Action-Planning Workshops for Development Management

Guidelines

Jerry M. Silverman, Merlyn Kettering, and Terry D. Schmidt
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ABSTRACT

Action-Planning supplements conventional planning and implementation approaches and strengthens the institutional capacity within a developing nation to efficiently and effectively plan and manage implementation of their development strategies. Action-Planning is most useful when addressing complex programs, projects, and policy work. Conventionally, the design of development efforts is differentiated from implementation, often at the sacrifice of immediate and long-term development results. As an alternative, this paper provides guidelines for an action-planning approach which can be adapted to integrate design and implementation through an iterative, participatory process.

Action-Planning during preparation and appraisal involves officials and beneficiaries in a participative process of planning and decision-making that strengthens design and contributes to improving capacity from the very beginning. Action-Planning used iteratively throughout design and implementation mobilizes commitment and enhances realistic planning among a critical mass of supporters and implementors to achieve the goals of program/project or policy work. Action-Planning, in the form of identification and design workshops, project launch workshops and periodic (e.g., annual) workshops, activates and builds teams that can operate within the project, program or policy context to meet the essential conditions for success. Local ownership of development programs is ensured, effective organizations and teams are created, systems and procedures for implementation are established and management capacities are institutionalized. The action-planning approach encourages management teams at all levels to adapt concepts and tools directly applicable to the program/project or policy setting at hand to make operations more effective and, thus, builds their capacity to be self-reliant and make development programs sustainable.
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS................................................................. viii

PREFACE......................................................................................... ix

I. JUSTIFICATION................................................................. 1

   Developing Institutional Capacity........................................ 1
   Phases in Institutional Development...................................... 1
   Design Phase............................................................................ 2
   Implementation Phases........................................................ 3

II. APPROACH.............................................................................. 4

   Role of Facilitators............................................................... 5
   Role of Participants.............................................................. 6
   Role of Resource Persons...................................................... 6
   Pre-Workshop Preparation and Workshop Follow-Up.................... 7
   Preparation.............................................................................. 7
   Follow-up.............................................................................. 8
   Workshop Approach............................................................... 8
   The Dynamics of Small Groups............................................... 9
   Workshop Products and Process............................................ 10
   Stages of Group Behavior..................................................... 10
   Style of the Effective Facilitator.......................................... 11
   The Facilitation Team............................................................ 12
   Size and Composition........................................................... 12
   Process................................................................................ 12
   Qualifications...................................................................... 12

III. STRATEGY............................................................................... 13

   Elements of a Strategy.......................................................... 13
   The Institutional Environment.............................................. 14
   Linking the Action-Planning Process to the Environment.............. 16
   Sector Reviews and Program/Project Identification..................... 16
   Program/Project Preparation............................................... 17
   Program/Project Appraisal.................................................... 18
   Program/Project Implementation Planning................................ 18
   Program/Project Launch....................................................... 19
   Training.............................................................................. 19
   Management Team Training................................................ 19
   Technical Skills Training...................................................... 21
IV. PREPARING ACTION-PLANNING WORKSHOPS.......................... 21
Sponsorship............................................ 22
Group Size............................................. 23
Participant Selection............................... 23
Workshop Length..................................... 24
Location............................................... 24
Workshop Facilities................................... 25
Designing Workshop Content and Process............... 27
  Guidelines for Workshop Design...................... 27
  Clarifying Workshop Objectives........................ 28
  Preparing Detailed Design and Agenda................ 28
  Preparing Materials.................................. 29

V. CONDUCTING ACTION-PLANNING WORKSHOPS.......................... 29
Creating and Maintaining an Active Learning Climate..... 30
Maintaining Appropriate Relationships........................ 30
Monitoring Progress.................................... 30
  The Agenda.............................................. 30
  Participation.............................................. 32
Daily Climate Setting................................... 32
Summarizing and Processing Learning........................... 33
Building Group Spirit................................... 33
Daily Closing............................................ 33
Managing Small Work Group Tasks.............................. 33
  Small Group Composition............................... 34
  Group Instructions....................................... 35
  Monitoring Small Group Progress.......................... 35
  Preparation for Reporting Back............................. 35
Managing Plenary Reporting Back Sessions...................... 36
Processing Small Group Results.................................. 36
Charts and Visuals........................................ 36
Reporting Back.......................................... 36
Providing a Context....................................... 36
Enforcing Time Limits..................................... 37
Moderating Discussion.................................... 37
Retention of Products..................................... 37
Processing the Learning.................................... 38
The Facilitation Team Approach................................. 41
Morning Meetings........................................ 41
Anticipating Activities and Maintaining
  Workshop Flow............................................ 41
  Team-Teaching Approach.................................. 41
  Performance Critiques.................................... 42
Evening Meetings........................................ 42
Workshop Evaluation....................................... 43
VI. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- Administrative Requirements
- Invitations
- Venue, Subsistence, and Supplies
- Logistic Support
- Financing

VII. POTENTIAL RISKS

- Participation as Threat
- Unrealistic Local Expectations
- Unacceptable Proposals
- Involvement of Beneficiaries
- Inappropriate Design and Facilitation Skills

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANNEXES

A. Illustrative Cases
B. Descriptive Agendas: Examples
C. Annotated Agendas: Examples
D. Workshop Evaluation Questionnaires: Example

FIGURES

1. Problems and Constraints on Project Management:
   The Three Arenas of Action
2. Training Room Layout
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PREFACE

This reference guide is written primarily for officials of public and private development institutions who might want to use an "Action-Planning" approach to program or project design and implementation. Action-Planning is a practical, flexible, effective way to design programs/projects while simultaneously increasing commitment and improving the management capacity of those responsible for actual implementation and operations.

These guidelines are the result of two complementary streams of thought and practice. One stream has been the World Bank's increasing use, since 1982, of "Action-Planning Workshops" at all stages of the project cycle and the extension of the approach in 1985 to program design at the macro-economic and institutional development levels. A variety of Bank documents have been prepared which directly or indirectly describe the operational utility of the approach. The reader might, in particular, refer to Technical Assistance and Aid Agency Staff: Alternative Techniques for Greater Effectiveness, No. 28 in this series of Technical Papers (1984). The other stream has been the development of "Action-Training Workshops" and "Team Planning Meetings" by the Development Projects Management Center (DPMC) of USDA. The similarity of the two approaches--independently prepared by different organizations--attests to their utility based on real world experience in the field.

The specific objective of this reference guide is to assist program/project officers to prepare for and implement successful Action-Planning Workshops. In addition, it should also be useful for stimulating new ideas and guiding the efforts of those responsible for the design and conduct of Action-Planning workshops in the field.

