



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Project Support PAR in MARD – VIE/02/016



SHARED PRACTICES ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION REFORM



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAFW	Committee for Advancement of Women
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DOP	Department of Personnel
GoV	Government of Vietnam
HRM	Human Resources Management
ISO	International Standard Organisation
IT	Information Technology
MARD	Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NAEC	National Agricultural Extension Centre
NAPA	National Academy of Public Administration
OMARD	Office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
OSS	One Stop Shop
PAR	Public Administrative Reform
PD	Project Document
PMIS	Personnel Management Information System
PSP	Public Service Provider
PSU	Project Support Unit
TA	Technical Assistance
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

FOREWORD

The project supporting Public Administration Reform (PAR) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) started in 2001. Funded by the Netherlands, UNDP and the Government of Viet Nam, the project has as aimed at improving the organisational structure of MARD, streamlining regulations, strengthening human resources, expanding the application of information technology, and enhancing the steering and coordination of PAR in the agriculture and rural development sector.

In particular, during the past six years, the project has supported the preparation and implementation of the PAR Action Plan of MARD for 2001 – 2005 using a results-based planning and management approach facilitating monitoring and supervision of the Plan. The project has also contributed to the simplification and streamlining of procedures; standardisation of work-flow processes and methodology for Job Descriptions, delineating responsibilities and lines of accountability; new learner-oriented training methodologies; the introduction and application of the Personnel Management Information System (PMIS); the piloting of ISO 9001:2000; the application of the “one-stop-shop” mechanism in seven MARD departments; a variety of information technology applications enabling central-local two-way communication between central and local levels; new systems for reporting on-line; and of the initial piloting of rural telecenters in 13 communes. These significant achievements have had a strong impact on the Government’s management of the agriculture and rural development sector and the delivery of public services to farmers.

The project has also initiated some significant research studies, including a study on service providers’ needs and demands; a study on recommendations for the promulgation, issuance and implementation of legal normative documents related to agriculture and rural development; a study on gender issues related to PAR in the Ministry; a study on the extension system, etc. These studies have together formed an important basis for the preparation of the PAR Action Plan 2006-10.

The knowledge and experience gained through the tools, models and methodologies implemented or piloted by the project will be disseminated as best practices that could be replicated on a wider basis in the Ministry and beyond, contributing to the enhancement of the efficiency and effectiveness of the public administration system and, consequently, to the sustainable development of agriculture and rural development sector in the future.

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Executive Summary

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) plays a vital role in Viet Nam's continued development. To meet both current and future challenges in the agriculture sector Viet Nam needs a MARD committed to meaningful public administration reform responding to the needs of its most important clients, the farming households and the rural poor. As line ministry for the ARD sector MARD has two core elements in its mandate: MARD shall undertake state management in the sector on behalf of the GoV. But MARD shall also ensure provision of public services, aiming to stimulate income generation and poverty reduction in the sector.

The Public Administrative Reform in MARD is directly oriented towards socio-economic development in the rural areas and consequently also directly linked to the national targets of poverty reduction. MARD's PAR process has been internationally supported during the phase until 2005, focused around a core outcome formulated as 'Effective and Efficient MARD Administration'. Under this project support MARD has piloted a number of approaches of which some have been selected to be presented in this document as contributions to Shared Practices, aiming at giving ideas and inspiration to other actors on the PAR scene and in the different administrative units.

Shared Practice One introduces the use of objective-oriented planning tools or logframes. MARD has piloted and by now is gradually applying logframe approaches for a number of planning and design processes, having realised how powerful this planning and design tool is. Logframe approaches have been used for two PAR Action Plans (2005 and 2010), the Anti-corruption Action Plan, the Socio-Economic Development Plan and a range of subprojects under these.

The objective-oriented planning approach offers participatory problem-solving tools, ensuring commitment and consensus. It offers a solid base for comprehensive monitoring and reporting systems and for project implementation. The note includes a supplementary description of project implementation, based on the logframe approach and using the PAR in MARD project as a case.

MARD has piloted the One-Stop-Shop mechanism as the first line ministry. Approaches and experiences are presented as the second Shared Practice. The OSS has offered clear advantages even though the pilot has not lasted very long. Results after 10 months existence have been convincing and OSS will in the coming years be implemented as operational mechanism for all administrative units in MARD.

Implementation of quality management systems have been piloted at MARD. The experiences are presented as Shared Practice Three. Although cumbersome and resource demanding the ISO has proven and effective tool to streamline work processes and define unit and individual functions clearly. ISO will also be implemented in other units during the next phase.

Other practices could have been included in this document. The not included practices are, however, reported either in individual thematic reports or in the project documentation report. This relates for example gender mainstreaming which is comprehensively reported in a thematic report from the project. It also relates to the reports on beneficiaries and customer needs, which are reported for example in the Farmer Needs Study and the Legal Impact Assessment.

By the end of this PAR phase, the project PAR in MARD is regarded a success, although it has been to a large extent internally oriented towards organisational and institutional restructuring. It is anticipated and hoped that the needs of the farming household can come more directly into focus as a driving force for the next PAR phase, which by now has been designed and approved by the Minister of MARD.

1 PAR Issues in the ARD sector

1.1 Sector Background

Vietnam is still predominantly an agricultural economy. Approximately 78% of Vietnam's population of 82 million earns their livelihood from agriculture, broadly defined. In numbers this comes to a staggering figure of some 60 million people. Over 80% of Vietnam's poor are living in rural areas.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) plays a vital role in Viet Nam's continued development. The Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) comprise a challenging 4.5% annual growth rate for agricultural production and poverty reduction in rural areas at the level of 2% per year. The SEDP operates through interventions within the input and output side of the ARD sector.

The importance of governance as a sustaining element to realise economic growth and poverty reduction targets is widely accepted.¹ To meet both current and future challenges in the agriculture sector Viet Nam needs a MARD committed to meaningful public administration reform responding to the needs of its most important clients, the farming households and the rural poor.

The challenges with respect to balanced development and social progress are even greater with the advent of Viet Nam's international integration, which is likely to have a direct and immediate effect on farmers, especially the poor. These changes require an effective and responsive MARD that can help Vietnamese farmers capitalize on the opportunities and respond appropriately to the challenges of globalization.

As line ministry for the ARD sector MARD has two core elements in its mandate: MARD shall undertake state management in the sector on behalf of the GoV. But MARD shall also ensure provision of public services, aiming to stimulate income generation and poverty reduction in the sector. Continued, consistent and comprehensive administrative reforms, ensuring that MARD is effective, efficient and responsive to the needs in the sector stemming from the GoV and the farming households as well are seen as the necessary response to fulfilling the mandate.

¹ Cf. the global governance data and statistical documentation published by the World Bank Institute at www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/data

1.2 The PAR MP

In 1986, the 6th Congress of the Communist Party initiated the “doi moi” or renovation process with priority given to economic reforms. After the initial wave of economic reforms, producing significant changes in the transformation from a centrally planned economy towards a socialist market economy, a national review of lessons learned demonstrated that administrative weaknesses hampered attainment of socio-economic growth targets. The review of lessons learned very clearly pointed to the need for a comprehensive administrative reform.

The PAR Master Programme 2001 – 2010 was approved by the Prime Minister in Decision No 136/TTg on the 17th September.

The diagnosis in the PAR MP states that 'the lingering existence of inertia and habits from the centralised, subsidized bureaucratic system which have taken deep roots in the thinking, working styles and practices of a section of cadres and civil servants, in particular those who have vested interests in this old system, will create obstacles to PAR and make it very difficult for PAR to get over the influences and constraints of the old mechanism and adapt itself to the market-based mechanism. In the meantime, we will carry out PAR with limited knowledge and experience in state management in the development of a market economy with socialist orientation'²

The Master Programme aims at gradually substituting subsidised and centralised management practices by new mechanisms, suitable for a socialist oriented market economy. The Master Programme is based on four mutually linked strategies: (i) institutional strengthening promoting the rule of law and enhancing efficiency of public service; (ii) organisational strengthening establishing rational structures with clear distribution of responsibilities; (iii) human resources strengthening, streamlining staff structures and enhancing effective personnel management, motivation and incentives; and finally (iv) financial strengthening decentralising financial management and budget functions. The overall target is by 2010 to establish an administration which is democratic, transparent, professional, effective, and efficient, pursuant to the principle of the socialist legislative government under the leadership of the Party.

Under the Master Plan each ministry, centrally-run cities and provinces have developed a specific action plan for their sector for 2001 - 2005.

1.3 PAR in MARD

The Public Administrative Reform in MARD is directly oriented towards socio-economic development in the rural areas and consequently also directly linked to the national targets of poverty reduction. In the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005, covering the first phase of the PAR MP, this is stated in the overall, long-term objective, which is combining socio-economic development with enhanced administrative effectiveness and efficiency.

