



GROUP DYNAMICS

Trainer's guideline

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August 2009



Introduction

1. Main objective

To establish a strong bond within the members for good governance, mutual understanding and install the sense of responsibility among themselves on self-help projects at village ecology for sustainable holistic area development.

2. Specific objectives

By the end of the training, members of the group should be able to;

- Define what a group is? (Module 1)
- Know why farmers want form village groups. (Module 1)
- Know how to form an effective village group (APC). (Module 2)
- Know the duties and responsibilities of office bearers, group leaders, chiefs, committees and ordinary members. (Module 2)
- Know qualities of good leaders and members. (Module 2)
- Know how to elect leaders. (Module 3)
- Know why an APC must have a constitution (Module 4)
- Know how to develop a constitution. (Module 4)
- Know how to conduct meetings. (Module 5)
- How to write minutes of the meeting. (Module 5)
- Know how to face problems. (Module 6)
- How to reach sustainable village development

3. Training arrangements and organization

For sake of convenience, efficiency and affectivity, two training sessions will be reasonable:

i. First training

- The first training will cover module 1 to 4 that will target all members of the APC at village level, and if some villages are closer, they can join another. This looks at organization and qualities of good leaders and members.
- This first training is a critical stage, which needs to be addressed with consciousness and care as it forms the foundation of a good APC. As such the trainer needs to dedicate the whole day for that in order for people to understand the principles for all the modules.

ii. Second training

- The second phase will target group leaders, committees and chiefs. That session can be done in half a day.
- This training makes the APC strong as it concentrates much on the responsibilities of the running leaders, committees and chiefs as well as constitution and meetings of the APCs. As a result, it is advisable for all trainers to be serious and consider much of the most critical areas.

Refreshments will be addressed during monitoring of the APC. If any mistake is spotted then corrective measures will be taken in the process.

Leaders will be monitored for the whole season to make sure that by next year, they will be more independent on group administration.

1st training: with all members of the group

1. Definition of a group

This is a really important module. Its aim is to make the villagers understand why it is important to work in groups for the sustainable development of the village.

1.1. What is a group?

→ Ask the question to the farmers.

Repeat the interesting things that have been mentioned and which are in that definition:

“It is a group of individuals having the same interests, objectives and who agreed to cooperate and work together under one name, with a constitution formulated and agreed by the group members themselves.”

Conclude by reminding them this definition.

1.2. Why farmers want to form a development group?

→ Ask the question to the farmers.

Remind them those main ideas:

- Because it is easier and more efficient to have the help of the other to solve his own problems. (give an example : taking care of a tree nursery alone is hard and tiresome, but at group level it's easy to share the work and to have benefits from a community tree nursery)
- Because a group can provide all the strength needed to improve the livelihoods and the incomes of the community.

1.3. What are the objectives of your group?

→ Ask the question: why the group needs objectives?

The objectives are the cement of the group. They are the common wishes of the members. It is to reach those objectives that the farmers are gathering in group to work.

You can make a comparison for them for a better understanding:

| A person without objectives | A person with objectives |
|--|--|
| - Lives one day at a time. - Faces more and more problems every day - Is not motivated and always in a hurry | - Is motivated - Works more easily - Makes efforts to reach his objectives |

→ Ask the question: What are the objectives of your group?

Guide the group by reminding them the following ideas:

- The aim of the group creation is to work on agriculture issues
- The aim of the group creation is to reinforce food security
- The aim of the group is to increase the livelihoods of the villagers.

1.4. How can they achieve their objectives?

→ Ask the question to the farmers.

Try to make them express or remind them the following ideas:

- Sharing knowledge about their agricultural activity
- Helping one another to solve various problems.
- Becoming a self-sustaining organization that is able to lend to its members funds, inputs, organize purchase of inputs and implementing things on their own.
- Facilitating easy communication with the extension workers

1.5. How to form an effective development group?

→ Remind them the main following ideas:

“An effective group is a group which works seriously in order to achieve its objectives.”