1/ Founded in 1976, DPMC’s primary purpose is to create more effective management technologies for the less developed countries. DPMC receives funding for research and dissemination through the Performance Management Project from AID’s Office of Rural and Institutional Development, Science and Technology Bureau. Over the past nine years DPMC has applied and adapted action-training approaches to prepare teams who will go overseas to work with mission and Host Government officials, to collaboratively design projects, to plan the launching of projects at the earliest stages of implementation following approval of donor financing, and to periodically evaluate the re-plan ongoing efforts.
I. JUSTIFICATION

Developing Institutional Capacity

The Action-Planning approach is directed toward improving the borrowers' institutional capacity to efficiently and effectively plan and manage the implementation of their development strategies. The approach supplements conventional development planning and implementation techniques. It is a powerful means for achieving seven fundamental objectives:

(a) Identifying local perceptions of problems and constraints to be addressed by development programs/projects;

(b) Revealing values and attitudes to which the program/project approach must be adapted;

(c) Arriving at a procedural, analytical, and operational framework that meets the development goals of the country;

(d) Mobilizing a critical mass of local supporters and implementors for the development strategy as a whole or particular program/project elements of the strategy;

(e) Generating sufficient commitment and ownership by appropriate supporters and implementors;

(f) Starting a process for team functioning to be used throughout planning, implementation and evaluation; and

(g) Improving the capacity of project or program management teams to plan and manage on an on-going basis during implementation.

Phases in Institutional Development

A program or project of institutional development can be divided into three reinforcing sets of activities: (i) identification, preparation, and appraisal; (ii) start-up implementation; and (iii) ongoing implementation. These three phases of activities can benefit enormously from agreement among all parties to a program or project about procedures, analytical frameworks, and other means to operationalize developmental and political criteria for decision making.

Nevertheless, the distinction between "design" on the one hand and "implementation" on the other hand should not be rigid for at least two reasons:
(a) By its very nature, a program to improve institutional capacity must be implemented over a long period within a changing environment. Thus, the program must be designed to allow continuous modification, based on learning and innovative problem-solving, rather than on the routine application of solutions determined during an earlier planning and design phase.

(b) In the context described above, initial planning and design activities should themselves be viewed as the first phase of implementation through the direct involvement of those whose capacity is to be improved.

The conventional approach to institutional design—which distinguishes between the design and implementation phases—normally places local professionals and potential beneficiaries in the role of informants and the foreign professional in the role of designer. Only after a project is negotiated and agreements signed (i.e., after the project is "designed") are local professionals and potential beneficiaries given active roles. Further, "implementation" is sometimes carried out under the leadership of foreign "experts".

The alternative approach outlined here views initial identification, preparation, and appraisal as an integral part of a multi-stage implementation process based on iterative planning. In all phases a large variety of interdependent environmental factors must be considered; e.g., finance, economics, social conditions, policy, management, technology, human resource development and institutional development. These all must be integrated so they support and reinforce each other's contribution to the achievement of objectives. In some cases, a careful balancing of trade-offs among different factors must take place. Action-Planning is an effective means to integrate relevant considerations from many different disciplines and interests. The dialogue and learning that takes place makes it more likely that the interests of the different stakeholders are satisfied sufficiently, so that implementation of the activity is widely understood and supported. Participants contribute to each other's knowledge to further the goals of the group. For example, the World Bank representative and officials of the borrowing country, participating together in an Action-Planning Workshop, are more likely to share their respective knowledge, skills, and creativity and then be committed to subsequent decisions and actions. Therefore, the participation of local officials and other beneficiaries in that process from the very beginning should be viewed as part of the capacity-building program.

Design Phase. The purpose of the initial design process is to establish preconditions acceptable to both the donor and the recipient government for the commencement of a formal project or program and, perhaps, the establishment of some new supporting policy initiatives. Regarding the institutional aspects of a program or project, the objectives during each of the three stages in the design process should be viewed as follows.

2/ The word "stakeholder" is used throughout this paper to mean an interested or concerned party.
(a) **Identification:** Identify and establish appropriate relationships with external entities whose actions are likely to affect program/project performance directly or indirectly (p. 16-17).

(b) **Preparation:** Choosing, from among options, appropriate organizational structure, control, and coordination patterns (p. 17-18).

(c) **Appraisal:** Specifying the detailed organizational arrangements and designing the learning process (p. 18).

These three pre-implementation stages are the time to mobilize commitment among a critical mass of supporters and implementors to the goals of the program/project. These goals should be stated in broad terms along with appropriately detailed plans. Shared expectations should be created so that both the broad and detailed strategies will be reconsidered as the project proceeds through a process of periodic reviews and re-planning.

**Implementation Phases.** One of the valuable applications of Action-Planning is to help new projects begin effectively. When applied to new programs/projects, Action-Planning helps to:

(a) Shift ownership from designers to implementors;

(b) Develop the organization and create effective teamwork and operating procedures;

(c) Establish a management system for effective implementation; and

(d) Improve the implementation skills of the management team and create internal capacity for self-reliance.

These necessary conditions for successful implementation do not occur automatically. In the rush to implement, building these conditions is often ignored by management teams which have technical proficiency but limited managerial experience. But if they are not established, the result is predictable and inevitable: confusion, delay, low achievement, and wasted resources will plague implementation efforts.

The Action-Planning process does not attempt to teach a single "system" for managing implementation, which may be inconsistent with other organization systems, processes, or cultures. Rather, it helps the management team develop an effective approach which fits the project context and their personal experience; hopefully within a framework that gives a high priority to social and economic growth (p. 19-20).

Personnel who manage development efforts are usually selected for their technical abilities, not their management skills. But the technician-made-manager faces responsibilities he is not equipped to handle. Even technical roles include a management component. Managerial
skills are essential, but usually lacking. Traditional management courses are not the solution. Key persons cannot be released to attend long training courses and typically only a portion of what they learn in such courses applies in the specific program/project context.

The effectiveness of Action-Planning workshops is multiplied many times if, following program/project launch, they are conducted on a regularly scheduled basis during implementation (p. 20-21). In addition to providing a vehicle for cumulative improvement of planning and management skills, recurrent workshops also serve as a mechanism for monitoring the performance of the organization and making whatever adjustments might be necessary to the implementation plan on a rolling basis.

Action-Planning Workshops create an expectation that decisions about the future are conditional and must be reviewed by the group as the future unfolds. Regular review sessions must be scheduled to take stock of developments by comparing actual experience with plans; with re-planning taking place as needed. Such follow-up efforts can make a difference in a number of ways. First, they can reinforce the new patterns of behavior and the use of new tools that have been learned. Second, they can help group members avoid a relapse into previous patterns of behavior and sustain the momentum of the workshop. As influential outsiders, facilitators can help muster support from higher authorities.

