB	Commune Development Boards
CF	Community Facilitator
CPCC	Commune Project Coordination Committee
CPMU	Central Project Management Unit
DPC	District People's Committee
DTSG	District Technical Support Group
EM	Ethnic minority
NTP-PR	The National Target Programme for Poverty Reduction
PPMU	Provincial Project Management Unit
SEDEMA	The Socio-Economic Development for Communes Faced with Extreme Difficulties in Ethnic and Mountainous Areas

1. BACKGROUND: CONTRACT FOUR – COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

1. Based on its ongoing support for the Northern Mountains Poverty Reduction Project (NMPRP) and the Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project (CBRIP), the World Bank has been invited by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) on behalf of the Government of Vietnam to consider support for a follow-on operation to help finance and add value to Vietnam's National Target Programs for Poverty Reduction (NTP-PR) which are being re-designed for the 2006-2010 period. The proposed operation is referred to as the Poor Communes Livelihoods and Infrastructure Program (P-CLIP).

2. The Objectives of the proposed P-CLIP is to reduce poverty and foster secure and sustainable livelihoods for those living in the country's poorest and most disadvantaged communes. In particular, it would enhance the performance of GoV's SEDEMA program with respect to local-level empowerment, transparency and accountability; poverty targeting; and monitoring and evaluation. It is expected that the program will focus geographically in regions in which poverty incidence is highest and poverty gap deepest. For the purpose of this contract, in consultation with MPI communes in Northern, Central and Mekong Delta Regions have been chosen.



3. Key Performance Indicators are to include a) Empowerment of local communities and ethnic minorities, assessed against their demonstrated capacity in directly managing investments and use of citizen report cards; b) Instrumental benefits of empowerment seen in higher quality and cost-effectiveness of basic infrastructure investments in participating communes, by comparison with those in non-program communes; c) Poverty targeting as shown by the percentages of poor people included and non-poor excluded, and percentage of program investments that reach or benefit the poorest two quintiles of the population; and d) Improved process monitoring and impact evaluation mechanisms applied in practice and used to inform ongoing implementation. Preparation work to be supported by this PHRD Grant include four major components, each of which will comprise a separate contract package. This report deals with deliverables under Contract Four, Module One, specifically as follows -

2. SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES UNDER CONTRACT FOUR

4. It is anticipated that the re-designed NTP-PR for the period 2006-2010, which P-CLIP will support, will reaffirm a focus on the enabling environment for decentralised local development efforts. An essential part of such an enabling environment is information dissemination and effective communication for social change. Provision of public information in accessible, timely and understandable forms is an essential instrument to promote cadre capacity, community dialogue, transparency, mutual understanding and agreement. It is a valuable tool to enhance peoples' awareness of their rights and responsibilities with respect to NTP-PR activities, thereby enhancing overall effectiveness, impact and accountability. The strategy is not intended as a tool for one-way information dissemination but as a means to promote dialogue, building capacity and increasing

empowerment – amongst both beneficiaries and implementers of the programme. The activities to be carried out under the communications strategy preparation contract will include three modules, under which this report deals with Module 1 detailed overall as follows:

Module 1: A Review of Existing Operational Manuals and Communications Activities associated with the Government's NTP-PR and the World Bank-financed Northern Mountain Poverty Reduction Project (NMPRP) and Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project (CBRIP).

3. MODULE 1. DETAILED SUBJECT UNDER THIS REPORT

3.1 MODULE 1:

- a) **Collation and desk review of existing operational manuals (OMs) and guidelines used to support current implementation procedures under NTP-PR, NMPRP and CBRIP and similar programs.**

Review of Existing Operational Manuals and Communications Activities

5. Under Module 1, the consultants as required by the TORs referred to and liaised with the ongoing DANIDA support to CBRIP, which is focused on capacity-building through improved project training materials and methods. The consultants also reviewed the study and recommendations on capacity building, under taken by the Partnership to Support the Poorest Communes (PAC).



6. Specific reference was also paid to desk reviews of the various reports available such as the FIRST ANNUAL REPORT for the World Bank by the Louis Berger Group Inc and VICA Consultants Ltd presented December 2004. This report presented a detailed review of the problems identified in regard to communications and as a desk study, and from previous experience with the extensive site visits to the respective communes, these findings were used as a base line from which to expand the current analysis.

7. In addition to the three lots of Project Manuals reviewed herein, extensive reading was conducted to see where the communications manuals had in the past managed to impart required information and where they may have failed, and if failed, why and what can be done to improve the situation.

8. As indicated in the comments responding to the initial TORs, the communications strategy has to direct itself not just to what has happened in the past but what is likely to evolve in the future. This is in part anticipating the project design. Never the less from lessons learned this review team is aiming at both simplicity and empowerment of recipients beyond what exists at present.

9. Some of the specific findings related to communications strategy are presented in summary form below.

Table 1: Analysis of past communications strategy

Finding	Analysis	Previous recommendation	Further recommendation
Leaflet distribution process not effective	Distribution on ad hoc basis	Photocopies and rotation	Previous recommendation not very effective
Posters not permanently posted	Children collect or weather destroys	Post in central area	Good news if people save them. Produce more
Many ethnic minority people cannot read	Need for other mechanism	Use more verbal communication	Use pictures where possible
Content of meetings not given in advance	Not effective	CPCC should go door to door to advise people	Have meetings at a scheduled time when people are available
Information at follow up meetings (year two) weak	People lost interest	Workshops for CPCCs	Require further workshops directed at aims of project rather than just reaching targets
Lack of awareness of project policies	Lack of time for discussion	Pay more attention to provision of full and accurate information	Have to link project benefits to individuals
Women's participation in discussion is limited	Said lack of seats, short time duration of meetings, language barrier	Train CPCC on communication and use participatory methods	Analysis of this issue seems poor so will require detailed attention
People participate less after sub projects are selected	There are no requirements for subsequent village meetings	CFs should encourage further village meetings	Need to involve people in the sub projects
Few people work for income	No clear mechanism for contractors to hire local people	Need to negotiate with contractor from beginning	Need to change system to include locals
People not consulted on construction design	This has caused protests (Son Ha, Quang Ngai)	CPCC should monitor more closely	Part of major change in ownership
Disclosure of financial records and reports to the public	Lack of supervision by PPMU and communes not used to revealing such information	PPMU to post information in public places	Require a better method where accounts can be explained
Selection of contractors alien to communes	All seems too complicated	Bidding should be simplified	In the bidding process contractors should be given points for use of local labour
Insufficient information on resettlement	Safeguard policy in place but not well understood and people not well informed	Needs in intensive training of safeguard policy	Need to document and distribute more leaflets on safeguard policy