² Here from Goran Andersen: Reflections on Administrative Reforms in Vietnam; Sida – Capacity development

OVERALL OBJECTIVE:

"Strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of MARD to realize its state management function in the sector and to improve the sectoral administrative system in order to boost the socio-economic development in the rural areas in

To attain the overall objective the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 has selected four intervention areas:

- Organisational Issues: rationalising MARD's organisational structures, reducing overlapping functions and developing capacity enabling further decentralisation (in the subsequent phase);
- Human Resources Issues: Developing human resources management systems and initiating capacity development to build a strong civil service;
- Institutional Issues: strengthening state management functions, which here mainly rests on application of ICT in management and on drafting new regulations based on ISO principles;
- Financial management reforms.

This Action Plan 2005 was formulated with support from first phase UNDP PAR project. It is considered a major achievement as it represents the first attempt to apply objective-oriented planning and design approaches, setting out more clearly formulated objectives than before and focussing interest more on a ministry as service provider to end-users or beneficiaries.

The Action Plan 2005 included 44 outputs. VIE/02/016 has supported implementation of 16 and the remaining outputs have been implemented using internal staff and funds.

LESSON LEARNED:

MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 for the first time applied objective-oriented planning approaches, setting out clear targets, outputs and measurable indicators for success. The Action Plan 2005 has been widely disseminated and consequently all units, leaders and key staff have been fully informed about the targets and the process. Combined with strong leadership commitment this has highly facilitated the successful

1.4 Benefits and Results

Aiming at improving public service delivery to farmers in MARD's sectors, the first phase support to MARD's PAR process is focused around a core outcome formulated as 'Effective and Efficient MARD Administration'.

It is thus anticipated that improvements can be demonstrated within a huge number of predominantly administrative processes and structures, which by enhancing responsiveness and reducing red tape also are anticipated to increase citizens' satisfaction.

The Project has under MARD's PAR Action Plan positively sustained attainment of the overall objective, establishing an effective and efficient MARD administration. MARD today is organisationally more streamlined and responsibilities have been decentralised downwards in the ARD sector. Separation of state management functions from service delivery functions have been initiated and implemented in a number of units. Functions have been clarified and documented in for example the ISO pilot. Foundations for improved human resources management and development have been laid. Modernisation of the state management administrative system has

taken major steps ahead, using significantly improved ICT-based tools. Gender awareness has been stimulated and strong interventions towards enhanced accountability and transparency formulated in the ACAP. And notably the orientation towards the farming household as beneficiary and client for MARD as state management unit has changed significantly, directly expressed in the rural telecenters' component and three landmark studies, mapping the needs of the farming households, the perceived effect of regulatory documents as well as the ability of public service providers to deliver need-based services.

The project has during implementation faced challenges, sometimes delays and other difficulties. The PAR SC and the PSU have, however, successfully applied a range of approaches to overcome weaknesses and challenges, and hereby presents some of these for inspiration and sharing of information and experiences.

2 Shared Practices

2.1 Objective-oriented Planning: Using logframe approaches

2.1.1 Management guide

MARD has as the first Ministry applied an objective-oriented planning and design methodology to develop the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005. Here the objective-oriented planning approach or the *logframe approach* was successfully applied for the first time and subsequently it has been more widely applied within MARD.

The logframe approach is globally widely accepted and recommended as the superior planning and design tool due to the following significant features:

- It is participatory, implying that stakeholders and beneficiaries are directly involved in all pertinent analytic and planning steps thus ensuring ownership and facilitating implementation;
- It identifies clear targets formulated as objectives at different levels;
- It uses indicators as operational definitions of targets and thus enables result-based monitoring and evaluation;
- It applies a logical work-break-down approach, clearly linking activities logically to the objectives to be attained and consequently also paves the way for detailed activity-planning on annual, monthly, weekly or daily basis if so desired;
- It enables clear and distinct definition of responsibilities and outlines what-to-do for all project team members all the way down to individual staff.

According to MARD's experiences the logframe approach offers benefits when planning at *programme, project and sub-project (component) levels*.

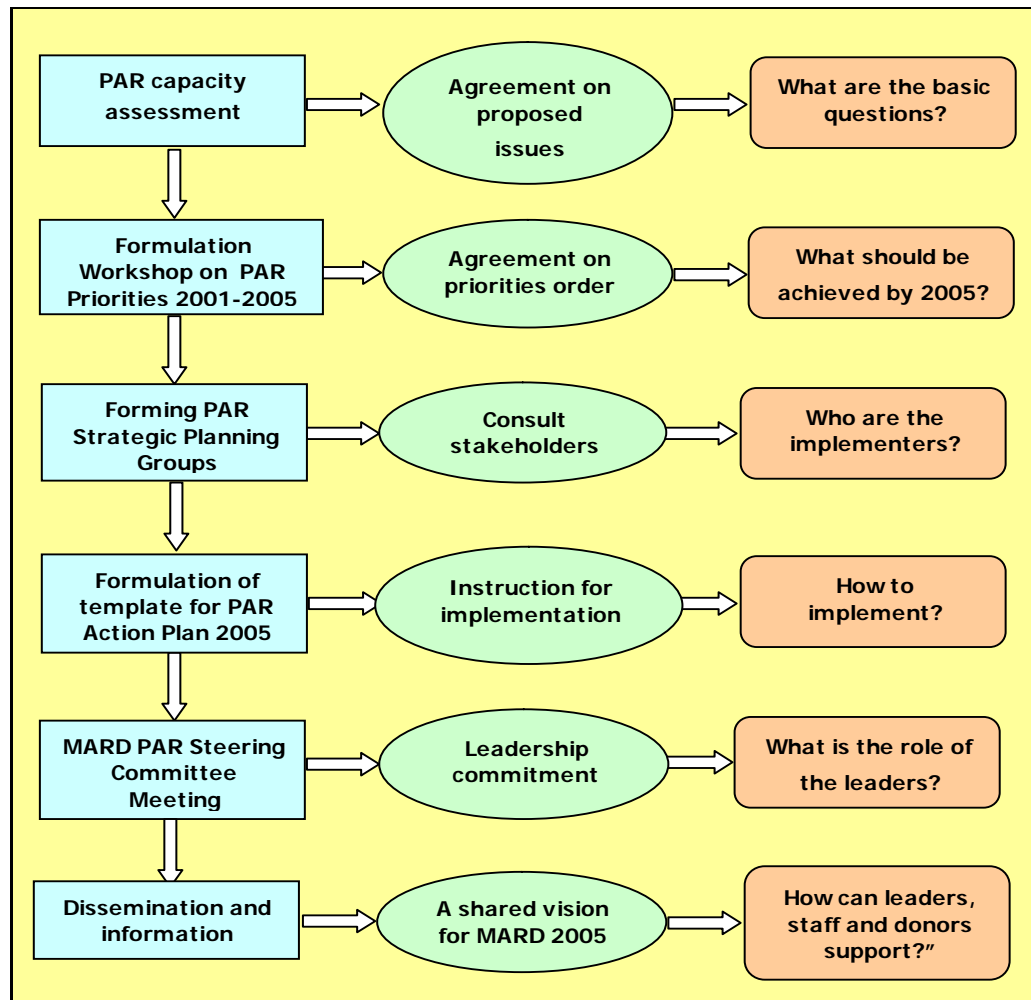
2.1.2 Step-by-step guide

For the Action Plan 2005 the planning process was conducted stepwise:

1. **Identify and agree on priorities.** Within the overall comprehensive PAR MP MARD shall identify issues and activities, addressing the needs of MARD and potentially influence directly the public services requested by the beneficiaries. The setting of MARD priorities at the starting point is most important for the commitment and ownership during the subsequent implementation.

2. **Stakeholder participation.** Based on the selected priorities of MARD 2001-2005, six strategic planning groups for PAR were established with the inputs of civil servants of DOP, OMARD, Inspectorate, DoF, Department of Investment and Infrastructure Construction, Department of Agriculture Extension, Department of Animal Health, Department of Plant Protection, and Department of Water and Irrigation Management. The planning groups participated in a training course on strategic planning methodology.
3. **Drafting the action plan.** The planning groups drafted the strategic action plan as a logical framework including objectives, outputs, indicators, key activities, resources, timeframe for the prioritised PAR activities of MARD.
4. **Consultative process.** During the drafting process the action plans designed by the PAR strategic planning groups were finalised with consultation of the related Departments. The integration of the six specific action plans into the PAR Action Plan in MARD was assigned to the editorial board to ensure consistency and unity. After verification of the draft action plan by the PAR Steering Committee the editorial board incorporated revisions and prepared the final plan for approval.
5. **Dissemination.** After approval by the PAR Steering Committee the dissemination process started. Dissemination workshops for managers of MARD Departments, DARDs, Training Institutions, other PAR agencies (MoHA, OOG) and the donors interested in MARD were conducted. The dissemination marked the completion of the preparatory period and started the implementation process.
6. **Implementation.** After forming the Project Support Unit (PSU) detailed activity-planning was carried out using work-break-down approaches. Most significantly, the implementation has successfully applied a Task Force approach, allocating implementation responsibilities for specific, well-defined sub-projects to Task Forces, formed within and across units (agencies and departments) directly affected by the reforms. In this way ownership and commitment has been ensured.