Action-Planning Workshops introduce management concepts and specific tools which have direct applicability to the project at hand. They improve management skills in problem solving, decision making, planning and monitoring, by facilitating a process of learning concepts and applying them immediately to the program/project. Tools are introduced just prior to their need by the work group. For example, a responsibility chart is introduced when work assignments of the project/program are being made. After practice exercises by the individuals and/or the group, the responsibility chart is considered by the team for use in the assignment. The rate and intensity of learning is heightened by the relevance and the immediate applicability of what is learned to the task at hand. The precise extent and mode of application is left to the group. They are in the best position to determine how the logic and form of management tools can best be used in their environment. The approach encourages management teams to adapt concepts and tools to make their operations more effective and, thus, builds their capacity to be self reliant (p. 20-21).

II. APPROACH

Action-Planning workshops differ from traditional planning and management training in several ways. They should be based on careful consideration of the perceived needs of the key stakeholders of the program/project. They focus on teams rather than individuals. They are participative, practical, "learn by doing" programs which simultaneously build team management capacity while producing results of immediate value (i.e., operationally useful program/project designs and implementation
plans). They involve minimum formal lectures, maximum participant activity, and extensive use of small groups for discussion, problem-solving and decision-making. They should be designed to create a climate where people of different disciplines and interests listen to each other and attempt to integrate relevant expertise and experience -- technical, social, political, financial, and economic. At the end of each workshop, participants will have produced useful products directly related to their work. As important, they will have learned management concepts and discovered effective ways to operate as a team throughout the program/project.

The unique features of Action-Planning can be further explained by describing the role of facilitators, the role of participants, the role of resource persons, and the approach.

**Role of Facilitators**

The role performed by Action-Planning Facilitators differs from the role performed by "teachers". In a traditional teaching environment, the teacher is the expert; students are presumed to have little knowledge. The job of the teacher is to fill the students with wisdom by lecturing while the students carefully listen and diligently take notes.

Action-Planning facilitators, by contrast, recognize that all participants bring to the workshop some valid experience and expertise that relates to project management. The facilitators' role is not to be the "expert", but to create an active learning climate in which knowledge is discovered through discussion and mutual exploration.

This approach assumes that most of the information the participants need to solve the issue at hand already exists somewhere within the group. The facilitator's job is to work with the group to discover the needed information, "process" the experience by which they solve the issue (p. 33, 36, 38-41), and guide the team in recognizing effective problem-solving procedures that can be used in the future. When needed information is not available to the group, such information is identified and steps are taken for the group to obtain it.

The facilitator helps the team discover more effective norms. For instance, if a project manager views his role as providing the best ideas and making all the decisions, then capable members of the team (especially junior ones) may be reluctant to contribute their knowledge and ideas. The result is a less effective team. In this situation, the facilitator should encourage junior members to participate and introduce the norm that the team works best when everyone contributes. If the trust level with the project manager is high, the facilitator might also privately counsel him on the value of actively seeking opinions and suggest ways to do so without diminishing his authority. Sometimes, however, encouraging the active participation of junior staff in the direct presence of supervisors can have negative results (p. 46).
In any event, the facilitator acts as a catalyst for the participants' learning; helping them to discover principles they can use to be more effective in solving the issues at hand and in addressing similar future issues. Occasionally the facilitator plays an instructor role by suggesting an approach or explaining the use of a particular management tool. He/she may present a brief lecture on, for example, how to set objectives. Such mini-lectures are used at key points in the workshop to give the participants a framework for tackling specific issues and producing useful results.

The role of a coach of a sports team provides a good analogy to the facilitator's role. The players, not the coach, must perform on the field. The coach can help each player discover his talents and give tips on how to use them more effectively. He can suggest plays for the team, then critique their performance. But it is the players who do the job on the field; the coach sits on the sidelines. A major difference is that the facilitator works him/herself out of the job while building local talent.

Facilitation skills are not the equivalent of common sense. Rather, they are technical skills acquired through training and extended practice. Consultants employed as facilitators should be carefully selected based on previously demonstrated performance. It is a false economy to assign that role to just anyone who might be available or to assume that trainers or consultant personnel qualified in other capacities can adequately serve (p. 11-12, 27-42).

Role of Participants

In Action-Planning workshops, the primary responsibility for achieving results rests with the participants, not with the facilitators. The participants may initially be uncomfortable with this notion, as it contradicts their previous experience with workshops. But the facilitator makes it clear by his/her actions that participants are not attending as passive recipients of information, but as the primary producers of information, decisions, and agreements. Once this is understood and participants become actively involved, their discomfort normally disappears and they produce effective work.

Role of Resource Persons

The most senior Government Officers and aid-agency staff need not be full-time participants in Action-Planning Workshops. Their busy schedules may limit their availability, but they can serve in valuable roles as Resource Persons. They can set guidelines, including planning premises, review plans, and provide feedback. It is important to have a continuing two way dialogue in which guidelines and planning premises are reviewed carefully and reconsidered in light of the desired ultimate goals and potential tradeoffs.

Facilitators are concerned with the process of the workshops. They give instructions and "process" the results (p. 33, 36, 38-41). However, they do not take positions on content; it is not their responsibility to do so. Thus, to the extent that policy directives or procedural requirements are an important part of the learning expected to occur, it is useful to
have appropriate officials and technical staff present in order to answer questions or take an active part in plenary discussion (p. 12). At the same time, it is also important that the presence of specific resource persons should be timed for appropriate points in the schedule so as to avoid wasting their time and running the risk of undue interference in the work of the participants. The importance of resource persons -- both senior decision-makers and technical specialists -- is reflected by the many references to their role throughout the remaining text.

Pre-Workshop Preparation and Workshop Follow-Up

It is useful to think of the Action-Planning Workshop as consisting of three segments, namely Preparation, the Workshop, and Follow-up.

In this section we will summarize the Preparation and the Follow-up segments. The major part of the paper deals with the Actual Workshop (p. 29-43). A more detailed description of the Preparation phase is provided below (p. 21-29).

Preparation. The purpose of the Preparation Segment is to prepare the groundwork for the design and implementation of the workshop. A workshop always has clients (persons) with whom it is important to reach specific understandings in advance about what results are expected, what would be considered as "success", and what limitations will be placed on the effort. This is, in effect, a charter for the effort. If the proposed conditions are incompatible with an Action-Planning Workshop, then either they should be renegotiated, or a different approach should be adopted such as a briefing, lecture or consultation.