Finding	Analysis	Previous recommendation	Further recommendation
Operational Manual for compensation confines compensation to 1-2% while safeguard policy states that compensation shall be paid at market price without any deductions.			These issues need to be resolved

10. A general recommendation throughout the reviews was that the CFs need to help more effectively. Obviously this identifies a major training need in that area. This commences with the lack of information to certain groups of people in the communes on what the project is about, showing also that attendance at a meeting is not enough and language needs to be understood by everyone. It also extends to selection of projects and is more relevant to employing local people. When looking at a communications strategy, these issues need to be resolved.¹

11. A general theme which comes through in the general documentation is that “systems” that appear to include instructions whether in manuals or in other forms seem to be too complicated for the recipients – the stakeholders to understand. It is of course realised that donors have certain rules for lending and for monitoring performance but there should be a way of aligning such requirements with the aims of these poverty reduction projects for empowering the beneficiaries. As an example, the Chia Se Program has a Program Implementation Manual of in itself 131 pages covering every aspect of implementation; there are four volumes and nine Annexes. This is an extensive amount of material to absorb let alone feel one is part of.

12. Following on this theme, all the project preparation and appraisal documentation aims the deliverables at not just providing infrastructure for these poorest of communes but for involving them in the construction/delivery process. It does not appear however that the documentation and rules etc., governing delivery take fully into account this process given its complexity.

13. Such an issue becomes clear as elsewhere in the previous WB review, it is noted that contractors find it more expensive to hire local untrained people than to move in their own teams. If however the project is aiming at empowering the local communes, the extra cost of employing locals should be incorporated into the process. This could be done by providing for a training allowance in bidding process or by giving a higher score to bidders who provide for the use of local labour. Instead the current documentation whilst all encompassing, appears to aim at covering all formal eventualities but is perhaps cast in the wrong direction for the recipients.

¹ First Annual Report, to CPMU December 2004, Pg 58.

14. The lack of clarity and focus in some areas is outlined in the review of the individual programme manuals as follows.

I. Community-Based Rural Infrastructure Project (CBRIP)

General comment:

15. In general the majority of people in the project areas seem to know basic aspects of the project such as the project name, its main purposes, scope of infrastructures that the project can support, their responsibility to contribute by 5% of the construction cost, either in cash or in kind (labour, materials), the total cost of project support for each village/commune. Many people may know in more detail such issues as priorities given to women and EM, community monitoring and maintenance rights and responsibility, etc. What they know least is perhaps the safeguard policies (environmental, resettlement and compensation policies). There are still people who do not know about the project or know only its name.



16. Those who went to village meetings participated in voting to select village representatives for CPCC and to select priority subprojects but many of them probably it seems did not have chance or did not know how to speak out with their own opinion/questions for various reasons.

17. Among project staff there are differences in degree of knowledge about the project at different administrative levels, with CPCC members seemingly being the least knowledgeable. That means information dissemination has to focus on project staff at different levels, not just on beneficiaries.

18. In terms of participation, people participation appears to be strong really only at the beginning of each project cycle (selection of sub-projects) but not very much on consultation or construction design. Community monitoring is done by a selected groups of villagers. This is may be very well done but these people obviously lack technical knowledge and need further help. Community maintenance is not very good with no clear plan.

In review of the Manuals specifically:

1. Information Dissemination Activity is not always fully emphasized in the Project Guidance Manuals.

19. The Guidance Manuals provide guidance mainly on projects implementation on site and there is not much guidance on promulgation about projects. The result is that the information dissemination activity is in reality not always overly digested by the community. Therefore, the information dissemination effectiveness is not high. On the other hand in regard to information dissemination, this is mentioned in CPCC, CF, DTSG and PPMU training. CBRIP is a very complex project and so too is the information dissemination within it. The weakest part seems to be in the safeguards policy. There is a

detailed policy but it is not clear how well this is disseminated. What this tends to indicate is that at an official level there is training but at the recipient end there remains a need to step up dissemination.

20. In the Guidance Manuals of CBRIP, only **Volume 1: “Community-Based Sub-project Planning and Implementation Process”** (Vietnamese Version) has sub-item 1.2 “Information Dissemination about Project” (Page 15), which mentions the information dissemination activity as an independent activity. All other volumes of these manuals have no independent information dissemination activities as in Volume 1. In those volumes, information dissemination activities are often *integrated* into other activities on site. This can cause project implementation staff *not to pay full attention* to information dissemination activities during the project implementation process. Instead they often pay attention to other project activities. Take the following, for instance:

- Volume II presents in great detail knowledge of construction techniques first, and then mentions information dissemination activities on maintenance at the end of the book (Pages 73-75). It results in dissemination activities to local people on maintenance for sub-projects not being fully implemented. The maintenance work in CBRIP is consequently seen to be poor and the implementation of information campaign is not very good either.
- Volumes III and IV are similar to Volume II. Concretely, there is only one line in Volume III mentioning the financial disclosure issue: “*Financial information of sub-project is publicly disclosed to the community*” (Page 21). In Volume IV, information dissemination on safeguard policies is presented in pages 14, 16 and 26.