Figure 1: The Action Plan Process



The key advantages, making this a best practice approach, are:

- Simple and systematic approach;
- Strengthening the role of the PAR Steering Committee;
- It actively mobilises participation of specialists from related agencies at an early stage of the process;
- The template is simple, easy to understand and use as a tool when instructing the implementing agencies;
- The responsibility of the related stakeholders is clearly identified; and
- It can be used as a tool for monitoring and evaluation

MARD piloted the approach when preparing the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005. It was applied also to develop MARD's contribution to the five year SEDP for 2006 – 2010, the Anti-corruption Action Plan (ACAP) and internally for a range of sub-projects as well as for the preparation of the MARD PAR Action Plan 2010. It is envisioned that a similar, participatory approach shall be applied when moving towards result-based planning over the coming years.

2.1.3 Technical manual

The objective-oriented planning and project design approach has been globally applied since the beginning of the 1960's primarily for development projects by a vast number of national and international development agencies. Being used by many agencies implies that concepts and terminology has developed over time to reflect the specific concerns of the agencies.

MARD has primarily applied the classic understanding of the logframe approach containing five distinct elements: (i) development objective; (ii) immediate objective; (iii) outputs; (iv) activities and (v) inputs.

In some logframe applications the development objective is described more as an *outcome* or *outcome target* which is believed to better reflect the long-term nature of this concept.

CONCEPTS IN CLASSIC LOGFRAME

- *Development objective* describes the anticipated long-term target or objective towards which the project will contribute
- *Immediate objective* describes the intended effect, purpose or benefit for the beneficiaries (target group)
- *Outputs* are results which can be achieved and sustained (guaranteed) by the project management
- *Activities* are expressed as processes initiated by the project management. They are means to achieve the end: the output.
- *Inputs* are expressed in terms of funds, personnel and goods

Basically, the logframe approach offers tools to (a) understand the present situation, identifying less desirable elements; (b) formulate a target or vision for a future situation, where less desirable elements have been overcome; and (c) identifying the process to move from (a) to (b). The logframe approach uses *problem analysis* to understand negative aspects of the present situation; *objective analysis* to formulate the vision and targets to define a new situation; and well structured *project design* comprising outputs, activities and inputs to identify what to do to attain the targets.

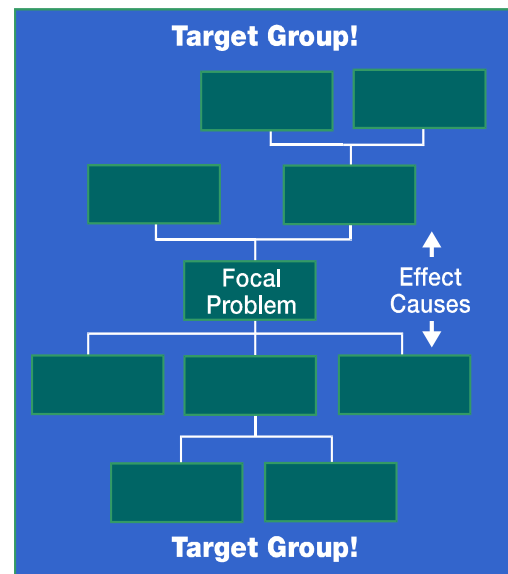
The logframe approach is normally applied in two distinct phases: the analytical and the design phase.

Analytical Phase

The analytical phase has two purposes. Firstly, it contains the analysis of the present situation and secondly it subsequently identifies the targets in the form of objectives for the improved situation.

The analysis of the present situation focuses on issues and problems to identify underperforming areas, unsatisfactory deliveries, and performance gaps in agencies, regulations, and staff and as such constitutes a broad and distinct *baseline* against which changes can be incurred, monitored and evaluated.

The problem analysis is carried out based on existing information. Previous internal and external reviews and assessments, feed-back from clients and beneficiaries, specific studies and regular internal progress reporting will in most cases constitute the input data for the problem analysis, normally combined with knowledge and experiences drawn from officers and staff working within the units and agencies. The Task Force or planning group will compile and summarise this information. Here a range of tools are available: organisational analysis, stakeholder analysis, analysis of strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) are examples. It is generally recommended to include or base the analysis on beneficiaries' information and/or participation. Issues and problems will appear very different when seen from the farmers' point of view compared to the perception of a civil servant in the ARD sector.



To clarify the issues and problems as well as their causes, traditional logframe sometimes draw a *problem tree*, which may be used in the internal analytical process. In the problem tree all relations reflect cause-and-effect.

The important aspect here is not the use of any specific tool but rather that the analysis is comprehensive, defining clearly and distinctly all *baseline issues to be improved*.

The baseline study or the problem analysis focuses on identifying *negative* aspects. When this has been carried out, the analytical phase can proceed to the second step: identifying the objectives, which are used to describe the *positive* aspects in the new situation.

If a problem tree approach has been applied, the problems can be transformed from negative statements to positive achievements and drawn in a similar *objectives tree*. Objectives are formulated at two levels: long-term development objectives, similar to outcome targets and more specific immediate objectives. It is important to note that objectives are descriptions of situations, not activities.

- Objectives are the driving forces in project work and are normally formulated at different levels:
 - Development or directional objectives indicate the direction without stating how far we expect to move. Directional objectives are mission statements or guiding stars pointing to the long-term goal.

- The immediate objective is the image of the reality which we want to achieve as the end-of-project situation and should ideally be formulated to the extent possible in accordance with so-called SMART guidelines.

Applying the SMART guidelines facilitates the setting of *indicators* being the operational definition of the objective or the tool to know when the new situation / objective have been realized.

Identifying the immediate objectives and formulating these in line with the SMART criteria is complicated and most likely will be done over several reformulation and refinement processes. The immediate objective as an image of the reality we want to achieve or attain is, however, extremely important as it defines as clearly as possible where we want to go and thus constitutes the direct basis for agreement, consensus and commitment by all persons and units participating in the project.

SMART CRITERIA:
Immediate objectives could be formulated being
Specific,
Measurable,
Accurate,
Realistic and
Time-bound

It is sound practice to formulate only one development objective and limited number (two to three) immediate objectives as specifications of the development objective. The relation must be logical, implying that when immediate objectives have been attained the development objective will also be attained in the longer term.

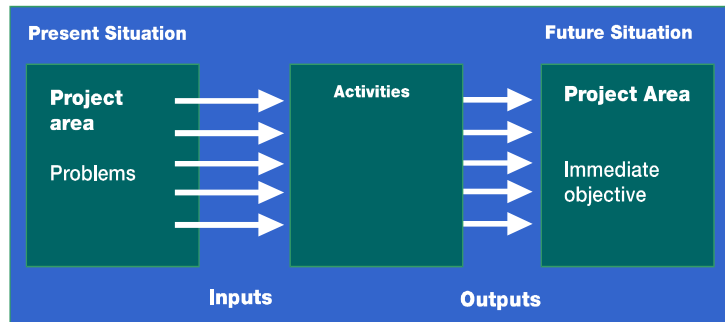
Having analysed the negative aspects of the baseline situation and formulated and prioritised development and immediate objectives, reflecting the new situation, the analytical phase should include also a brief analysis of possible *strategies* to attain the objectives. Strategies can be based on different types of interventions: legal and regulatory interventions; economic interventions (incentives, fees and levies); technology and investments; training and capacity building; organisational restructuring; awareness etc. Strategies can be assessed systematically according to cost-benefit; available resources, chance of success etc and will in most cases combine and balance the different types of interventions.

Design phase

Inputs to the design phase comprise the development and immediate objectives, analysed and prioritised during the analytic phase. By now, the present situation is well described in the baseline study or the problem analysis and the desirable future situation has been outlined in the form of objectives, where the immediate objective forms an image of the future reality. The design phase deal with how to come from present to future situation.

The concepts in the logframe dealing with this are:

- *Outputs* or direct and preferably tangible results produced by
- *Activities*, which are something that we do. They are based on
- *Inputs* – the resources that are needed to carry out activities.