Generally, it will be necessary to interview key stakeholders to determine whether conditions are suitable for an Action-Planning Workshop to accomplish both learning and doing. A skilled facilitator from the outside has great advantages in carrying out such interviews. By asking open-ended but structured questions after establishing a friendly and confidential relationship, the facilitator can often obtain expressions of feelings, perceptions, and points of view that the interviewee might hesitate to make known to his colleagues and particularly his superiors. Large differences in perceptions by different stakeholders have important implications for the duration, the scope and the design of the Action-Planning Workshop. Detailed knowledge of the points of view of individuals, for example, may indicate the desirability of particular sequencing and grouping of individuals for small group work. The facilitator shares the overall results of the interviews with the clients, anticipating their implications for the design and conduct of the workshop. For example, where there are strong negative feelings about existing arrangements, those in authority must be prepared to permit the airing of such feelings in open exchanges. The experience with such situations has been that after the venting of such feelings in open exchanges, the differences in perceptions give way to the imperatives of common interests within the group. If the authorities cannot tolerate such initial expressions, then an Action-Planning Workshop may not be the most appropriate approach.
Where interviews indicate a wide divergence of views among those in authority, these may need to be addressed prior to having an Action-Planning Workshop at the working level. An initial meeting of those persons, conducted by a skilled neutral facilitator, to narrow their differences has proven to be an effective method for managing such situations.

In any case, information obtained during the Preparation Segment is important for refining the design and focussing discussions and decisions during the workshop. It may be necessary, for example, to limit the scope of the Action-Planning Workshop or shift the agenda to make it more practical and relevant for the existing situation.

**Follow-up.** A substantial Follow-up Segment is generally essential to successful action-planning. The workshop generates excitement, enthusiasm and commitment, but needs nurturing to realize its full benefits. Without adequate follow-up the progress made during the workshop is easily dissipated. The planning process initiated during the workshop usually results in partial or incomplete plans which need to be made more specific by the teams in the course of their ongoing work. Furthermore, some of the techniques introduced may be relatively new for the participants. There is a common need for review and reinforcement so that the use of these techniques are appropriately adapted and institutionalized in their respective organizations.

It is very useful for the facilitators or some resource persons to visit the participants, teams, and their superiors to maintain the momentum of the workshop by helping the participants over the rough spots that are inevitable in the first use of any new techniques and processes in an organization. The follow-up of the facilitators in the organization can do much to assure the long term success of what was achieved in the workshop.

In some cases, follow-up will involve further Action-Planning workshops and working sessions to help overcome internal barriers to the success of continuing efforts. Finally, follow-up provides the facilitators with invaluable feedback on the approaches and techniques they have used, so they can adjust future workshops to achieve more relevant and better results.

**Workshop Approach**

Adults learn differently than children. Children learn by rote memorization and repetition; adults must be able to relate the material to their experience. Action-Planning workshops are based on principles of effective adult learning. Some important principles of adult learning are discussed below.

(a) Learning is most effective when the concepts are relevant. Traditional management training courses are limited in that much of what is taught does not apply on the job. Action-Planning concentrates on basic principles and tools which are
directly relevant to the participants’ own effectiveness. The workshop is designed to accomplish some specific objectives which are agreed to by participants from the beginning. The formal information "taught" is limited to these specific objectives.

(b) **Learning is most effective when it is applied immediately.** Action-Planning combines the teaching of management concepts with their immediate application to the program/project. Even the best management concepts will be forgotten if not used. Application reinforces learning. Participants remember much more of what is learned because the learning is directly relevant to the task and reinforced through immediate use.

(c) **Learning is most effective in an active rather than a passive environment.** Action-Planning workshops emphasize small groups to discuss issues, solve problems, and make decisions which they present to the large groups. Traditional learning modes focus on lectures and other passive approaches. Learning occurs best in an environment which is stimulating, challenging, participatory, and interesting -- the Action-Planning environment.

(d) **Learning is most effective when the concepts are compatible with individual experience.** The planning, organizing, and management concepts used in Action-Planning workshops provide a framework to which trainees can fit their individual experience. Rather than being seen as a complex subject which only senior officials or donor agency staff must understand, management is understood to be part of every team member’s job.

(e) **Responsibility for learning belongs to the participants, not the trainer.** The facilitator shifts responsibility for the learning process and for workshop outcomes to the participants. The climate for participants assuming responsibility for learning is established at the beginning and reinforced throughout the workshop.

(f) **The training process involves both teaching and learning.** In Action-Planning workshops, everyone teaches and everyone learns (including the facilitators!). The Action-Planning approach builds multi-disciplinary perspectives through problem-solving work groups comprised of individuals from different backgrounds. This helps overcome the myopia caused by individual technical specialty and organization focus.

**The Dynamics of Small Groups**

Two types of dynamics--task and process--occur simultaneously during workshops. **Task** (also called problem-solving) dynamics refer to getting the work done. Discussing ideas, proposing solutions, and making decisions are examples of task behavior. At the same time, **process** dynamics occur. These deal with how people interact with each other and the manner in which the tasks for which they are responsible are performed.
Ensuring that everyone can speak, testing for group consensus, and resolving conflicts are typical process dynamics.

Totally task-oriented groups may produce results, but there will be little personal commitment to them. On the other hand, totally process-oriented groups may enjoy the workshop immensely, but accomplish little useful work. The facilitator must ensure that both task and process dynamics occur. He/she may sometimes have to adjust the workshop to provide the necessary balance if the group tends too far in one direction or the other.

Workshop Products and Process. Workshop designers and practitioners must be concerned with both product (what is achieved) and process (how it is produced). While workshops must produce specific work products, the facilitator does not solve problems for the group. For example, if there is spirited discussion of which agency should be responsible for certain tasks, the facilitator resists the temptation to make substantive decisions or recommendations.

Rather, he/she suggests principles by which the group can decide. The group might be asked to explore the implications of the various alternatives and solicit criteria for deciding. When the group has decided, the facilitator "processes" the results to make them aware of how they decided, and explores how else the team might use that approach in the future. By making decisions on substantive work issues using effective processes, the group develops the confidence and capacity to address similar issues in the future. For this reason, the facilitator gives primary attention to the process of decision-making, not to the outcome of the decisions. On the other hand, the substantive information produced by participants in Action-Planning workshops is important data of immense value to decision-makers; especially during design phases and the supervision and replanning of implementation.

Stages of Group Behavior. Workshop groups almost always go through four sequential stages of behavior:

(a) **Forming** -- coming together, getting to know each other and the facilitator;

(b) **Storming** -- initially resisting the workshop and the facilitators, testing the behavior code, and determining rewards and penalties;

(c) **Norming** -- developing a group spirit, feeling good about the workshop, developing trust in the facilitators and each other; and

(d) **Performing** -- tackling the work that needs to be done.