2. *Information dissemination is clearly emphasized at the beginning stage of the project implementation but fades out afterwards.*

21. The CBRIP information dissemination activities presentation method adopted in the four Guidance Manuals mentioned above results in the fact that information dissemination activities have in reality, often been carried out in the *sub-project implementation preparation* stage. In the following stages of sub-project implementation, information dissemination activities are less and less used and then perhaps not performed. This is because of the presentation of information dissemination applied in those four guidance manuals. It causes project implementation staff to adopt their approach in a similar way. The result is that the participation of local people to project activities is reflected more at the beginning stage. At later and final stages of sub-project implementation, people’s participation is more and more reduced even when there are subsequent reviews in some projects.

3. *Information dissemination at project implementation preparation stage is general, does not go into detail.*

22. As pointed out above, Only Volume I, Point 1.2 (Page 15) mentions information dissemination activity as an independent one. However, this point is referred to *generally* and *there are not many specific details*. For example, on mentioning that the objective of

project promulgation is to make local people “clearly aware of their rights and responsibility in works selection, making contributions to the construction, supervision, management and maintenance of the works”, it lacks information dissemination content on the people’s right of being compensated for their property losses. This results in the fact that a large number of project implementation staff at commune level does not have a correct understanding of the compensation policy of the project. Once project staff’s understanding is wrong, the people suffer and they do not know about compensation policy applying to losses either. This point is also included with the distributing of leaflets to households where without regulating the required contents of those leaflets, especially important ones that need to be emphasized, there seems to be lack of understanding. These communications errors seem to result in disputes and misunderstandings on compensation policy which is not very good for the projects.



4. *Information Dissemination at later stages of project implementation is not separated into an independent activity.*

23. In Volumes II, III & IV, information dissemination activity is not separated into an independent activity. Therefore, people know very little information relating to later activities of sub-projects. For example, (i) People do not know whether they have the right of carrying out simple sub-projects by themselves or not. (ii) The Community is not clearly aware of their obligation in performing maintenance activities on sub-projects after putting the works in use. If this information is disseminated over all courses of the sub-project implementation process, there will be greater participation in the project.

Lessons learned.

- Documents on information dissemination should be compiled as independent (separate) and compulsory activity.
- Information dissemination activities are compiled as detailed as possible.
- Information dissemination activities must be reflected over all courses of sub-project implementation. In other words, information dissemination must be done continually from the first stage of project implementation preparation until the final stage of maintenance after completion and putting the works into use. Each stage will have a relevant content of information dissemination. Thus, information will reach people at the right time. Repeated dissemination will have much higher effectiveness as compared with one-time dissemination.

II. Northern Mountains Poverty Reduction Project (NMPRP)

1. *Information Dissemination Activity is emphasized and detailed in the Project Implementation Manuals.*

General Comment:

24. Many of the observation in CBRIP are also valid for NMPRP. In fact, the existing documents suggest that many of the means for information dissemination used in CBRIP are also used extensively here (poster, leaflets, other media means). Below are a few additional points.

- Women representation in the Commune Development Boards (CDB) is weak, with usually only one woman out of 12 to 24 members on the CDB (Shanks et al. 2005). There is no requirement that each village should have one man and one woman as in CBRIP. Low women representation casts some doubt about women participation in decision making in project implementation. (The same is not true for EM participation).
- There is no requirement for women's attendance in village meetings as well as no requirement for women voting to select sub-projects. Experience of CBRIP suggests that lacking such an explicit requirement, women's participation in village meeting may be limited to only attendance and not involve much discussion.
- As in CBRIP, information dissemination about compensation and other safeguard policies is poorly done.
- Poor and remote villages do not have sufficient voice in the project. Many EM people are illiterate and cannot understand project policies in the Kinh language



In Review of Manuals Specifically:

25. In relation to the Project Implementation Manuals and reference documents, all have a lot of disseminative information on the project to be publicized. The information dissemination is presented widely at different stages of project implementation. For example:

- Project Implementation Manual (Part 1: General Information of NMPRP) clearly states that *people will participate in all stages of project implementation* (from initial planning to maintenance activity of works and services after completion). Also, this document clearly points out that all information relating to all project implementation stages must be *publicly informed and disseminated* to the people (Page 13).
- Project Implementation Manual (Part 2: Method for Participatory Commune Development Planning) also emphasizes further that all information on the project must be disseminated in the whole commune. The dissemination method is that development plans of the communes must be posted at public places, or presented as maps with illustrative pictures for easy understanding by the local people (Pages 4, 5, 12).

- Project Implementation Manual (Part 4: Institutional Capacity Building Plan) uses the whole of point 5.5 “Public Education and Information” (Page 20) to present one of the approaches to support people living in remote upland areas. This point indicates in detail various means of communications (TV, radio, dissemination materials on husbandry, supply of fresh water, etc), media programs and concrete places for performing information dissemination.
- Project Implementation Manual (Part V: Bidding and Procurement Procedures) uses the whole of point 5.6: “Procurement with Community Participation (CP)” (Page 26) to present the community participation in sub-projects with cost of less than USD20,000 and local labourers accounting for 40%~50% of total contract value. In order to make the community participation effective, a communications strategy had been implemented: “Local community should be well informed and encouraged to participate through a program of information dissemination on the nature, functions, content and requirements of the works through notices/advertisements posted and broadcast in the communes. All information regarding projects’ investments must be disclosed publicly in the communes. Means of information dissemination include public meetings, broadcasting in local media, notices in public places, leaflets, etc. (Page 26&27).
- Project Implementation Manual (Part VII: Financial Management Manual) uses the whole Chapter 7 “Financial Reporting and Information Disclosure” (Page 58), which uses point 7.4 “Public Disclosure of Financial Information” (Page 61) to present the financial disclosure issue of the project. This point presents in detail principles of financial disclosures (clear, easy-to-read and easy-to-understand written forms, time of disclosure, use of local language, etc), content of information to be publicly disclosed so that all people know and for it to help them be ready for participation in the project, and places of financial disclosure.
- In addition to the PIMs mentioned above, Reference Document R1: “Strategy and Action Plan for Ethnic Groups” points out that *‘A strong information dissemination program will be established for the Project to provide project information as well as to promote transparency in available resources and costs of various sub-projects. The media used will be a combination of modern and traditional sources depending on the access to such sources and the literacy level of the communities. In addition to text and speech, alternative media such as pictures, visual aids, video and other appropriate methods will be used’*. (Page 7). Reference Document R2: “Policy Framework for Compensation and Rehabilitation of Project Affected Persons” also emphasizes that project affected persons (suffering property loss) will be consulted throughout the various stages of the preparation and implementation of the Compensation and Rehabilitation Plan. For these purposes and prior to the preparation of the Compensation and Rehabilitation Plan, the PAPs will be informed of the provisions of this Policy Framework at public and individual meetings held by the respective PPMU, District People’s Committee and Commune People’s Committee. Each household PAP will be fully informed by the relevant District People’s Committee and/or Commune People’s Committee of their entitlements and rehabilitation choices under the Compensation and Rehabilitation Plan (page 7).