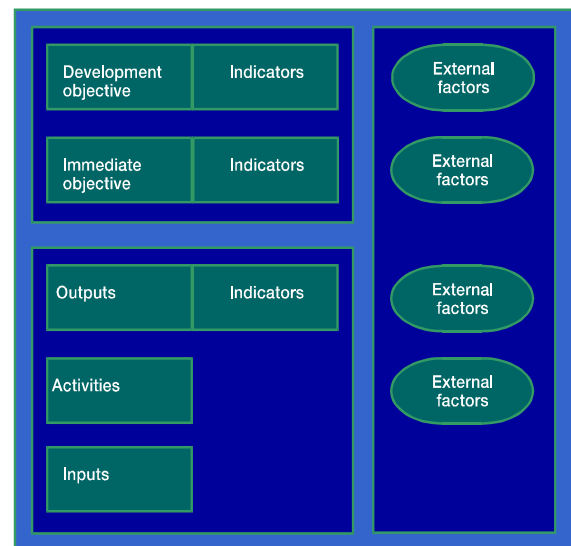


Based on inputs – financial, technical or human resources – a project initiates and carries out activities, which produces outputs or results. This is the basic understanding of a project (or programme) in the objective-oriented planning and design approach. A project only produces direct outputs, not objectives – but outputs will, when realised, support attaining the objective or the new situation.

As development objective, immediate objective and outputs by definition describe situations the logframe approach requires an operational definition of when the situation has arrived. When has a project met its targets?

To determine this, the logframe approach uses *indicators*, which are definitions or specifications of elements describing a *situation*. It is required that indicators include qualitative and quantitative elements, are realistic and time-bound – or in short are in line with the previously mentioned SMART criteria.

One final element is included in the design phase, relating to elements outside the project and exerting influence outside management control on attainment of objectives and outputs. These are the *external factors* or *critical assumptions*. Very often existence of a new regulation or decree could be an external factor.



The concepts and relations in the logframe are shown in the project matrix.

Tools

MARD has modified the project matrix to better suit planning and design requirements for the ministry and the sector and here most notably added information relating to responsibilities (responsible unit or agency) and tentative timeline for implementation. The general concepts are, however, fully in line with logframe requirements. On top

level the outcome or development objective is describes and indicators are developed. Under this MARD has formulated several component, reflecting the different types of interventions (legal, human resources etc) and for each of these component a clear objective, tallying with the outcome or development objective, is described including also the operational indicators.

Under each objective the necessary number of outputs (results) are described and here again relevant, measurable indicators are identified. And under each output typical key activities are described. As an activity is something that we do, indicators are not used. Instead a first estimate of necessary resources (budget) to carry out the activity is identified.

MARD has added information about general responsibility for the component and information about participating agencies or units to produce the output. On activity-level MARD’s paradigm includes a tentative estimate of implementation period from planned start to planned finish of each activity.

MARD’s matrix is shown below as a paradigm:

LOGFRAME PARADIGM FOR [Insert name of PROJECT/PROGRAMME/COMPONENT]						
OUTCOME:			INDICATORS:			
COMPONENT A: Describe			General Responsibility: nn Department			
Objective: Describe component objective			Indicator: Define indicator(s)			
Output 1: Describe first output		Org. units	Indicator(s) for output 1:			
Main activity	Act. No.	Start		Finish		Finance & input
		Plan	Practice	Plan	Practice	
Activity description	1.1	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	
Activity description	1.2	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	
Activity description	1.n	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	
Output 2: Describe second output			Indicator for output 2:			
Main activity	Act. No.	Start		Finish		Finance & input
		Plan	Practice	Plan	Practice	
Activity description	2.1	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	
Activity description	2.2	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	
Activity description	2.n	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	Qtr/Year	

The logframe paradigm is present as an outline only, which shall be completed and expanded with additional outputs, objectives and components as per requirement.

MARD’s PAR Action Plan 2005 and the PAR Action Plan 2010 have both applied this paradigm. The Action Plan 2006 – 2010, approved by the Minister of MARD in October 2006, can be downloaded from www.mard.gov.vn

2.1.4 Specifics

The description above covers the salient features of a logframe-based approach to planning and design. It includes a first draft timeline and an outline budget, reflecting financial and other input requirements to implement the project.

It is important to note that it is a planning approach which does not (yet) include a detailed time-bound implementation plan. This shall be prepared as the very first step when the project has been approved, a framework budget has been allocated and a project implementation unit has been established. All these activities relate to project implementation and management, which is the subsequent step to project design and planning.

2.1.5 Reports

Key reports using the logframe approach comprise:

MARD PAR Action Plan 2005;
MARD PAR Action Plan 2010;
MARD Anti-corruption Action Plan;
MARD's contribution to the Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006 – 2010.

Manual Integrated Project Cycle Management, published by EUROPEAN COMMISSION, EuropeAid Co-operation Office, General Affairs, Evaluation. The manual comprises EU procedures and a comprehensive description of the logframe approach. An English version can be downloaded from the website of the European Union.

Objective-oriented Planning Approach, published by NORAD (Oslo) contains the classic teaching and instruction material regarding the logframe approach. An informal Vietnamese translation of the first edition can be found at www.seac.dk as a pdf-file. Newer editions in English can be requested from NORAD.

If the project planning and design approach is used for internationally funded project (ODA project) the planning team should consult the specific donor and adapt the approach to reflect specific requirements of each donor.

2.1.6 Contact details

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2.2 Project Implementation – a Case Study

The Government of Vietnam (GoV), the Royal Embassy of the Netherlands and UNDP have approved technical assistance projects to support PAR in MARD I (2001-2003) and II (2004-2006).

From the very beginning the project aimed at managing the implementation process, ensuring efficient control of resources and regular progress monitoring fully in line

with the NEX modality. The approach of the project is to ensure that implementation contains the following attributes:

- Systematic planning (irrespective when the planning is done);
- Structured methods that can be used throughout the project cycle;
- Good practices in project management.

To meet that aim, the project developed and adopted the following guiding principles for implementation:

Directing the Project

The project is directed by a National Project Director (NPD) and managed by a National Project Manager (NPM), advised by an UNDP-contracted international adviser (RTA) based in Hanoi. A Project Support Unit (PSU) supervised by the NPM coordinates the daily implementation activities. There is a non-executive MARD PAR Steering Committee that manages the strategy for PAR implementation.

Implementation Procedures

The Project Document (PD) endorsed by the Government and donors provides the overall strategic direction of the project. The PD is cascaded into Annual Work plans detailing for each year the activities that must be carried out to achieve the expected outputs of the project. The Annual Work plans are prepared and presented at the Annual Project Review Meetings at the start of each year. The donors and GoV stakeholders attend the annual meetings and provide comments on the prepared work plan. The annual work plan is then revised based on the comments and submitted for approval.

The Quarterly Work plan is prepared based on the Annual Work plan, dividing the annual activities into four quarters. The Quarterly Work plans in turn guide the preparation of weekly work plans.

There is room for changes in activities and interventions in line with the changing circumstances under the overall strategic direction of the PD. These changes are reported in the quarterly and annual reporting.

The project applies a work-break-down approach, specifying activities under each defined output by year, by quarter and by week. Consequently implementation can be separately managed but still integrated into a complete whole.

Activities are initiated after approval of Terms of Reference (TOR), defining what shall be attained, the methodology to be applied and the resources available for the activities. The TOR provides the justification for allocation of resources. They are reviewed by the PSU prior to committing human and financial resources and thus constitute an important tool to establish the link between activity, outputs and outcome.

Based on approved TOR responsibility for implementation has been allocated to Task Forces, normally headed by the leader of the relevant department. The Task Force

modality has ensured ownership and practical applicability and relevance of project supported activities.

The procurement of the services and equipment based on the TOR follows both the UNDP and or the Government guidelines, depending on the signatories of the contract.

Managing Product Delivery

Each member of the PSU has been allocated responsibility for follow-up and support to activities implemented by either Task Forces or contracted to external suppliers under supervision by the NPM. Weekly meetings at the beginning of the week report on progress of previous week and inform what is scheduled for the coming week. This meeting is attended by PSU staff and chaired by NPM.

Task Forces are submitting progress reports and completion reports and generally also a summary of lessons learned or a brief evaluation.

There are quarterly and annual progress reviews of the project. Both the quarterly and annual reports contain the following sections:

- Achievements for the period;
- Challenges faced during the period;
- Variations to the plan;
- Lessons learned;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Risk management;
- Plan for next period;
- Recommendations;
- Financial expenditure (actual and forecast);
- Equipment inventory;
- Staff.

IT-based work planning tools (Microsoft Project) have been used with some success for the scheduling of activities, but so far not extensively for resource allocation and financial reporting.

The Annual Project Report is presented to the donors and GoV stakeholders at the start of the year at an annual review meeting. Comments are received from the participants at the review meeting and the work plan for the coming year is then revised based on those comments.

Project Closure

The project is closing on 31 December 2006. An external project terminal evaluation has been conducted 4 month prior to project closure, enabling inclusion of lessons learned and recommendations into the Project Completion Report.

The Project Completion Report is structurally similar to the Annual Report. It is reporting for the whole project period, summarises results, experiences, lessons learned and provides full project documentation in print and electronic version.