Action-planning workshops are designed to rapidly move through the first two stages and swiftly get to "norming" and "performing". Facilitators should observe the changes in dynamics which occur over the several days of the workshop. On the first day, people may be tentative and reserved as they test out the workshop and each other. But as bonds of
friendship and trust develop, the group takes on its own spirit and character. There will be a point -- sometimes on the first day, but usually on the second or third -- when things "click" and a results-oriented atmosphere can be sensed. Thus, since the "storming" stage is normal and is to be expected, it is important that facilitators and sponsors of the workshops do not panic and prematurely change the content and process as planned initially for that reason alone.

**Style of the Effective Facilitator.** Conducting Action-Planning workshops is a demanding, intensive experience. When workshops go well, facilitators will feel stimulated and satisfied. When they do not seem to be going well--especially during the "storming stage"--it is natural for discouragement and disappointment to set in.

The difference between successful and unsuccessful workshops most often boils down to the climate set by the facilitator. He/she creates an effective climate by being:

(a) **Self-confident** -- able to guide the workshop without dominating, to be a "catalyst" rather than a "commander";

(b) **Enthusiastic** -- actively looking forward to the workshop and projecting that enthusiasm to others;

(c) **Flexible** -- able and willing to adjust the workshop design in response to his/her observations and participant concerns;

(d) **Results-oriented** -- knowing what results the group wants to accomplish and aiming toward those results;

(e) **Personable and friendly** -- interested in people, not aloof or distant, and willing to get to know participants as individuals;

(f) **Good-humored and humble** -- willing to make jokes about himself/herself, to be modest, and not elevating himself/herself above the group;

(g) **Multifaceted** -- capable of playing simultaneous roles as advisor, catalyst, listener, devils advocate, teacher, friend;

(h) **Open to feedback** -- encouraging participants to comment on what is useful and what is not, monitoring the climate, accepting criticism from participants and the co-facilitators; and

(i) **Sensitive to feelings** -- recognizing the emotional intensity that some participants may experience, helping them acknowledge and deal with their feelings.
The Facilitation Team

**Size and Composition.** Conducting Action-Planning workshops requires a team approach rather than individual facilitators. Ideally, there should be three facilitators for a group of approximately forty participants.

Facilitators should be "outsiders" with no direct program/project involvement. Outside facilitators can be perceived as neutral and can help resolve disagreements in a way that an interested party could not. The facilitation team can be a combination of consultants or staff unconnected with the specific program/project. This role should not be played by the program or project officer, manager, or trainers from within implementing agencies (p. 5-6).

If an overseas consultant is used, local persons should also be included on the facilitation team. There will usually be follow-up workshops, and it is difficult and expensive to continually use overseas consultants. A good mix for a three person team might be two experienced consultants and a less experienced, but locally based, consultant for initial workshops with the ratio changing to all locally based consultants following several iterations through the program/project cycle. Part of the task of the experienced facilitator is to develop the skills of the less-experienced facilitators working with him/her. Thus, an additional benefit is that, as a spin-off from the participation of less-experienced locally based facilitators, their institution (whether a university, institute, or local consulting firm) indirectly receives Technical Assistance through participation in the introduction of Action-Planning facilitation techniques.

**Process.** The facilitation team should candidly discuss their perceptions and expectations regarding:

(a) Areas they feel confident about;

(b) Areas they do not feel confident about;

(c) The main skills each has as a facilitator;

(d) The weaknesses each may have as a facilitator; and

(e) Expectations about how the team will operate.

**Qualifications.** Facilitators need not have technical experience in the subject matter at hand. In fact, the generalist trainer is often best. Facilitators who are also experts in the substance of the project (be it health, agriculture, or whatever) may get too involved in the technical details of the project instead of focussing on their essential climate-setting role. Nevertheless, because the results of the workshop most often must be translated into a document acceptable to decision-makers and technical staff, resource persons with substantial expertise who are assigned the responsibility for preparing such documents should be present throughout the workshop (p. 6-7).
III. STRATEGY

Elements of a Strategy

Because every program and project is, in some important aspect, unique, each will have a different improvement strategy based on the issues, organizations, and individuals potentially involved. The matter is further complicated by the differing immediate objectives and issues addressed at the different stages of the program/project cycle. Nevertheless, from a process point of view, most strategies will include a combination of:

(a) **Workshops** -- intensive sessions tailored to the specific strategy and functions of program/project planning and management.

(b) **Seminars** -- more conventional in-service management training programs to teach key skills and subjects (such as office administration, financial management).

(c) **Consultation** -- ad hoc technical assistance support to assist in addressing issues not suited to a workshop approach (primarily with senior government officers).

The full strategy need not and should not be identified at the start. Decisions about the nature, sequence, and participants of future workshops, seminars, and consultations are best answered after each successive workshop. The strategy should grow and evolve, with the fuel for growth being the participation of appropriate personnel during each workshop and consultative experience.

A large number of people are likely to be involved with a potential program/project when you count the persons directly involved on the management team, staff of participating ministries, consultants, advisory and policy groups, regional and local level personnel, donor and budget agency representatives, and so forth. The various "layers" of persons potentially involved can be viewed as an onion, with a small center core surrounded by progressively larger levels of personnel, each more distant from and less actively involved.

However, pushing that metaphor further, it is important that the correct onion is ultimately selected. The choice has a profound effect on the future program/project's management structure, functions, and procedures. Unfortunately, insufficient attention is normally given to the selection of the lead implementation agency(ies) at the initial stages of the design process (p. 17,22). Nor is sufficient attention paid to the identification of other agencies whose actions--or absence of action--can affect implementation.
The Institutional Environment

The institutional environment requires special attention during the early design phase. Effective implementation of a program/project depends not only on the internal strength of design and organizational structure, but also on its relation to the broader framework of national priorities and policies, and organizational and institutional patterns and practices. Consequently, though some problems can be resolved by a program/project’s management team itself, others are caused by factors over which they have little or no control. Thus, in order to address environmental effects on implementation, it is useful to distinguish between three "Arenas of Action" as illustrated in Figure 1. These three Arenas are:

(a) The Public Policy and Bureaucratic Environment;

(b) The Project Organization; and

(c) The Individual Within the Organization.

From the perspective of the management team, some characteristics of the Environment can be "influenced"; i.e., change can occur as a consequence of actions by the program/project in combination with the actions of others. These combined actions can be systematic in the sense that program/project activities are consciously integrated with the prescribed actions of other organizations. However, combined actions can also be simply the sum of uncoordinated activities carried out independently by various organizations, in which case the outcome—whether positive or negative—is unpredictable. Other characteristics of the environment can only be "appreciated" by the management team, i.e., the program/project organization has no control over these elements. Thus, "appreciated" elements are constraints; factors to which the management team must adapt rather than change.