Characteristics of an effective group:

- The group must be self-forming, that is members must select themselves.
- Members should be hard working and honest
- Members must therefore know each other well
- Members must be willing to work together
- Members should not be defaulters

An effective development group should have:

- A main committee to run the group activities (executive committee)
- Some key persons within the committee who will be in charge of each activity
- A constitution
- A book for record keeping
- A meeting place
- A membership annual subscription

2. Organization, group leaders and qualities of good leaders and good members

By the end of the module, members should know what is the organisation of the group, which leaders a group must have and what are the qualities and the responsibilities of good leaders. In that way, people who want to take part of the leadership will know what will be their duties and can choose the post which they want to be candidate. All the members will have in mind who can be the most suitable person for each post.

2.1. Group leadership

→ Ask the question: What is the group leadership? Why does a group need a leadership?

You can make them think about this issue with a comparison: if our group was a minibus:

- We would be all the passengers of the minibus.
- We would have a direction that we have chosen => the shared objectives of the group
- As the driver in the minibus, we will need some trustworthy people who drive the group to its objectives => the committee = the leaders of the group

The committee consists in:

- A chairman or chairperson (it is up to the group to choose a vice): he is the one who leads the committee and members of the group.
- A secretary (it is up to the group to choose a vice): he is the one who records all the decisions, the attendance to the meetings and the members of the group.
- A treasurer: he is the one who manages the accounting of the group (recording and management of loans, reimbursements, payments...)
- 5 other members: they participate in the decisions and they share the follow-up of the specific activities of the group.

2.2. Qualities and duties of good leaders and good members

A leader is a person who is elected by the people to lead and guide them in various activities

➔ Ask them what should be the responsibilities and the qualities of each group leader and ordinary members.

Guide them thanks to the following tables:

The Chairman:

| Duties and responsibilities | Qualities |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪To convene meetings as stipulated in the group constitution ▪To install group discipline, with the assistance of the committee ▪To approve the agenda for each meeting ▪To delegate his duties to his vice if necessary ▪To be able to solve emergency problems ▪To solicit general consensus amongst the membership ▪To conduct the meeting when a forum is formed ▪To sign minutes of the previous meeting after confirming that they are true reflection of what was discussed. ▪To delegate the management of specific activities to other committee members. ▪<i>To manage the seed bank (loan amount, follow-up of reimbursement, decisions on management...)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪Good behaviour ▪A fluent speaker ▪Cheerful and patient ▪Hard working and interested in development activities ▪Active at work ▪Commands respect but is not pompous ▪Must have good an exemplary behaviour |

The secretary:

| Duties and responsibilities | Qualities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To prepare all group meetings including formulation of agenda. ▪ To keep records of all members by name and group activities. ▪ To take minutes of the meeting and maintain a record of all meetings ▪ To read a summary of what the meetings has agreed ▪ To inform the chairman of issues affecting the members ▪ To handle all group correspondences ▪ To ensure that all members understand the objective of the group ▪ To play an advisory role to the chairman ▪ To keep the group/members' confidential matters ▪ To conduct introduction whenever there are visitors at the meeting ▪ <i>To manage the seed bank (recording of the members, decisions on the management...)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know how to read and write ▪ Be of good behaviour ▪ Disciplined ▪ Dedicated and interested in development activities ▪ Active ▪ Meticulous and rigorous |

The treasurer:

| Duties and responsibilities | Qualities |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Maintain and secure group funds and accounts (if there is an account) ▪ Inform group members of the group financial position ▪ Ensure that group assets are used to the intended purpose ▪ Alert in advance of any unfavourable development in the finances ▪ Present an up to date report at all meetings. ▪ Ensure that a group has chosen three signatories to sign withdraws slips when withdrawing money from the bank (if there is a bank account) ▪ <i>Register all the loans and the reimbursements of the seed bank</i> ▪ <i>Manage the seed bank (loan recording, reimbursement recording, storage of the seeds, decisions on management...)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Know how to read and write ▪ Trustworthy ▪ Have some knowledge of arithmetic ▪ Disciplined ▪ Cheerful and dedicated ▪ Meticulous and rigorous |