Key Advantages of the Implementation Approach

The structured approach has combined with the logical framework in the PD provided a common and understandable language for project participants, external and internal. It has facilitated the control in use of resources and management of risks.

The systematic use of TOR, progress monitoring and reviews has enabled management control of deviations from plans and initiation of necessary corrective actions.

The procedures have included flexible decision point and ensured involvement of management and stakeholders at appropriate points. This has encouraged communication and information between the project, project management, and stakeholders.

The work-break-down approach and the allocation of responsibilities to individuals and Task Forces have:

- Offered clear definition of roles and responsibilities;
- Reduced meetings and bureaucracy;
- Ensured separation of management activities from technical activities;
- Better appreciation of project risks by all concerned;
- Appropriate managing of changes and reduction of risk.

2.2.2 Contact details

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2.3 One-Stop-Shop mechanism in MARD

2.3.1 Management Guideline

A key component within the national PAR Master Plan (2001-2010) is to set up one-stop-shop (OSS) operations at several levels to serve citizens and firms. The OSS mechanism implies establishing a physical office, where customers' requests for various services are received, settled and responses returned. In the OSS office, information on operational procedures, services offered, price of services and scheduled case handling time is made public.

The OSS mechanism was implemented at both provincial and district levels since early 2004 and at the commune level since early 2005.

Originally, OSS was initiated in FDI as the operational principle of Management Board of industrial export processing zones. It was later extended to appraisal of private

company registration. OSS was officially applied in Ho Chi Minh City in 1995; in another 4 provinces and cities, Hà Nội, Hải Phòng, Bình Dương and Hoà Bình by 1997.

The instruction of the Prime Minister No. 09/2005/CT-TTg dated 5 Apr 2005, based on the PAR progress report of the National PAR Steering Committee in the second quarter 2005, proposed to select some ministries, ministerial agencies, governmental agencies to develop and implement OSS.

MARD has been the first ministry to pilot the OSS mechanism at this level. As the governmental agency responsible for state management within agriculture, forestry, irrigation and rural development nation-wide, MARD has a range of business contacts to clients – citizens as well as organizations and enterprises. To enhance effectiveness and improve responsiveness the Minister of MARD issued Document No2797/BNN/VP instructing the pilot implementation of one-stop-shop mechanism in MARD agencies, and the Department of Plant Protection, the Department of Animal Health, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Irrigation, the Department of Construction Management, and the Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development were selected to conduct the pilot. The selected departments subsequently formulated proposals and prepared themselves to apply the one-stop-shop mechanism under the instruction of the Minister.

On 21st February 2005 the Minister approved the proposals from the Department of Plant Protection, the Department of Animal Health and the Department of Agriculture. On 14th June 2005 the Minister approved the proposals of the Department of Irrigation and the Department of Construction Management. In October 2005 the final approval was given for the proposal of the Department of Cooperatives and Rural Development. Therefore, six MARD Departments were implementing the one-stop-shop mechanism in receiving, settling and responding to requests of clients by June 2006.

2.3.2 Step-by-step and technical guide

Formulation of the OSS pilot

Based on Document 2797 the six selected pilot department prepared the pilot project in the following steps:

- Setting up Steering Committees. 5-8 member OSS Pilot Steering Committees were set up at 6 Cucs. Chairperson of the SC is the Director of the Department, and Vice Chairperson is a Deputy Director of the Department. Its members are leaders or experts from Divisions of Administration-Organization, Finance, Inspection as well as other related technical divisions. One of the most important initial tasks of Cuc's OSS Pilot Steering Committee is to formulate the pilot project. After the project is approved by the Minister, the SC is responsible for implementing - establishment of OSS section, giving direction and operational instructions, M&E etc
- Developing the OSS pilot scheme.
- Establishing a Receive & Response Section in the unit.

- Formulating the project and submitting to the Minister for approval.
- Promulgating regulations on administrative settlement procedures and order.
- Issuing operational regulations of Receive & Response Section.
- Equipment procurement at Receive & Response Section.

The Minister approved the OSS pilot projects of 3 units 21/2/2005, of two units on 14/6/2005 and finally of Department of Cooperatives & Rural Development in October 2005. The units officially initiated the pilot OSS on 01/3/2005, 1/7/2005 and 01/11/2005 respectively. The project formulation process at some units and MARD's approval was delayed. Being a pilot scheme implied that most of units were inexperienced and faced difficulties already from project design. Proposals were revised several times and did not follow a united framework.

Creating awareness and building capacity

- In order to effectively pilot OSS in administrative settlements for customers, MARD leaders and the pilot units firstly focused to heighten awareness of Committee members, Party members and staff, focussing on PAR improvement in general and the need to establish and implement the OSS mechanism in particular to create consensus, shared visions and determination during implementation.
- To strengthen confidence and clearly understand the OSS administrative model, the PAR Project in MARD VIE/02/016 coordinated with the pilot units to organise field trips for relevant civil servants to visit and exchange experiences at several localities: Thanh Hoa city, Ninh Bình and Ho Chí Minh city where the OSS mechanism is being applied well.
- The PAR Project in MARD engaged national consultants to survey OSS implementation progress and results from June - Dec 2005. The survey results recommended the units to step by step complete their OSS projects. At the same times, several OSS-related workshops were organized focusing on content and methodology of customer satisfaction survey and performance assessment of the OSS units.

Feedback from study tours/field trips and workshops clearly indicate that they have been instrumental in overcoming barriers to implementation and strengthening capacities of staff.

The OSS section

The direct OSS implementers of a Cuc is called *Receipt & Response Section*, or for short "*OSS section*". Organisation and personnel of an OSS section is decided by the Department Director, based on recommendations of the OSS Pilot SC. There are from 3 to 7 persons in OSS sections, usually headed by the Manager of General Administration Division or an experienced expert. The members of OSS section are experts from Divisions of General Administrative Division, Finance, Inspection, as well as other related professional divisions. OSS staff was seconded to the OSS section based on experience, administrative skills, and being fully aware of administrative procedures and legal regulations related to the OSS-applied working areas.

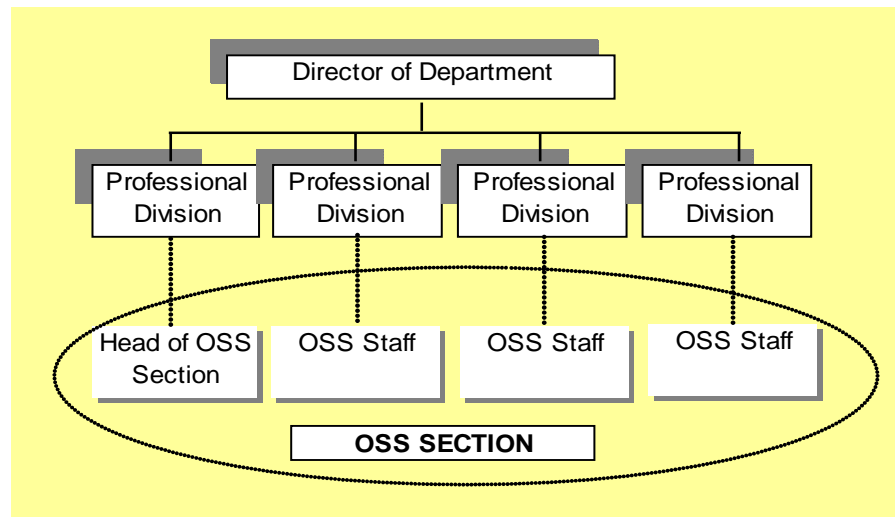
Key functions of the OSS section are to receive service requests, settle and respond to customers as scheduled. The OSS section is the place with direct and daily contacts to customers, offering advice and response to requests; the OSS section also manages its facilities and means.

Service models

Two different service models have been applied in MARD – the **Receive requests – Settlement – Response (R-S-R)** model and the **Receive requests – Response (R-R)** model.

Under the model Receive requests – Settlement – Response (R-S-R) the OSS section will receive requests regarding a specific service. Staff will verify, process and settle by themselves and respond to customers. Strength of the model is that the OSS section can settle all customers’ requests independently without assistance by professional divisions; consequently, a big volume of requests can be settled. The OSS section must in this model be staffed by professionally qualified experts regarding the services and decisions to be settled. Physical working area must be sufficiently big for several staff cadres, working simultaneously. The R-S-R model is suitable for departments receiving many service requests, providing a suitable workload to ensure full-time working for OSS staff.