2. *Information dissemination mentioned above is not separated into an independent activity that needs to be obligatorily during implementation in all sub-project implementation steps.*

Lessons Learned.

- Similar to CBRIP, in this NMPRP manual, information dissemination should be presented as an independent (separate) activity and this activity must be obligatorily and implemented *regularly* from the beginning stage of project preparation to the final stage of maintenance after completion.
- It was recommended that in future programs steps should be taken to ensure a more balanced ratio of men and women on these management and supervision boards, so that women are more fully and actively involved in all project activities, and so that women's opinions can affect decisions (Shanks et al. 2005).
- A series of village meeting to develop village development plan is good idea and should continue.
- There should be a requirement for women's attendance at village meetings and gender-sensitive procedures for sub-project selection as in CBRIP.
- See the CBRIP lessons for dissemination of safeguard policies
- Distribution of project resources within a commune need to be based both on needs (more needs, more investment), and also on a right-based approach (every commune person to have the same right to benefit from the project—the implication of it is that remote village with few households (low needs) should also receive investment (usually very high cost due to remoteness).

III. Chia Se Program

General comment:

26. By design Chia Se involves participation of beneficiaries many times during the project implementation. A distinctive feature of Chia Se is that a large proportion of funding (about 80% of Local Development Fund-LDF) is to support households directly whereas in CBRIP and NMPRP it is used for infrastructure. This also contributed to better information sharing about the project because recipients (households) have to repeatedly account for the use of the fund to the commune project management unit.

27. Chia Se emphasizes village participatory planning and has an innovative procedure for village situation analysis and village baseline data collection for monitoring and evaluation. These activities involve participation of villagers in many meetings and also contribute to better understanding of the project.

28. A short coming of Chia Se in information dissemination is that the terms used in the manuals and other project instructions are too academic and many of the terms appear to be difficult for people to understand (see In-Depth Review Of The Chia Se Poverty Alleviation Programme by Henny Andersen, Goran Nilsson Axberg, Ho Thi Phuong Dai, Hugh Emrys Evans-Team Leader, Vu Ngoc Long, and Le Quoc Quan, 2004). This may lead to the situation when people have a good knowledge about general points of the project but they may not know sufficient details about certain aspects of the projects. In the document cited above, the authors commented that the poor did not receive priority as mentioned in the objective of the project (they receive the same share as other households according to “equal spirit” of traditional Vietnamese concepts). Observation when visiting Chia Se project cites (Quang Tri and Yen Bai) suggests that the tasks and tools for information dissemination, data collection, and participatory procedures in Chia Se are too complex for the existing level of knowledge and capacity of local people and it should be simplified.

29. It is strongly suggested that lessons learnt from CBRIP should be applied here also. Note also that in CBRIP information dissemination is integrated into project activities and not clearly set out as in Chia Se.

In Relation to Manuals Specifically:

30. In relation to the manuals themselves, information dissemination documents of the Chia Se program are detailed and concrete (Volume I, Chapter 4, Page 29 and Volume IV, Chapter 11, Page 48, 56, 57). Special sections regarding subprojects that can be done by the *community themselves* (page 29) will contribute to enhancement of people’s awareness to attract more of their participation. Information dissemination procedure is implemented at many stages. From the promulgation and introduction of the projects to self-implementation of projects, these are publicized to all local people. This information which is disseminated at village level (because the village is a project implementation cell), appears to bring more effectiveness than the other two projects, CBRIP and NMPRP: See comparison table following:



Table 2: Broad Project Comparison

Item for Comparison	CBRIP	NMPRP	Chia Se Program
“Detail” level of Information Dissemination	Not detailed	Detailed	Most detailed
“Emphasis” level of Information Dissemination	Not emphasized	Emphasized	Emphasized
“Independence” of Information Dissemination	Independent	Not clear ¹	Independent
Time of Information Dissemination	At beginning stage of project implementation	Not clear	At many stages
Estimated community participation to the project	At beginning stage of project implementation	At many stages	At many stages

Note: Comparing the three projects, CBRIP information dissemination is not only at the beginning of the project but it is concentrated at the beginning of each project cycle. In each commune/village there are three project cycles (3 years in a row), and each year they have village meetings to select subprojects and these are occasions when information dissemination is implemented intensively. At other times people are reminded about the project and they may think more about the project when they have to pay 5% contribution or when they apply for a job on the construction work to earn additional income.

Lessons Learned

31. Lessons learned mentioned in regard to the manuals in the CBRIP section will be general lessons for all three projects CBRIP, NMPRP and the Chia Se Program.

- Documents on information dissemination should be compiled as an independent (separate) and compulsory activity.
- Information dissemination activities are compiled as detailed as possible.
- Information dissemination activities must be reflected over all the courses of sub-project implementation. In other words, information dissemination must be done regularly from the first stage of project implementation preparation until the final stage of maintenance after completion and putting the works into use. Each stage will have a relevant content of information dissemination. Thus, information will reach people at the right time. Repeated dissemination will have much higher effectiveness as compared with one-time dissemination.