The committee members:

| Duties and responsibilities | Qualities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Examine and contribute constructive ideas at meetings ▪ Take part on decisions on group matters ▪ Ensure that members abide by the group constitution ▪ Deals with defaulters ▪ Accept any duty or responsibility that may be assigned to them by the committee ▪ Exemplify good leadership ▪ Maintain discipline within the group ▪ Follow-up of specific activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good behaviour ▪ Trustworthy ▪ Dedicated and interested in development work ▪ Active and cooperative ▪ Ready to serve others and accept responsibility |

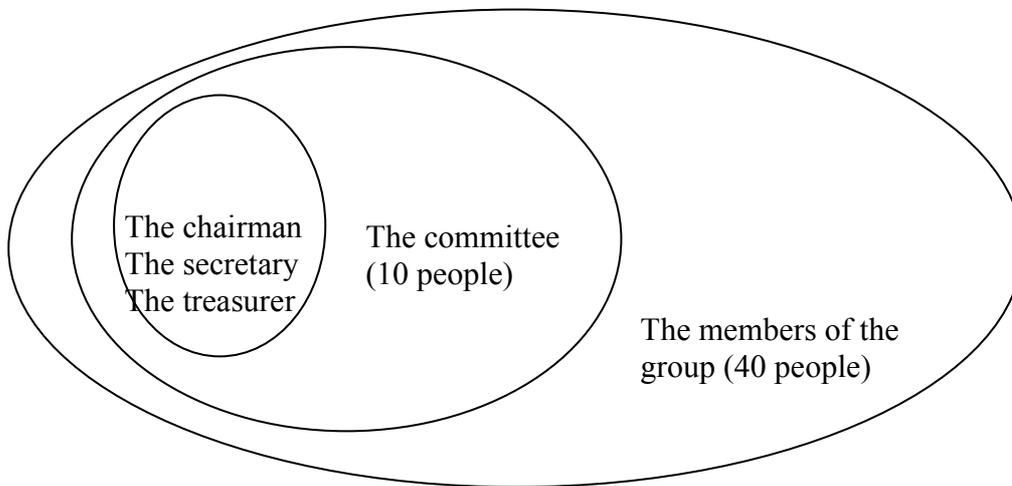
The ordinary members:

| Duties and responsibilities | Qualities |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attending all meetings ▪ Be current on membership fee ▪ Abiding by the constitution of the group ▪ Giving accurate information to the group ▪ Sharing equitably any jointly owned equipment ▪ Paying off loans in or on time. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good behaviour ▪ Trustworthy ▪ Dedicated and interested in development work ▪ Active and cooperative ▪ Ready to serve others and accept responsibility |

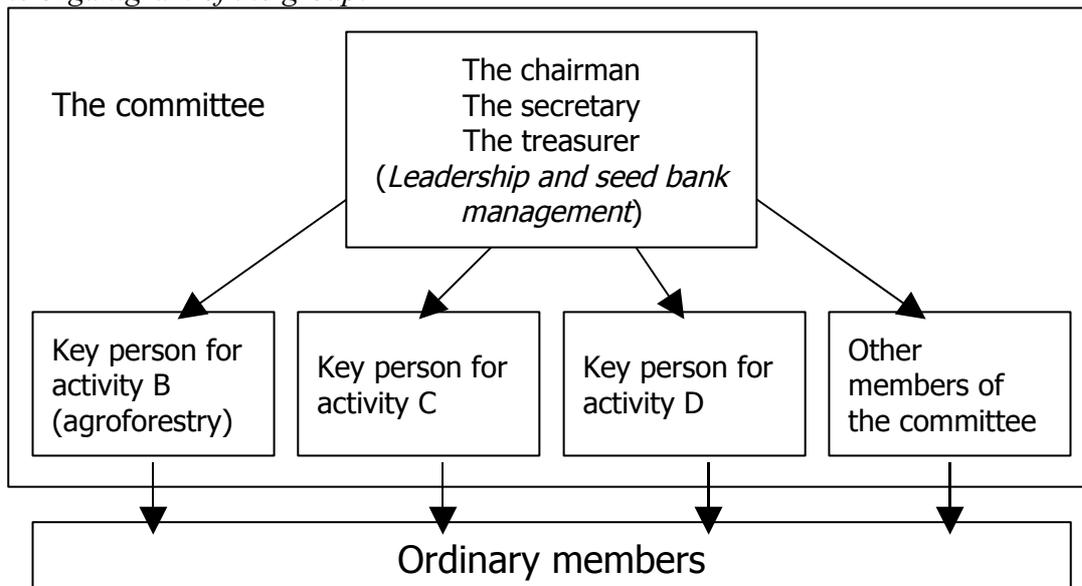
2.3. The organisation of the group

➔ Remind the organisation of the group with simple drawings:

The diagram of the group:



The organigram of the group:



3. Development of a constitution

By the end of this module, members should know why there is a need for constitution and how to prepare a constitution.

3.1 Definition of the constitution

A constitution is a set of rules that govern the action of the group. It specifies how the group is organized, duties of the members and committee, procedures during meeting and penalties imposed on members who don't follow rules and regulation of the group.

3.2 Why a group must have a constitution?

→ Ask them this question.

The following points should be reminded to them:

- Because when several people want to work together they have to clearly agree on the duties and rights of each of them and on the functioning of the group.
- No group can function properly without rules that govern the action of the group. A group constitution provides such rules.

3.3 Clauses in a constitution

→ Use the following clauses to discuss with the farmers:

- Name of a group
- Address of the group
- Purpose of forming a group
- Membership eligibility
- Amount of the annual subscription
- Maximum number of members
- Responsibility of group members, leaders and committees
- Length of terms of committee members
- Membership fees
- Loan disbursement and repayment procedure (for the seed bank)
- Assets to be acquired
- Disciplinary procedure for the whole functioning of the group
- Disciplinary procedure in case of misreimbursement of the seed bank's loans.
- Frequency of general meetings
- Frequency of revision of constitution
- Distribution of the assets if dissolution of the group

3.4 Procedure for writing a constitution

- All the members should be convened to a meeting (it can be done after the training)
- The VH or one of his deputy facilitate the meeting (with the help of a field officer)
- A decision should be taken with all the members for each clauses mentioned above
- The final decisions for each clause should be recorded on the group's book.

All members should be present when developing a constitution.

4. Election of leaders

By the end of the module, members should know how to elect leaders.

4.1 Election procedure

- a) All members of the group should be convened to a meeting
- b) The village headman should conduct the meeting
- c) The village headman should state the objective of the meeting
- d) After having explained the purpose of the meeting, the election should be conducted freely and the leaders elected on the basis of the qualities of a good leader.
- e) Nomination of a member to hold the post in a group should take into account the skills needed to carry out the duties of the post
- f) Three names should be proposed for each position, and clearly told to all the members.
- g) Voting should be based on the principle of one person one vote, and one getting highest number of votes wins the position
- h) The elected members should be introduced to the group.

4.2 For the voting itself several methods can be used:

Ex1: If all the members are able to read and write

Write the name of the candidates on a board.

Distribute small pieces of papers to the members.

The members write the name of the chosen candidate on it.

Two people count the number of voice for each candidate.

Ex2: If the people can't read and write

Use the same procedure but replace the small papers by small pieces of coloured papers (each colour represents a candidate) or by small pieces of papers with different signs on it (each sign represents a candidate).

Ex3: Plebiscite

One person says clearly the name of the candidate. The members who want to vote for that candidate raise the hand. The raised hands are counted. This should be done for each candidate for each post. The biggest number of raised hands wins.

2nd training: with the leaders of the group

The first thing that can be done as an introduction of this meeting is to remind the duties and responsibilities of the leaders and make sure that each of them as well understood.

5.How to conduct a meeting

By the end of the module, members will be able how to:

- Conduct meetings
- Plan the agenda of a meeting
- Keep attendance register of the meeting
- Writes minutes of the meeting
- Plan the next meeting

5.1 How to prepare a meeting?

- Each meeting should have an agenda reporting all the issues that should be discussed
- The secretary prepares the agenda for every meeting
- The chairperson approves the agenda
- All members should be informed of the agenda, date, time and place of the meeting
- Each member should have a chance to comment on the agenda before the meeting.