Figure 2: R-S-R Model

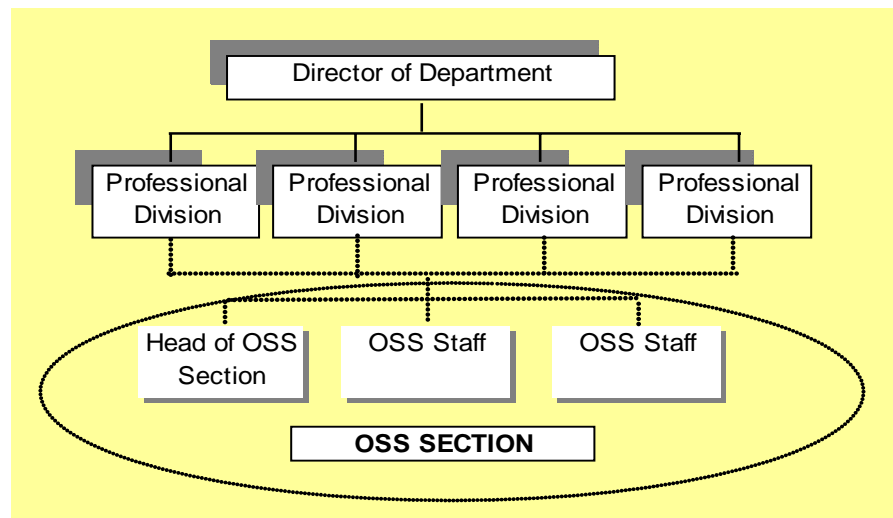


To ensure fully qualified staff and thus enabling settlement directly at the OSS section all professional departments have allocated experts to the OSS section. Only the Department of Plant Protection had from the beginning a workload enabling OSS operation under this R-S-R model.

In the second model Receive requests – Response (R-R), the OSS section will receive and record a request regarding a specific service. OSS staff will subsequently transfer requests to relevant professional divisions for verification, settlement and feedback to the OSS section. Subsequently, the OSS section will respond to customers. The advantage of the R-R model is that the independent OSS section will require few and

not deeply specialised staff. There is limited demand for a specialised working area, only a small reception desk is necessary. Drawback of the model is that it tends to be passive, depending on the operation and case handling of the professional divisions and can not settle a big volume of requests.

Figure 3: R-R Model



The OSS section is in this model the reception desk, responsible for customer handling, receiving, transmitting and ensuring feedback to customers. Settlement, decisions and subject matter case handling is done in the professional departments by experts here. Benefits for customers are clear: a citizen has only one focal point to approach regarding a request.

OSS sections of the remaining five departments (Agriculture, Animal Health, Irrigation, Construction Management, and Co-operatives & Rural Development) operate by R-R model.

Service areas

The number of services in the OSS pilot is rather limited. MARD has selected about 30 different services to be delivered under the OSS mechanism, grouped into three types of services:

- Licensing;
- Project and programme appraisal;
- Consultancy and complaints handling.

Licensing service includes a number of specific and diversified services including licensing quarantine, practice, imports, experiments etc. 3 out of 6 Cucs provide up to 13 different licensing services. Demand for licensing services has been high.

Appraisal service includes specific services including for example appraisal of medicine registration, requesting extension, certification etc. 5 out of 6 piloted Cucs provide

about 13 different types of appraisal services. Demand for appraisal and approval service has been high.

Consultancy and complaints handling has not been popular in the pilot units. Actually only two out of 6 Cucs provide this service. The demand and number of customers' requests in this area has been low.

The Cucs decide and select the services to be provided under the OSS mechanism. Licensing and appraisal services fit well with OSS model, having more customers than consulting service and response to complaints. This does not imply that every Cuc can provide all three types of services. This depends on the nature of the services delivered by the departments. The pilot shows that the Departments of Plant Protection, Agriculture and Animal Health offer a wider range of services whereas other departments like Irrigation, Construction Management and Cooperatives & Rural Development do not have the same range and only have few customers.

Table 1: Service Areas

	Dept. of Plant Protection	Dept. of Agriculture	Dept. of Animal Health	Dept. of Irrigation	Dept. of Construction Management	Dept. of Cooperatives and Rural Development
Licensing						
Appraisal						
Consultancy and complaints						

Administrative procedures

Based on the existing regulations regarding administrative decisions and settlement, the units in the pilot have undertaken a review of regulations to simplify and streamline procedures to ensure good coordination between civil servants in the OSS section and the professional divisions. Heads of units have issued internal regulations regarding OSS-based administrative procedures and settlement order. In these the administrative settlement process at Cucs is basically agreed as follows:

- A customer requesting an administrative settlement under the authority of a unit only needs to contact directly an OSS staff, mandated to instruct regarding procedures and necessary documents.
- Upon receiving a customer request, the Receipt & Response Section issues a receipt to customers, records and transfers the request to the related professional divisions for settlement.
- After completing the settlement, the professional divisions transfer the decision to the Receipt & Response Section, who will respond to customers on time.
- If a request relates to responsibilities of many professional divisions or sections, the focal division hosts and coordinates the settlement. A customer does not have to contact by himself as before.

- If a customer does not appear in person at Receipt & Response Section he/she can submit the request and receive response by mail.

The Department of Animal Health has established on-line settlements for requests for quarantine imports, temporary imports, re-export, border-gate transfer, transit of animals and animal products.

In general, the administrative settlement process at units has been improved, shortened and is less cumbersome for customers. Internal coordination among professional divisions and sections has gradually been improved and become more comprehensive.

Facilities and equipment of OSS sections

Establishment of physical facilities at MARD premises has been difficult. Overall, the departments have, however, managed to arrange R&R sections at relatively convenient locations with sufficient working area. Only the R&R sections of Department of Construction Management and Department of Irrigation share location with technical divisions because of limited working space.

In addition to equipment, funded by departments' budgets, all six departments were supported by the Project VIE 02/016 to procure office equipment, meeting the initial need of OSS sections.

Legal regulations related to OSS services, administrative procedures, demonstration processes, fees, and case handling time for each kind of request have been reviewed and publicized in a convenient place, easily accessible for customers. Due to limitations regarding office space the location of OSS section, publication of procedures and other customer information is not fully optimal.

Performance monitoring and assessment

The performance under the OSS-mechanism has been monitored and assessed. This is preliminary as the period of operation has varied and in general is rather short. Questionnaires have been developed and submitted to staff of OSS sections, to members of the Steering Committees and a customer feedback questionnaire has been developed.

2.3.3 Reports

Review of "One-Stop-Shop" Pilot Implementation at Some Units under Ministry Of Agriculture & Rural Development by Nguyen Trung Thong and Nguyen Loc. Report 6 in Project Documentation.

2.3.4 Contact details

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2.4 ISO as Best Practice for Quality Management

2.4.1 Management Guideline

In accordance with Decision No. 2078/QĐ-BNN-VP dated 15/8/2005 by the Minister of MARD the Office of MARD (OMARD) has piloted a quality management system for 17 key activities under OMARD's mandate. The application of the quality management system (QMS) formulated in ISO 9001:2000 is a new issue in Vietnam, piloted for the first time within the state management unit at ministerial level. It is a complicated assignment, related directly to the performance of OMARD and other MARD agencies.

ISO is understood as a management technology process, enabling organisations to deliver quality product – services – satisfying clients and the organisation itself. ISO can serve as the basis for maintaining and improving management efficiency and operational effectiveness.

Implementing the ISO QMS will as output ensure better services from the agency and thus in general better performance and enhanced effectiveness. As the ISO is based on full, written documentation of work processes and procedures for these, the implementation process includes a review of work processes, allocation of responsibilities for outputs to units and individuals and consequently also a review and possibly revision of the organisational structure. The ISO in OMARD thus was a pilot in two aspects – the QMS and the organisational review. Successful implementation requires strong will and commitment from leadership, without which the ISO will remain as a paper exercise only.

For ISO and QMS to be successful, leadership must demonstrate their commitment by mobilising adequate resources to fulfil the work flow and procedure analysis and take responsibility to formulate and disseminate the policy and quality objectives as well as the work plan for the implementation. Changes in procedures and organisational responsibilities, incurred by the QMS, shall be effectively communicated. Training shall be provided regarding revised approaches.

For units in the public sector ISO can assist to enhance service quality by clarifying and improving functions and mandates of units; clarify staff responsibilities; establish reliable need-bases service delivery to clients and implement proper administrative procedures, ensuring good and efficient case handling for external as well as internal cases.

Implementing ISO has specified and adjusted responsibilities and tasks. New job descriptions have been prepared for a number of functions. Consequently, Trade Unions and staff shall be motivated and participate actively to ensure success. Leadership may also consider reward policies and schemes to facilitate effective implementation.

Quality management is a process. Developing and implementing the QMS is a first step and the enhanced respect for quality delivery shall be maintained among others by regularly assessing system and staff performance and initiate actions to overcome observed short-comings.