3.2 MODULE 1:

- b) In regard to a participatory review with users at different levels, national, provincial, district, commune and below; including both women and men, and ethnic minorities in selected NTP-PR and WB project sites, the content, appropriateness and utility of current materials and timeliness, quality and efficacy of any accompanying training that has taken place.**

32. This process of reviewing this section early in the project cycle was simplified since three of the consulting team had worked extensively on previous projects related to these issues.² The consultants were able to use their extensive earlier experience and working knowledge of the areas under consideration.

33. In general, from review of available material, in all 13 provinces under CBRIP, information has been disseminated through a variety of channels.

Village meetings:

34. Generally at the start of the project, each village in the project is organized to hold one village meeting with the sole purpose of providing people with the information about the project, their rights and responsibilities. The village meeting needed to have more than 40%

of women participants to be a valid village meeting. The projects were to be carried out in 3 cycles (3 years), and this meeting for each village is only for the first year. In this meeting, villagers vote for one man and one woman to participate in Commune Project Coordination Committee (CPCC).

35. CPCC members, then, are trained with participatory methods for a community-based participation process. The training lasted for about a week and was done by participatory specialists invited by CPMU or from some universities (agricultural and forestry universities in central Vietnam). The training materials were reviewed by the project and they are satisfactory for providing the trainees with participatory knowledge and skills, including how to work with village people in village planning and project implementation. Participatory methods have become quite popular in development projects throughout Vietnam so are now reasonably well understood.

36. Next, another village meeting is organized for selection of priority small-scale infrastructures (known as “sub-projects”) to be built by the project. CPCC and CF, and in many cases also DTSG facilitate village meetings. This village meeting also needs to have more than 40% of women. In this village meeting, villagers again have explained the project policies. People discuss priorities and selection is done via balloting (women and men vote separately, with policy to give priority for women choice). It should be noted however that as soon as one interferes with the process of one person one vote and introduces “affirmative action” voting procedure becomes tainted and degree of preference to be given becomes subjective.

37. In general, about 60-80% of village people attended these village meetings and in most cases women attended more than men. While various reviews indicate that many people did not really understand the issues, in general it may be assumed that from these meetings most people gained some main information about the project. However, there are aspects of these village meetings that need more attention in terms of provision of information:

- Attending the meeting does not warrant having good information. Particularly it does not mean good participation.
- People were not provided adequate information before the meeting (what it is all about, who in the family should go). There is a lack in methods of inviting people to the meetings, which may result in having only those who stay at home at the time of the meeting and not necessarily the most knowledgeable persons. A common method of inviting people to village meetings is using the local loudspeaker system (available in most communes), using a drum to signal people about the meetings (for remote village in mountainous areas where people are scattered), or door-to-door invitation (invitation is usually general as one person from each household).
- For a village of a large size (say 200 households or more), lack of a meeting house that can accommodate all people can affect the quality of the meetings. In many



village, people get together in the village head's house and many have to sit outside. Those sitting outside probably cannot know what is going on nor participate in the discussion. In many other villages they split village meetings into smaller meetings. Now, after four years of project implementation, many villages had new village meeting houses built by the project, but the size of these houses are conditioned by the total amount of money from the project for the given village, and in many cases they are still small for the population size of the village.

- Quality of village meetings is weak for various reasons. Usually each village meeting lasted for about two hours. This is a very short time for people to be able to participate in discussion of many aspects of the project in sufficient details. This is particularly true for village with a large population size. In many cases, people come, listen, and vote, with not much discussion. A part of the story about the weak quality of village meetings is due to habit people have of only listening to higher-ranking people, and for higher-ranking people to talk only and not seeking opinion of people (despite that they are trained with participatory methods).
- In many cases, two village meetings mentioned above are combined in one meeting, which exacerbate the shortcomings mentioned.
- Starting from the second year of the project, only one village meeting was organized, and not much information was discussed again. Instead, they only carried out selection of subprojects.
- It seems that safeguard (mainly compensation) policies have not received due attention in information dissemination. Project staff in many provinces fear complicated procedures of compensation process may delay project implementation. They often said that CBRIP focuses on small infrastructure constructions that do not require extensive compensation. The losses of property, if any, are generally small. Therefore they do not pay attention to information dissemination about compensation. In addition, this is possibly because these are the most sensitive issues and once they are raised open up lengthy discussion which can be avoided by ignoring the issues until they arise. CPCC and other project staff consequently seem to persuade people to donate their assets, or compensation is done outside the project framework.
- Lack of skills in recording village meeting contents, and poor storage of such records.
- For sub-projects selected by villagers that later were not approved by the CPCC, there is no satisfactory way to provide feedback to people on reasons for non approval.
- Holding male-female joint discussion or separate discussion for women and men: (the project guideline is to have separate discussions while in reality in many places they combine) It was suggested in some communes that there was no need to hold



separate meetings for women and men. There are various views on this. Strengthening local people's participation in community development projects is a process that takes time. Through this process local people and officials should learn new customs and give up old habits which would probably impede the democratic participation of each person, especially the women and the poor or the EM, people having few representatives in the villages. Experiences in the world show that women and men have different views on development priorities. Holding separate discussions and meetings for women and men creates good opportunities for both women and men to speak out their opinions and viewpoints on priority issues in the village. This means a great deal to people who are shy, less self-confident, or habitually do not give out their opinions in big groups. In the context that there is no absolute equality between women and men, men are likely to have greater influence than women, and tend to direct discussions to their priorities. Having said that, the other line of thought is that in striving for eventual equality, separation is not an effective route towards that end.

38. Another issue which should be noted to ensure the quality of meetings is the role of the village elderly. In communes with many EM people, opinions of the village elderly are normally very important. In many provinces, project staff used village elders' influence in order to encourage women and men to attend meetings. This is good and needs promoting. However, it is necessary to avoid cases where the elderly dominate view points of attendants in the meetings. A CPCC member in Bao Thuan commune (Di Linh district, Lam Dong province) reported that in the village all women and men usually followed the village elder's opinion.