5.2 When conducting the meeting:

- The chairperson opens the meeting and welcomes all members
- The secretary reads the agenda of the meeting
- The secretary reads the previous meetings matters arising from the minutes
- The chairperson facilitates the meeting
- Each issue of the agenda should be discussed with the present members
- The secretary writes each final decision to prepare the minutes of the meeting
- The chairperson checks the attendance
- The next meeting is plan at the end.

5.3 How to write minutes?

The purpose is to record what happened at the meetings and record decision taken. In a case of disagreement or confusion the minutes should provide clarity. The minutes are written by the secretary. To show authenticity, minutes must be signed by the chairperson.

The minutes should include;

- Date and time of the meeting
- Name of the chairperson or alternate chairing
- Name of secretary or alternate writing minutes
- Names of members not present, and probably reasons for being absent and also whether the meeting is considered valid or not
- Validation of the minutes of the previous meeting
- Decision taken at this meeting
- Plan of the activities and plan of the next meeting

6. Problems experienced by the APC and solutions

The objectives of this part are to:

- Identify problems experienced by group
- Formulate possible solutions to these problems

What can be the different problems?

- Members not honouring group's annual subscription/saving requirements
- Members not attending meetings
- Misuse of inputs obtained through loan or grant
- Wilful default by some members
- Group executive not accounting moneys from loan recoveries properly or anything relevant
- Bad reimbursement of the loans
- Indiscipline in the group
- Members not interested to participate in the group activities

Having listed these problems, the group should be able to solicit solutions for the problems above.

References:

- Inter Aide – Agriculture training guidelines – in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture of Malawi – March 2006
- Pratiques: Le taxi brousse – sensibilisation à la formation de groupements – Marie-Cécile Ricard – Décembre 2006

** Laurence Mathieu-Colas and Goulven Le Bahers, agronomist, managed the food security project "Agro-Phalombe" in Malawi from April 2008 to April 2010.*

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Documents attached to the group dynamics training:

1. Comparison between the APC and a Minibus



The destination



The passengers



The ticket



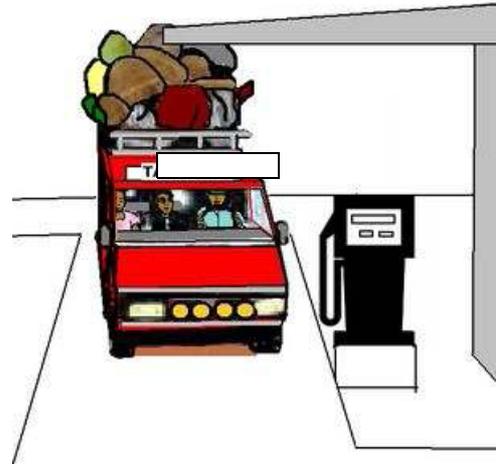
The engine



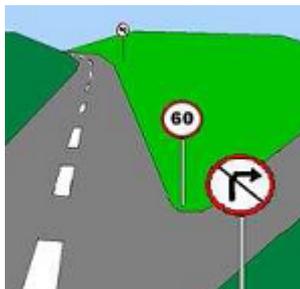
The driver



The employee who is helping the driver



The fuel



The rules of the road

In the group, what is the direction? → The objective. This is the point that the members want to reach.

In the group, who are the passengers ? → The members. They have decided to form the group because they know where he drives them and they know that they can rely on it.

In the group, what is the engine? → The activities. This is what allows the members to reach the objective.

In the group, who is the driver? → The chairman. He knows the destination, and he is the one who maintain the direction to reach the objectives.

In the group, what is the ticket? → The membership fee. It is necessary for each member to pay his membership fee to enter the group, like the ticket in the bus. This is a mean to run the activities (payment of the inputs, payment of the materials...).

In the group, who are the employees? → The main committee, the treasurer and the secretary. They help the chairman in his duties to lead the group. They also take part in the decisions about the group, and they have there specific duties.

In the group what are the rules of the road? → The constitution. The members have to know this text very well and agree it if they want the group to drive safely on the road to the objectives.

In the group, what is the fuel? → The motivation. Without motivation, nothing can be done, this is what allows the group to run.