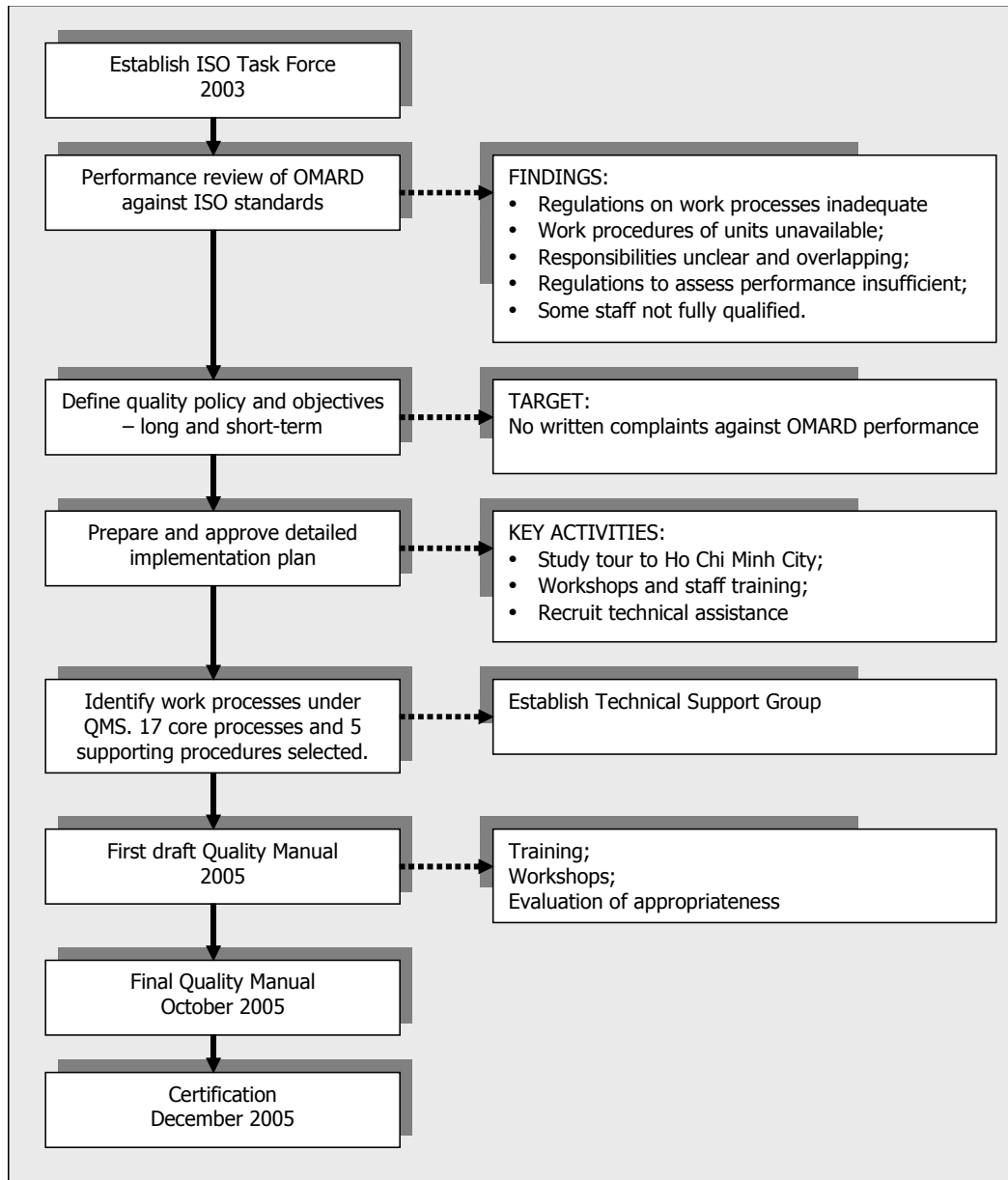
2.4.2 Step-by-step guide

The ISO pilot was implemented in line with the following steps, which were based on a Task Force approach, using internal as well as external resources and strongly and consequently supported by leadership in OMARD:

1. Prepare TOR for the Task Force; identify Task Force members and appoint Task Force. Responsibility for implementation allocated to the Task Force;
2. Prepare the baseline study which was carried out as a performance review, assessing existing performance and procedures relative to ISO standards;
3. Identify, agree and approve policy and quality targets: where do we want to go?
4. Organise training courses on basic knowledge about ISO for all the staff in OMARD;
5. Identify the administrative processes to be included into the QMS. For OMARD 17 core and 5 supplementing processes were identified;
6. Prepare and approve a detailed implementation plan;
7. Select and appoint a Technical Support Group, comprising internal and if necessary external specialist; Organise training courses on documentations development;
8. Prepare first draft Quality Manual for the selected processes;
9. Introduce, train and evaluate the efficiency and appropriateness of the draft Quality Manual;
10. Revise and promulgate final Quality Manual;
11. Implement and train staff in accordance with the revised procedures and processes in the Quality Manual;
12. Assess and obtain certification; Carry out maintenance, mid-term review, regularly monitoring and evaluating, prevention measures, adjusting and improving for better performance.

The necessary steps are illustrated in the flow chart below.

ISO FLOW CHART OMARD



2.4.3 Technical manual

OMARD is an agency that consolidates, coordinates and reports the planning and activities of MARD organisations, being additionally responsible for the administration of MARD operations. OMARD has 11 units of which 2 are income generating public service units and around 100 civil servants and over 100 employees.

OMARD’s tasks focus on 4 key activities as follow:

- Assist MARD leaders in steering and directing the agriculture sector;

- Serving MARD in conducting its operations;
- Assisting MARD to organize state management archives, rewards, press and publication;
- Implement PAR and state administration computerization.

OMARD has a unique and important role in MARD. Its mission is to ensure consistency of MARD functions in all situations.

OMARD's products including measurable and non-measurable outputs for example giving direction in issued documents as well as information processing and correct and timely case handling regarding incoming documents.

OMARD's customers are respective MARD agencies, units from central to local level inside and outside the sector as well as individuals in and out of the country, including MARD's leaders. It manages works process within quality, budget and timelines. The development and application of QMS ISO 9001:2000 in OMARD is linked to the effective, scientific working processes, clear responsibilities of individuals and units during case and work settlement in order to ensure office quality and impact, contributing to the improvement of MARD's efficiency and effectiveness in state management.

The development and pilot implementation of the quality management system conforming to ISO standard (QMS ISO 9001:2000) at OMARD is a process. It has been a new and difficult approach for a state administration agency such as OMARD. After more than 2 years developing and implementing the pilot quality management system, OMARD obtained its set targets despite of a heavy and complicated workload while assuring regular tasks and sudden events.

The formulation and implementation of the quality control system in OMARD conforming to ISO 9001:2000 standards was completed with the support of Project PAR in MARD VIE/02/016 and consultancy assistance by APAVE International Consultancy.

Timeline:

- Oct 2003: OMARD set up the Task Force to pilot the ISO 9001:2000 QMS OMARD (hereinafter refer to ISO Task Force).
- Nov 2003: Organized a study tour on exchanging experience of implementing ISO 9001:2000 in the Office of the People's Committee of the District 1 and Office of the Provincial People's Committee in Ho Chi Minh City.
- Dec 2003: Conducted training courses on basic knowledge of the QMS ISO 9001:2000 (delivered by the Vietnam Productivity Centre) for the cadres and civil servants of OMARD.
- Feb 2004: Contracted a consulting firm to provide support for OMARD in studying the detailed contents of the ISO 9000 and 9001:2001 QMS.
- Mar 2004: Coordinated with the PAR in MARD Project to organize training courses on ISO 9000 for leaders of MARD Departments, Inspectorate, and leaders, civil servants and cadres of OMARD. The Communist Party, Leaders and Trade Union of OMARD have since decided to apply the ISO quality management system. The

ISO application is linked to the implementation of office culture management to promote material and spiritual life by: advocating the emulation of activities with specific objectives and agenda; having a clear reward and sanction system for organizations and individuals.

- April 2004: OMARD identified the list of workflows that should be considered for application. Finally, policy and quality objectives have been identified to have 17 work procedures and 5 supporting processes in accordance with the regulation of the ISO system.
- July-Dec 2004: Organized training courses on the formulation of the quality control system for leaders, civil servants of agencies.
- Jan-May 2005: Formulated, adjusted and finalized the Quality Manual for piloting ISO at OMARD. Set up the Technical Support Group with the participation from staff with necessary experience and qualified drafting skills and IT experts who to support the editing and revising the Manual in accordance with the ISO standard; apply IT in data management and archiving; and print the material in accordance with quality requirements. During the preparation of the Manual, a number of OMARD internal and external workshops have been organized to invite comments and consultations.
- May 2005: OMARD issued the Draft Manual for pilot operation while continuing the finalization.
- 15 August 2005: MARD issued a Decision on the Application of Quality Management System confirming to ISO 9001:2000 in OMARD.
- From 10 to 12 July 2005: The 1st internal assessment followed by a second internal assessment 7-8 December 2005. After each internal assessment, the Manual was revised.
- 26 Oct 2005: OMARD officially issued the ISO Manual on Quality Control System for the implementation.
- End-Dec 2005: QUACERT, which is affiliated to the STAMEQ-MoST conducted the assessment for certification. Based on the assessment, OMARD was awarded the ISO 9001:2000 certificate with the validity from 9 January 2006 to 8 January 2009.