3.3 MODULE 1:

- c) Identification and documentation of *all* existing communication channels, media and activities used by NTP-PR/NMPRP/CBRIP to raise awareness of their activities and facilitate target groups and implementers' understanding of operational processes, and their rights and responsibilities (e.g. village or mass organisation meetings; TV/Radio slots; leaflets; public address system; Commune Culture/Post office stations etc);**

Other ways to provide project information to local people:

39. Project posters and leaflets are used in all provinces to disseminate information about the project. Posters are posted in public places. Posters are printed in colour, in many provinces it is made of durable materials such as plastic to resist wearing by weather. Leaflets are distributed to households. In some provinces (Binh Thuan and in a number of communes in other provinces), leaflets are distributed to 100% of households in the project communes. However, in general, only slightly more than half of households in other project areas receive leaflets.

40. Using commune loudspeaker system to provide people information about the project is also a common activity of the project communes. Except for a handful of communes lacking this system (some provinces provided loudspeakers for commune for this purpose), this communication method is widespread in the project areas.

41. A project logo is attached to project constructions which also helps to provide people with awareness about the project. Logos are made of durable materials (metal, tile, cement, etc.) since soft materials are quickly degraded or lost.

42. Creative ways of provision of project information:

- Many provinces produced T-shirts, shirts, caps, bags and calendars with project logo to distribute to DTSG, CF, CPCC, and in many cases also a number of households (sometimes all households).
- Many provinces use local TV and radio to broadcast information about the projects (usually only for 2-3 times). Binh Dinh PPMU has project's dissemination materials translated into Bana and H're languages (the two majority EMs in Binh Dinh province) and broadcast on the local radio stations in order to propagate the project.
- Binh Dinh PPMU also conducted many other various ways of dissemination such as showing videos about the project (based on the videos by CPMU and by the Provincial Television). In Huong Son commune, Tan Ky district (Nghe An), CPCC used a four-wheel vehicle equipped with a loud-speaker to disseminate the information and this is a very effective way.
- In Binh Tan and Binh Thuan communes (Quang Ngai province), slogans and flags were hang up on the day of village meeting held to disseminate project information. CPCCs also invited an ensemble to attract people to the meetings. These ways of dissemination seemed very effective in isolated rural areas with many EM people.
- CPCC in Cam Quy commune (Thanh Hoa) had an initiative to build three concrete bulletin boards with project logo in public places. This is a good idea because the bulletin boards are durable and, in addition to project information, they can be used to propagate news on production as well as other socio-economic information. The currency and detail of information on the bulletin boards draws attention from local people and they will obtain project information while reading the news.
- Both Vietnamese and local EM languages were used during meetings in communes with many EMs.
- Dissemination activities were also integrated into other village meetings.
- In many communes, mass organization meetings are also used to disseminate the information about the project. Of particular importance is the Women's Union's role in providing project information to women (Ha Tinh).

43. Initiative of CPCC in Phong Phu, Tuy Phong district, Binh Thuan: printing leaflets for each household (following is a citation from the 4th Quarterly Report by the Process Monitoring Team of CBRIP).

44. CPCC in Phong Phu, Tuy Phong district, Binh Thuan had invented a very innovative way to disseminate project information. They used a part of the 1.7% fund for management to print leaflets for each household in each of the project villages (the total printing cost is only more than 1 million VND). The original idea of the CPCC is only to make it easier for households to contribute their share in the 5% contribution fund for the subproject. Since the villagers are very poor and the contribution of each household (depending on each subproject) can amount to VND 50 thousand which is a significant sum that not all households can afford at one time, the CPCC decided that each household will contribute this sum over a period of a few months with each month paying only VND 5 thousand.

45. In addition to making it easier for household to pay for 5% the contribution, this method is very good for information dissemination. Collection of contributions for a few months in a row is a very good way of reminding villagers about the project and it will help them to understand the project, their responsibility and their rights better. In the leaflets, there are project name and logo, the village name, the household (head) name, the name of the subproject(s) in the village, the project years (first or second), the total cost of the subproject(s), the 5% cost that the villagers have to contribute, a calendar with detailed description of amount of money that each household have to contribute in a particular month during the period, and a note that the collection of household money will be carried out in the 30th day of each month and will be broadcasted in the village loudspeaker system.

46. The leaflet is printed very nicely and coloured! (see Appendix 2 leaflet attached). Random interviews with households in the project villages confirmed that they did receive this leaflet and knew about the project quite well.



47. The leaflet is a very good tool for dissemination of the project information and to improve its transparency. In its current form, the villagers can already have a lot of information about the project. However, there is still room for adding other information on the document, especially information about the rights and responsibility of the village people as well as project policies. This is an excellent innovation that other project communes in the whole project can consider.

General remark about CBRIP information dissemination:

48. Through all the above mentioned activities, the majority of people in the project areas know general aspects of the project such as the project name, its main purposes, scope of infrastructure that the project can support, their responsibility to contribute by 5% of the construction cost, either in cash or in kind (labour, materials), the total cost of project support for each village/commune. Many people may know more details such as priorities given to women and EM, community monitoring and maintenance rights and responsibility, etc. What they know least is perhaps the safeguard policies (environmental, resettlement and compensation policies). There are still people who do not know about the project or only its name.

49. There remains a major policy issue however on how far it is expedient to stress the compensation issue beyond what is provided at present. The information exists if one seeks to find it but it is possible to understand why officials do not want to stress the information since this can lead to false hopes, raise issues and problems before they exist as issues and in the extreme form lead to fraudulent claims.

50. Those who went to village meetings participated in voting to select village representatives for CPCC, and to select priority subprojects, but many of them probably did not have chance or did not know how to speak out their own opinion/questions for various reasons.

51. Among project staff there are differences in degree of knowledge about the project between staff at different administrative levels, with CPCC members being the least knowledgeable. That means information dissemination has to do also with project staff at different levels, not just beneficiaries.