2. Example of constitutions

APC CONSTITUTION CLAUSES / QUESTION

1. Name of the group?
2. Address of the group?
3. Objectives of the group?
4. Is it Permittable to have Sub-Committees within the main Committee?
5. How many members should a group be composed of?
6. For somebody to be a member, what should be the factors to look in?
7. What should be the Membership fee for a new member?
8. What will be the monthly Contribution fee for both new and old members?
9. How many leaders will be in a main Committee and Sub-Committees?
10. What will be the length of terms for office bearers?
11. How often will the group be Meeting?
 - (a) At what times?
 - (b) Which Venue?
 - (c) Who will be calling for the Meeting?
 - (d) What will be the Quorum before the Meeting starts?
12. PENALTIES / DISCIPLINES:
 - (a) What will be the Penalties for those arrives 10 minutes later after the Meeting starts?
 - (b) What will be the Penalties for the absentees?
 - (c) What disciplinary measures will be taken for those fighting each other during Meetings?
13. What will be the use of the Membership fees? *This management of common tools / income*
 - (a) What role will the Treasure play during the Meeting?
14. What will be the repayment Period for the Club/APC loans?
 - (b) What Steps will be taken against defaulters?
15. How will the group be Solving their Problems?
16. Will there be any option for the group Constitution to be amended?

Signature
 N. Smith

IALAMULO A GULU LA MULINGA (1)

- 1 DZIWA LA GULU : Mulinga
- 2 ADDRESS : Chikomwe FR School
Po Box 18
Mayaka, Zomba.
- 3 Cholinga Chagulu : Kuphunzira kuti titukule ulimi wathu kuti upite Patsoyolo kutizera munjira zosiyasiyana monya, zalimi wa Ziweho, ndi mberu.
- 4 Mgulu mwathu tizakhalemba ndi makomiti ang'ono ang'ono oyang'ana nira Zigawo zosiyana siyana, monya Zakhumbas, Futengo ndi Kumilambala.
- 5 Mgulu mwathu tizenera kukhala ndi mamembala akwana 45.
- 6 Muntw kuti akhale membala wagulu lathu ayenera akhale wamudzi momwemwono. wazaka Pakati Pa 18-60.
- 7 Ndalama zolowera Pagulu ndi K75.00 kwa Memebala wabopano.
- 8 Memebala akale ndi abopano ayenera kupeleka K10.00 Pamwezi uliouse.
- 9 Atsozoleni tizafuna akhale atatu Pakomiti tsikulu ndipo makomiti ang'ondang'ono akhale atatu, atatu.
- 10 Atsozoleni ayenera kukhala Pampano kwa Zaka Ziwinu kenako Masankho.
- 11 MISONKHAMO: Gulu lathu lizikumana tsiku lotembas lililonse Pamwezi.
- (a) Nthawi yokomamira 8:30 mamawa.
- (b) Mabo okomamira Pa Mulinga Church of Christ.
- (c) Pakhe muntw pamwe azipitikanika misonkhamo, aliyeuse ayenera kuozina tsiku lomwe tazwirizana kuti tizikumana.
- (d) Kutu misonkhamo uyambike pazenera Pakhale mamembala asachepela 15.
- 12 CHILANGO :
- Ochedwa kumisonkhamo wimphindi 10, misonkhamo utayambika azipiteka K5.00.
 - Djomba kumisonkhamo kapena kuntchito azipiteka K10.00

(a)

- Anthoni amenyama pabungwe ayenera achoke mugulu.
13. Ndatama Zopezeka Pasulu zizathandiza kukwaniritsa zolinga Zasulu lathu.
- (b) M'Songi chuma (Treasurer) azulutse ndondomeko ya ndakama Zasapulu wdi nkhibo zake.
14. Ngonyole yasulu iyenera kubwerezeka muthani yake, stephena kubweza azazenzedwa mlandu, anfungidwe kipeleka ndatama, akastephena alandidwe katandu.
15. Mavuto aPasulu azathetseka wdi abogoleri pokambirama.
16. Matalambo agulu azatha kuvonjezereka malingama wdi nyenzo / mthami.

Chairman

Secretary

Treasurer