Conducting performance review

A preliminary review of OMARD's present performance against its mandate, power, organisation and requirements of ISO 9001: 2000 standards was undertaken and has identified a number of important issues:

- Several inappropriate work settlement procedures and orders;
- Missing regulations on work processes, especially jobs related to other units and among auxiliary units, affecting management quality and efficiency;
- Missing clear regulations to control and assess work performance;
- Work procedures for all units are not available for easy reference and application by staff, civil servants and employees;
- Responsibilities of units and individuals in work settlements are unclear and sometimes overlapping.
- Some staff, civil servants and employees are not fully qualified.

Identifying quality policy and setting targets

Based on findings from the performance review the overall objective of QMS was formulated "to ensure effective performance of OMARD's mandate, enhancing the creditability of OMARD and MARD".

The immediate objective or the target for the quality policy entails a number of elements:

- Continuously improving the performance quality, responding to the requirements of the target groups;
- Clarify the responsibility of the officers, civil servants involved in the standardized processes;
- Simplify the implementation process to ensure the effectiveness and remove any unnecessary procedures;
- Improve the monitoring ability of timeliness, quality and management measures for the internal assessment in OMARD agencies;
- Minimize the time taken for executing workflows.
- Identify the specific quality objective and a work plan to attain this.

A specific target was subsequently defined for year 2005:

- Improve the quality of the performance responding to the needs of MARD and OMARD so that no complaints are submitted in writing regarding the performance of the Office.

Specific results and outputs

Capacity building: The cadre of key officers, civil servants in OMARD have undergone training courses on quality control, international quality system in general, and its application to public service delivery.

Revision and specification of functions and jobs: During the formulation of the quality control system, the functions, tasks, titles and qualification of each individual in each agency have been reviewed. The relevance and collaboration with internal and external OMARD agencies have been identified.

Review and revision of legal documents: Implemented a comprehensive review, collection and arrangement of all legal documents, laying the foundation for the implementation of the functions, tasks and terms of reference if necessary.

Identification of training objectives: Long-term training objectives for the officers and civil servants have been identified to ensure the qualifications needed for each position.

Work processes under ISO: OMARD identified 17 work processes to be included into the quality control relating to the functions and tasks. For these a Quality Manual consisting of 25 sets of documents as following:

- 03 documents on general regulations;

- 05 documents on the support process;
- 17 work processes.

Impact

Since the start of the pilot scheme, improvements are clearly seen in OMARD's efficiency and effectiveness:

- Cooperation with internal and external OMARD agencies has been improved, ensuring the quality of services to support MARD leaders;
- Performance quality measurement relative to regulations and responding to the increasing requirements of the customers through citizen's comments and evaluation of organizations within MARD and OMARD agencies has been strengthened;
- Work discipline and management have been improved; the document system, especially the files on performance evaluation has been rearranged to ensure the objectiveness and accuracy.
- Shortcomings regarding human resources and units have been detected for quick resolution. OMARD has planned to add more officers, civil servants and employees responding to the needs of each agency.
- A significant change at management levels with respect to officers, civil servants and staff regarding their responsibility in civil service administration and service quality has been implemented.
- With the ISO application, the performance of officers, civil servants has become more systematic, the time consumption has been shortened, the awareness on responsibility and the internal and external business relations have been improved.

2.4.4 Documents in the QMS

No.	Document item	Code
01	Quality Manual	STCL-HCTC-01
02	OMARD Quality Policy	CSCL-ĐDLĐ-02
03	OMARD Quality Objective and Work plan	MTCL-ĐDLĐ-03
04	Documents monitoring process	QT-KSTL-HCTC-04
05	Internal assessment process	QT-ĐGNB-HCTC-05
06	Prevention and Improvement process	QT-CT-HCTC-06
07	HRM process	QT-QLNS-HCTC-07
08	Equipment provision and management process	QT-CCTB-TCKT-08
09	Incoming documents receiving and processing process	QT-VBĐ-HCTC-09
10	Telephone, fax maintenance, repair services and contract arrangement process	QT-ĐT-HCTC-10
11	Process of Submission for Signatures, Issuance and Archive for MARD documents	QT-VBPH-TH-11
12	MARD Work plan Formulation process	QT-CTCT-TH-12
13	MARD Report Formulation process	QT-THBC-TH-13
14	Workshop, conference organization process	QT-TCHN-TH-14
15	Cash and transmittance payment process	QT-TTTC-TCKT-15

16	Reward review process	QT-KT-TĐ-16
17	Documents and data utilization service process	QT-KTTL-LT-17
18	Document Management process	QT-KSHS-LT-18
19	MARD Reception regulation	QĐ-TTBV-QT-19
20	MARD Hygiene and Environment	QĐ-VSMT-QT-20
21	Regulations on Workshops, meetings and receptions of MARD Leaders	QĐ-PVTK-QT-21
22	Internet connectivity process	QT-HĐM-TIN-22
23	IT End-user support process	QT-SDMT-TIN-23
24	Transportation service process	QT-PVX-ĐX-24
25	Car, materials and petrol management process	QT-QLX-ĐX-25

2.4.5 Reports

Development and Pilot Implementation of the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System at OMARD; Prepared and issued by OMARD.

2.4.6 Contact

Mr. Tran Quoc Tuan, Head of Administrative and Personnel Division, Secretary of ISO Task Force, OMARD. Tel: 8 468 8161; email: tuantq.vp@mard.gov.vn.

3 Lessons learned

3.1.1 Where is PAR today?

After implementing the MARD PAR Action Plan 2005 significant changes can be observed in MARD and the ARD sector.

The organisational restructuring component in the PAR Action Plan has been carried out applying three different modalities: (i) restructuring the Ministry; (ii) decentralising functions in a horizontal dimension; and (iii) decentralising functions in a vertical dimension. The organisational reform aimed at enhancing **effectiveness**, implying enhancing service delivery in accordance with MARD's mandate; enhancing **efficiency**, implying increased cost effectiveness and better use of resources; and finally to significantly improve **responsiveness**, implying balancing services towards needs in the sector and the clients.

Relative to improved responsiveness, three landmark studies – the *Farmer Needs Survey*, the *Legal Impact Assessment* and the study of the *Public Service Providers* – have broadly speaking in addition to specific results also been instrumental in changing perceptions and approaches to service delivery. Although difficult to quantify and document there is a distinct change in perceptions among staff and within MARD's unit, understanding and realising to a much higher degree MARD's role: serving the farming households and the ARD sector.

MARD has initiated improvements in human resources management and development and has made significant steps forward along the E-MARD Roadmap, enhancing the use of IT.

It has however been mentioned by the External Evaluation Teams for the PAR Action Plan and the project VIE//02/016 that the PAR process to date has been internally oriented, focussing a lot on internal aspects. This is a necessary step to modernise MARD, but is not sufficient. The new awareness regarding servicing the ARD sector and the farming households is still in its infancy.

The pilot regarding establishing Rural Telecenters is considered a significant step in the reorientation of MARD. This pilot is ongoing and will according to schedules be completed early 2008, when 13 pilot telecenters are fully operational and results have been evaluated.

3.1.2 Where to go in the future

It is anticipated that the demand and needs of the farming households will come gradually more into focus and constitute a driving force for the next PAR phase until 2010.

In the new action plan stronger focus will be placed on restructuring the Ministry and the sector to be responsive towards needs. This is formulated directly in the objective for the next PAR phase aiming at developing MARD into a modern, effective and efficient macro-ministry. This implies full separation of state management from service delivery functions and possibly also downsizing the service delivery functions, directly managed by MARD. Hereby service delivery will become more responsive, closer to end beneficiaries – or customers, who will have a stronger say regarding what shall be delivered and by whom.

In parallel to this process, which includes downsizing and empowerment of the farming households, decentralisation and adjustment of responsibilities, MARD will continue efforts and endeavours to enhance administrative effectiveness and efficiency and thus be able to deliver more and better. OSS will shift from pilot to full scale implementation in all units; ISO will shift to full scale implementation and gender mainstreaming, aiming at improving the gender balance will continue in the next PAR phase as well.

Most importantly, the consequences of the WTO accession will be analysed and incorporated to ensure that MARD services supports the attainment of development targets for the ARD sector and the income-generating capabilities of the farming households.

State management functions will be streamlined, located at most appropriate level in the ARD sector and MARD aims to fully implement a 'zero tolerance' policy as expressed in the approved Anti-corruption Strategy and Action Plan.