52. In term of participation, it is apparent that people's participation is strong only at the beginning of each project cycle (selection of sub-projects), and not very much on consultation or construction design. Community monitoring is done by a selected group of villagers. This may be very well done but they lack technical knowledge and need further help. Community maintenance is not very good with no apparent no clear plan.

Lessons learnt specifically from CBRIP:

- The dissemination must be repeated during the implementation process, especially for low educated people. For this, a fund for information dissemination and project design needs to be developed. Attention should be paid to avoiding the situation where information dissemination is only done well at the beginning of the project life.
- Methods of delivering information should be changed, updated and creative over time. Good experiences should be spread to other project communes and provinces.
- Project management levels should pay more attention on quality of information dissemination. While many people know about the project, there are still a certain number of people who do not know about some aspects of the project. Information provided should be more detailed.
- Quality of village meetings reflected in active discussion by all attendants should be emphasized. It needs creative way to facilitate discussion and to organize it in a manageable manner (time, location, size of village meeting, duration, facilitation, supporting means).
- All aspects of the project need to be equally address in information dissemination, not to omit any aspect, especially safeguard policies, rights and responsibilities of beneficiaries.

- At any time when a selection of alternatives/persons is needed, the selection process needs to be transparent and information about it need to be disseminated widely and in sufficient detail.
- Project staff, especially at commune and district levels, need to be trained with practical communication skills.
- Initiative of CPCC Phong Phu, Tuy Phong district, Binh Thuan province should be replicated wherever applicable.
- EM language should be used more in EM communities.
- Explicit requirement for women participation in project design as in CBRIP is very good and needs to be continued.
- There should be requirement to record all information dissemination activities for monitoring and evaluation as well as for refinement of project implementation.
- People do not participate in inter-commune subprojects (managed by district level) although they should do so. Attention should be paid to information dissemination to people for whatever affects the life of commune people, regardless of whether it is managed by the commune or by the district/province.

3.4 MODULE 1:

- d) Collation and review of available data on literacy and language use, newspaper/magazine readership, TV and radio ownership/access, preferred programmes and listening times amongst different groups (e.g. according to gender, age, geography, rural/urban, socio-economic status, ethnic group), and analysis of such data against identified poor communes targeted for inclusion in the future NTP-PR/P-CLIP.**

53. From the “Desk Review” under Module 1, what emerged was that no comprehensive all encompassing schedule as depicted above existed. Consequently as this is obviously something which should be detailed, the project team have scheduled this for inclusion in the Field Visits which they intend to undertake as a next step in the project execution (see Appendix 3 attached).

54. In particular mediums such as Radio/TV and time slots will be investigated, not only in the designated areas but for the country as a whole based on the sample findings.

55. Otherwise detailed means of communication listed as available today includes the following -

- T-shirts, shirts, caps, bags, and calendars with project logo to distributed to DTSG, CF, CPCC, and in many cases also a number of households.
- Many provinces use local TV and radio to broadcast about the project (usually only for 2-3 times). Binh Dinh PPMU has project’s dissemination materials translated

into Bana and H're languages (the two majority EMs in Binh Dinh province) and broadcasted them on the local radio stations in order to propagate the project.

- Binh Dinh PPMU showed videos about the project (based on the videos by CPMU and by the Provincial Television). In Huong Son commune, Tan Ky district (Nghe An), CPCC used a four-wheel vehicle equipped with loud-speaker.
- In Binh Tan and Binh Thuan communes (Quang Ngai province), slogans and flags were hang up on the day of village meeting held to disseminate project information.
- CPCC in Cam Quy commune (Thanh Hoa) built 3 concrete bulletin boards with project logo in public places.

56. As at January 2006, no specific poor communes have been identified for inclusion in the future NTP-PR/P-CLIP.


APPENDIX 1: MAJOR REPORTS REVIEWED IN ADDITION TO MANUALS

November 2005	Local Governance, Transparency and Anti Corruption in Community Driven Development in Vietnam	Sea Change Partners, Singapore
September 2005	Final Report for Research on Policies for fixed Cultivation and Sedentarisation in Vietnam	DFID – Institute of Ethnic Minorities
September 2005	Review of Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project (CBRIP) & Northern Mountains Poverty Reduction Project (NMPRP)	MPI
June 2005	The National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction for the Period 2006-2010	Revised NTP-PR Prodoc 25 June 2005 includes also review of National Target Programme on Hunger Eradication and Poverty Reduction 2001-2005.
June 2005	2006-2010 SEDEMA Socio Economic Development Programme for Economic Minorities and Remote Areas	WB/Donor Co-financing through P-CLIP
December 2004	First Annual Report	Louis Berger/VICA Consultants for World Bank
November 2004	PAC Conference papers on “Partnership to Assist Poorest Communes”	Conference papers
September 2004	Operationalising Pro-Poor Growth: Case study Vietnam	University of Frankfurt by Thomas Bonschab & Rainer Klump.
June 2004	Project concept note and related documentation	WB/ Robin Mearns
June 2004	Japan PHRD Funding Proposal For the Technical Assistance Programme	Japanese Government
May 2002	Progress Monitoring Report Second Report May 2002	MPI/WB with consultants Duong Bich Hanh & Natasha Pairaudeau
January 2002	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS)	WB(SAC & PRSC)) – IMF (PRGF)
June 2001	World Bank Project Appraisal Document for A Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project	WB Team under Christopher J.N.Gibbs
March 2001	Pre-feasibility Study, Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project, Vol III: Project Implementation Plan.	MPI/WB National Institute for Urban and Rural Planning – Ministry of Construction
May 2005	Review Community Based Rural Infrastructure Project (CBRIP) and Northern Mountains Poverty Reduction Project (NMPRP)	Shanks, Edwin, Vu Xuan Dao, Tran Thi Van Anh, Ngo Huy Liem

APPENDIX 2: BROCHURE

Leaflet made by CPCC Phong Phu, Tuy Phong district, Binh Thuan province.