In most cases, the arena defined by the organizational boundaries of the program/project itself is assumed to be under "control". However, depending on the extent to which personnel incentives are outside the control of the management team (e.g., salaries and benefits established by a government civil service commission), it might not have complete control over the actions of its own staff.

Data produced in a variety of action-planning workshops in Eastern and Southern Africa in the agriculture, education and public enterprise sectors clearly illustrate that no single institution within any country has "control" over all of the critical variables affecting the performance of functions necessary for the achievement of overall public investment objectives nor, even, the achievement of sectoral or individual project objectives. Thus, it is clear that in almost all cases individual organizations are limited to the exercise of influence rather than control. Three important lessons should be drawn from that insight:

(a) The natural human tendency to define a management problem in terms of insufficient control and, therefore, the solution as expansion of control rather than of influence is a recipe for failure;
FIGURE 1

PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS ON PROJECT MANAGEMENT
The Three Arenas of Action

- Environment: Public Policy and Administrative System
- Project Organization Management
- Individuals Skills

High Level Policy: Policy Improvements
Project Management Teams: Organizational Change
Individuals: Behaviour Change

Sustainability: Institution-Building
(b) Strategies and tactics for effectively exercising influence are substantially different from those which are required for attempts at expansion or exercise of control; and

(c) Strategies for improving implementation performance of organizations require coordinated efforts directed at reinforcing improvements in all three "Arenas of Action".

Therefore, such strategies are not likely to be fully successful if they focus solely on improving the management or technical skills of program/project staff and/or the organization and procedures of the implementing organization. Conversely, policy changes alone are unlikely to improve implementation performance. All three "Arenas of Action", while different from each other, are closely linked.

Linking the Action-Planning Process to the Environment

Action-Planning Workshops can be a key element in a strategy for expanding influence rather than attempting to exercise unattainable control. Such workshops bring together local participants from a variety of interdependent stakeholder organizations to focus on the relation of the project or program to conditions of the local environment as well as their own. By bringing a large number of participants together in an Action-Planning Workshop and conducting a set of exercises which require them to address specific work related questions in a systematic manner, the "expert" facilitates a process of local clarification, negotiation, creative innovation, and acceptable compromise. Further, the workshop integrates the knowledge of the expert (which is focussed primarily on technical and process issues) with that of professionals actually involved in operations and potential beneficiaries (whose advantage is in understanding local conditions and attitudes). Through this integration, workshops also serve as mechanisms for informal on-the-job training. During the pre-implementation phases of the project cycle, that training focuses on developing skills in problem identification and project planning. During implementation, team management skills are emphasized. Illustrative cases are described in Annex A.

Sector Reviews and Program/Project Identification. In the course of Sector Reviews and Program/Project Identification, when problems and constraints affecting the optimization of performance within a particular sector or sub-sector are identified, an attempt should be made to adapt to the "appreciated environment"; i.e., the environment composed of those entities that can affect a program/project's performance but are unlikely to be either controlled or influenced by those who will become responsible for program/project management. It is important to identify those entities which compose the appreciated environment and the possible conflicts of interest among them. Accurate information on such matters allows for the identification of supporters and likely inhibitors, candidates for implementing the program/project, and potential problems to be resolved and constraints to which adjustment must be made.
The initial workshops at the identification stage are best sponsored by a staff Ministry (e.g., Planning or Finance) rather than a line Ministry (e.g., Agriculture, Health or Public Works). If from the outset of the process a specific line Ministry is selected as sponsor of the process, the assignment of responsibilities for implementation can be prejudiced. With a line Ministry in charge of identification, responsibilities may not be freely shared with other agencies even where such arrangements are more appropriate. Whereas staff agencies may have a similar tendency, they cannot implement without a large measure of cooperation from the relevant line agencies.

Further, the criteria for selecting participants in the workshops at this point should be as broad as possible. Technical expertise should not be the main qualification required of participants in workshops at the identification stage. The need is for adequate representation of the broad range of groups whose interests will be potentially affected by organizational change. Not until the preparation and appraisal phases does a distinction need to be made between external supporters of the process and those directly engaged in the subsequent program/project.

As well as assisting operational staff directly, participation by official resource persons or consultants (p. 6-7,12) and observation by decision-makers of workshop discussions, negotiations and compromises can provide unusual insight into problems as perceived at the operational level and, thus, can identify useful lines of further inquiry.

Action Planning Workshops which focus on the identification of purposes and problems—in combination with more conventional methods—provide a process for surfacing a frequently mentioned obstacle to organization design; i.e., the accommodation of the differing purposes of the Aid Agency(ies), the Borrower, Intermediary Organizations, and Beneficiaries. They also serve as a mechanism for identifying a set of program/project components and a means for implementing them that will satisfy the purposes shared by the donor and various groups within the client government. Information of that kind is necessary if fundamental disagreements are not to be "swept under the rug", only to surface during implementation. A key ingredient that can be supplied by an action-planning workshop is a climate that encourages a readiness to consider the point of views of relevant stakeholders.

Program/Project Preparation. The preparation of programs/projects should include a choice of appropriate organizational structures and planning and management systems. Although responsibility for program/project preparation is, according to World Bank and many other donor agencies' official policy, supposed to reside with the potential recipient government and consultants hired by them, the fact remains that many governments do not take the initiative in drafting detailed project proposals. Thus, aid agency staff or consultants often prepare such proposals themselves, either in response to the identification of problems or constraints and a generalized proposal by governments, or in response to their own assessment of problems and constraints. It is not surprising that this is especially common for the institutional aspects of programs/projects.
Client governments often lack the procedures and the staff to plan and design sophisticated projects/programs nor have they staff with the necessary skills to design, in detail, a programmatic response to identified problems and constraints. Indeed, many proposed programs/projects are themselves designed to develop that capacity. Further, the preparation of proposals with the detail and within the formats required by the World Bank and other aid agencies is itself a specialized activity; the requirements of which differ from donor to donor. Thus, it is also simply easier for governments, once they have identified or acknowledged a set of problems and constraints and suggested a response in general terms or acquiesced to a response proposed by others, to simply leave preparation of the detailed design to aid agency staff. Workshops can be used to counter that tendency by drawing government personnel into the detailed design process without simply leaving it to their own initiative (and the resulting risk of lack of progress).

The preparation process should, itself, be divided into segments. The first segment should include a workshop which reviews the information generated during the identification phase and concludes with the identification of planning data required, data sources, methods for collection and analyses, and responsibilities. Appropriate participants in this workshop should have been identified -- implicitly if not explicitly -- during the previous identification stage workshop. A logical outcome of the assignment of responsibilities for data collection and analyses is the transformation of workshop working groups into planning task forces. Thus, the second segment of the preparation process is the implementation of the workshop action plans by those task forces. The third segment might be another workshop in order to review, assess, and prioritize the recommendations of the various task forces. Based on those conclusions, a Preparation Report can be finalized.

Program/Project Appraisal. The content of workshops which can be used during appraisal will not be described in detail here. It will vary somewhat depending on local conditions, the results of workshops conducted during Identification and Preparation, and the time available. To specify organizational arrangements and an action plan ideally requires ten days. However, persons using the workshop method should be flexible and prepared to adjust content and schedules according to circumstances. It is better to conduct an abbreviated workshop than not to have one at all--even if all that can be accomplished is the initiation of a dialogue between parties involved in the design and implementation process.

Program/Project Implementation Planning. Appraisal Reports do not, in fact, provide practical guidance for day-to-day management of programs/projects. In operational terms, appraisal reports are, in effect, reviews of feasibility studies and other work, whose purpose is to provide information on objectives, components, costs, economic rate of return, and management structure to enable those responsible for approving a grant or loan to make a decision regarding it. Thus, appraisal reports are not written primarily for the implementation management team.
The design of operational guidance for program/project managers is not made any easier by the long implementation period which characterizes most of these contemporary efforts, notably in agriculture, and by the necessary blurring of the once clear distinction between implementation and operational phases.

In order to provide necessary flexibility, detailed implementation plans should be prepared on a regularly scheduled recurrent basis and should cover tasks to be completed during the following phase; however long is appropriate for the specific type of program/project (e.g., for agriculture, annually). The first phase Action Plan should cover the period beginning with the completion of negotiations. It should be prepared by the borrower, assisted as necessary by consultants, and, if necessary, financed retroactively or by an advance from the equivalent of the World Bank's Project Preparation Facility (PPF). It should be carried out concurrently with the last stages of preparation and appraisal. Finally, it should be reviewed by the appraisal mission and might be included as an annex to the appraisal report. The First Annual Plan could thus assist the appraisal mission in assessing the feasibility of project implementation arrangements.

**Program/Project Launch.** Inasmuch as the entire management team would not normally be in place or even designated at the time the initial implementation plan is prepared, a subsequent "Program/Project Launch" workshop should be conducted by the entire management team to review and revise that plan—with consultant assistance if necessary—as soon as possible after the management team is together, but no later than immediately after loan or grant effectiveness. It is at this point that the process should branch into two training streams: (i) Management Team Training, and (ii) specialized, technical skills training.

**Training**

**Management Team Training.** Training of individual staff members in specialized techniques of operational planning and management as a discrete/separate activity will not likely have a significant impact on the performance of the program/project organization. For improvement to occur through enhanced planning and management techniques, the emphasis should be on management teams rather than individuals.

If an organization is to be more—rather than less—than the sum of its parts, it is important that persons responsible for achieving its objectives work together in a mutually reinforcing manner. If well-trained managers work in isolation from each other, their individual responsibilities might be formulated and executed in a logically consistent manner. However, the execution of those responsibilities will often contradict other rationally formulated actions by other managers acting independently. A multitude of planning and management options exist which are internally logical and appropriate. However, when different managers in the same organization choose different options, significant inefficiencies result. Thus, the issue is most often not whether what each manager does is inherently right or wrong. Rather, the requirement is that the same formulation and execution option is selected by all the managers on the management team and implemented by them together. Therefore, it is more important to "train" members of the management team together in a
directly operational way, on-the-job, by bringing them together in order to: (i) formulate specific activities and tasks to be performed by the organization and (ii) assign those activities and tasks to each other based on a clear common understanding of the relationships between them.

The Program/Project Launch Workshop is the first step in the management team training process. At this point, strategies for assisting new programs/projects should begin with an intensive three to five day implementation planning workshop with key operational staff to establish the detailed aspects of management activities, procedures, and assignment of responsibilities. Certain relatively simple management techniques can help teams plan more systematically and serve as important tools of communication. Such tools (work breakdown structure, scheduling, budgeting, monitoring reports) can be introduced as the need arises in the team's plans and can be applied immediately. In such contexts learning is highly motivated.

The first workshop should primarily involve operational personnel, who are most directly involved with implementation, rather than senior level policy personnel (e.g., key representatives of all participating agencies, consultants, advisor[s], and, depending on circumstances, the Project Manager). The latter groups might be invited, as resource persons (p. 6-7), to the last half-day for presentations and discussion.

The intensive planning workshop for core staff may be followed by other sessions over time for other "layers" of the program/project organization. After the first workshop, the team will be in a good position to identify follow-up activities; generally involving further workshops, training seminars, and consultation, with the topics and participants changing over time.

Subsequent implementation management and planning workshops should be conducted on a regularly scheduled basis. The review of previous plans and preparation of the next plan should be prepared by the management team and reviewed by appropriate supervisors and decision-makers. Though the latter might give guidance with regard to the process, they should not be involved in detailed planning. They should, however, give close attention to the relationship between the annual plan and: (i) the program/project's concept and objectives; (ii) its components and activities as appraised; and (iii) proposed policy and institutional changes. Changes in components or activities should be carefully reviewed to make sure that they are consistent with the ultimate objectives.

Each annual plan should identify tasks, specify their sequence and timing, assign responsibilities to individual members of the management team, and explicitly identify problems which have arisen in the course of implementation (e.g., in financing, staffing, or technical issues calling for changes in the details as appraised). The result provides supervisors with data they need to monitor implementation and an opportunity to review the proposed changes in the light of the original concept and objectives. However, because the plan is prepared by the management team, it is more operational and less theoretical.
In this manner, primary emphasis is placed on assisting the implementors in carrying out the program/project; particularly in identifying problems that arise in the course of implementation and helping the management team to solve or resolve them.

**Technical Skills Training.** In addition to the management skills of the team as a whole, organizational performance depends on the skill capacities of individual staff members. These capacities are best enhanced in "Action-Learning" workshops where specific skills needed on the job are learned and "learning and doing" are combined. When a large number of project/program staff or persons within the same country from a number of different projects/programs require training in the same technical skills, the following techniques can be used: (i) on site or in country action-learning courses in which skills are applied directly to the respective trainees responsibilities with guidance of the instructors; (ii) follow-up consultation by instructors; (iii) informal on-the-job training through interaction with and programmatic guidance by consultants; (iv) formal short-term training; and as a last resort; (v) formal long-term degree training. While these alternatives are not mutually exclusive, there is considerable scope for effective use of action-learning workshops and follow-up to develop capacity for technical training that spans a number of projects, programs and sponsors.3/

**IV. PREPARING ACTION-PLANNING WORKSHOPS**

Several of the steps described in this Section will have been started during the on-going dialogue between senior decision-makers, facilitators, and resource persons (p. 7-8,22-23). In addition, a flexible attitude must be taken toward the application of these guidelines in specific circumstances and within the context of local conditions. Variations will also be necessary depending on the stage of the cycle at which workshops are introduced and whether or not the workshop has been preceded by one or more in a series. Nevertheless, the discussion in this Section will, in most respects, be generally applicable.