HANG MỤC CÔNG TRÌNH	TỔNG DỰ TOÁN ĐƯỢC DUYỆT		Tổng mức đóng góp 5% vào công trình
	Năm thứ nhất	Năm thứ hai	
1/ Hệ thống nước sạch	143.000.000		7.150.000
2/ Nhà cộng đồng, Thiết bị		132.346.000	6.617.300
CỘNG			13.767.300



THÔNG BÁO

**HUY ĐỘNG 5% VỐN CỘNG ĐỒNG
XÂY DỰNG CÁC CÔNG TRÌNH QUY MÔ NHỎ**

Họ Và Tên (chủ Hộ) :

Địa chỉ: THÔN TUY TỊNH 1 - XÃ PHONG PHÚ

**MỨC ĐÓNG GÓP HỘ GIA ĐÌNH 5% XÂY DỰNG CÁC CÔNG TRÌNH QUY MÔ NHỎ
 THUỘC DỰ ÁN "HTCSNTDVCĐ"
 THÔN TUY TỊNH 1 - XÃ PHONG PHÚ**

Quý III/2004			Quý IV/2004			Quý I/2005			Quý II/2005			Tổng số tiền đóng góp 5%
Tháng 7	Tháng 8	Tháng 9	Tháng 10	Tháng 11	Tháng 12	Tháng 1	Tháng 2	Tháng 3	Tháng 4	Tháng 5	Tháng 6	
5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	5.000	3.500			48.500

Ghi chú : Thu vào ngày 30 hàng tháng tại hộ gia đình và thông báo trên hệ thống phát thanh Thôn.

APPENDIX 3: PROVINCIAL SURVEY PLAN

Consultant Team will be divided into 2 sub-teams: Sub-team 1 and Sub-team 2

Sub-team 1: - Going to **Dien Bien & Lai Chau**, 13-17 Feb.
- Going to **Soc Trang & Tra Vinh**, 21-24 Feb.

Sub-team 2: - Going to **Gia Lai & Dak Lak**, 13-16 Feb.
- Going to **Yen Bai**, 23-24 Feb.

FIELD MISSION ONE:

I. Northern Region: Sub-Team 1 & Sub-Team 2

No.	Province	Commune	Distance (km)	Mode of Travel
1	Dien Bien	To be determined later	460 km from Hanoi	Air & Car (QL6)
2	Lai Chau	To be determined later	144 km from Dien Bien	Car (QL6)
3	Yen Bai	To be determined later	182 km from Hanoi	Car (QL2, QL70)

Sub-Team 1:

13 February, Monday afternoon, Fly to **Dien Bien (13:50)**

14 February, Tuesday, in **Dien Bien:** AM meet with provincial project officials
PM visit selected Commune.
Stay overnight in Dien Bien

15 February, Wednesday: AM leave for **Lai Chau**
PM meet with provincial project officials.
Stay overnight in Lai Chau

16 February, Thursday: AM visit selected Commune in **Lai Chau**
PM drive back to Dien Bien
Stay overnight in Dien Bien

17 February, Friday: **12:10 PM** fly back to Hanoi

Sub-Team 2:

23 February, Thursday: AM drive to **Yen Bai**
PM visit provincial project officials
Stay overnight in Yen Bai

24 February, Friday, in **Yen Bai:** AM visit selected Commune
PM drive back to Hanoi

FIELD MISSION TWO:**II. Central Region: Sub-Team 2**

No.	Province	Commune	Distance (km)	Mode of Travel
1	Gia Lai	To be determined later	369km (From Da Nang)	Air & Car
2	Dak Lak	To be determined later	199km (From Gia Lai)	Air & Car

13 February, Monday:**11:45** AM Fly to Pleiku (Gia Lai)

Stay overnight in Gia lai

14 February, Tuesday, in **Gia Lai**:

AM see provincial project officials

PM visit selected Commune

Stay overnight in Gia lai

15 February, Wednesday:AM drive to **Dak Lak**

PM see provincial project officials

Stay overnight in Dak Lak

16 February, Thursday:AM visit selected Commune (finish early)³**12:00** fly back to Hanoi from Ban Me Thuot**III. Mekong Delta Region: Sub-Team 1**

No.	Province	Commune	Distance (km)	Mode of Travel
1	Soc Trang	To be determined later	295km (From HCMC-NH1A)	Air & car
2	Tra Vinh	To be determined later	156km (From HCMC-NH1A)	Air & car (NH1A)

21 February, Monday:AM fly to **Ho Chi Minh city**PM drive to **Soc Trang**22 February, Tuesday, in **Soc Trang**:

AM meet provincial project officials

PM visit selected Commune

Stay overnight in Soc Trang

23 February, Wednesday, in **Tra Vinh**:

AM drive to Tra Vinh

PM meet provincial project officials

Stay overnight in Tra Vinh

24 February, Wednesday:

AM visit selected Commune

PM drive back to HCMC & return to Hanoi

SUBJECTS TO BE MET:

Provincial project officials: Anyone available related to any of the related projects. Specifically CFs, CPCCs and PPMUs.

Communes: People related to the project, Head people, also group of normal average people living in commune. Separation also between men and women.

WORKING CONTENTS:

Standard questionnaire for Communes:

What do they know about these projects to assist them?

How did they find out about these projects?

Who advised them?

Do they see these people on a regular basis?

Can they name any assistance they have received?

What communications media do they have/know of i.e. posters, leaflets, radio, TV, other?

What other documentation have they seen?

Where do they get their main outside information, radio, TV, newspapers etc and if so what are they?

What would they like to see improved?

Any other suggestions?

Collect photographic samples of brochures/ etc discovered.

TRAINING:

Since training is required during the early part of the project before the final documentation and Manuals have been prepared, it is intended to incorporate training into these first Missions. The training will be interactive; to in part identify what material has been used in the past and its effectiveness while also pointing out to the participants, the findings of the desk study review contained in this report.