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3/ Such an approach has been used in both the AID sponsored Sahel Regional Financial Management Project and the IFAD/World Bank/African Development Bank financed Agricultural Management Training for Africa (RMTA) program. The pattern in both projects is similar. With some slight variations between them, managers of different projects and programs attend a workshop which includes some training in financial and program management. At a later point, various members of their senior technical staff (e.g., their accountants) attend a workshop focusing on their specific functions. Following that specific training, the managers join their technical staff member in reviewing specific plans for carrying out their specific function in the project or program. This type of workshop would appear to be applicable to any specialized skill that is required for a number of projects or programs.
There are seven key points in workshop preparation:

(a) Sponsorship;
(b) Group size;
(c) Participant selection;
(d) Workshop length;
(e) Location;
(f) Facilities; and
(g) Developing the workshop design.

**Sponsorship**

Action-Planning Workshops conducted during the initial identification phases of a program/project (p. 16-17) should normally be sponsored by a staff Ministry (Finance or Planning) of Government (p. 16). During preparation, appraisal, and initial implementation planning, the line ministry (e.g., Agriculture, Health, Public Works) responsible for the relevant sector (which will normally also be the implementing agency of Government) should be the sponsor (p. 17-18). Program/project launch workshops and subsequent recurrent planning workshops (p. 19-21) should be sponsored by the Program/Project Manager.

It is particularly important that formal arrangements are made by the appropriate host-agency within government at each stage of the process and that the workshops are clearly perceived locally as sponsored by Government or the most senior levels of private organizations. Senior officials should select the individuals to attend workshops and the results of the workshops should be shared with them. Unless workshops are approved by senior officials of government (or other relevant institutions), they should not be held. The purpose and benefits of workshops should be clearly understood in advance by the senior officials of sponsoring agencies. They should completely understand the justification and strategy proposed. Staff (or consultants) proposing to use the workshop method should make whatever adjustments are necessary; keeping in mind that, if a distorted sample of participants is selected or permission is not granted for the workshop because senior officials feel threatened by it (p. 46), such behavior is also important data for design and supervision purposes. These are minimum conditions for success.

The most effective workshops are those that are "owned" by Senior Officials. Ownership develops when the workshop is a direct response to the articulated needs of these officials and there is sufficient interaction between workshop participants and officials as plans evolve. Such interaction starts with officials establishing guidelines and planning
premises, participants testing these in the workshop and responding to the
decision makers, participants referring relevant policy questions and
options to officials for decisions as these arise, and presenting the final
product of the workshop to officials for consideration and modification, if
necessary.

**Group Size**

In order to determine the appropriate number of participants for a
particular Action-Planning Workshop, consideration must be given to the
trade-off between the representation of as broad a range of policy,
organizational, and technical viewpoints as possible on the one hand and
logistical complexities on the other hand. The former consideration tends
toward a decision for large numbers; the latter for smaller numbers.

The experience of workshop facilitators varies. As a general
rule, it is probably safe to say that less than 15 persons is too little,
more than 45 too many. Individual working groups within workshops should
have no less than 5 persons and no more than 8 persons. More than 8 is too
many for everyone to participate; less than 5 provides insufficiently
different viewpoints. Thus, in a range of 15-45, the number of individual
working groups can be from a minimum of 3 to a maximum of 7. Working
groups from different projects or programs provide the advantage of
covering the elements of management common to all projects or programs and
sharing a knowledge of differences.

As the process moves from identification, through preparation,
appraisal, initial implementation planning, and launch to recurrent
planning, consideration should move from ensuring the diversity of view-
points to ease of logistics by successively reducing numbers--i.e., at
identification, 45 is a good number; for annual planning, a maximum of 20
is normally sufficient.

**Participant Selection**

Criteria for selecting participants includes both the practical--
what key operational personnel should be here?--and the political--who must
be invited because their cooperation is needed?

During program/project design phases, experience with workshops in
countries in the Caribbean, Latin America, Middle East, Asia, and both
Western and Eastern Africa suggests that workshops are most effective when
participants are close to each other in rank or social status. Thus,
although it might seem a good idea to include participants from the
"bottom" (e.g., farmers) to the "top" (e.g., senior government officials in
the capital city) in the same workshop so that they can communicate
directly with each other, in practice the presence of the latter could be
expected to inhibit the participation of the former. Once implementation
has begun--at program/project launch--participation in workshops is
normally limited to the management team; among whom the potential disparity
in rank or status would not--in any event--be as great.
Where participation is desired across a broad range of the organizational hierarchy, it is useful to organize separate workshops for different levels of participants. For example, in several countries, a series of three workshops have been conducted during the same phase of the program/project cycle; the first for beneficiaries and field level officers, the second for district and provincial level officers and the third for senior government officials. In some of these cases, the facilitation team communicated the results of earlier workshops to the participants in the following workshop. In other cases, a few of the participants from previous workshops were selected to report the results to the more senior staff in subsequent workshops. Yet another alternative is to invite senior people to open the workshop and include a half-day "executive" session at the end in which they are briefed on workshop results and presented issues for review or decision.

Workshop Length

The optimum length for an initial problem identification workshop at the identification stage of the program/project cycle is between two and three days. Shorter workshops are less productive as participants need time to become comfortable with each other and the tasks. Longer workshops are seldom possible because—at this stage—the types and range of people required cannot be away from their primary responsibilities for that long.

An initial preparation phase workshop need last only three days if an earlier workshop was conducted at the identification stage; otherwise five full working days is recommended. The purpose of that workshop is production of a workplan for the preparation of the program/project proposal. A second two day workshop should be held approximately 30 days prior to scheduled completion of the proposal to review the draft with appropriate decision-makers prior to finalization. Program/Project Launch and subsequent Implementation Workshops — the purpose of which are to prepare the initial and subsequent implementation workplans for successive phases, also require about five days.

At both the preparation and implementation planning stage, workshop participants are normally involved directly in the design or implementation of the program/project in any event. Therefore, the question of being "away from the job" should not arise; the work done in the workshops is an integral part of their jobs.

Location

It might not be possible to select the workshop location of choice. It might be necessary to use a specific organization's facilities. However, when there is a choice, an interruption-free location away from the office should be selected so participants cannot slip away to attend to other business. If several organizations are involved, it may be appropriate to rotate locations and hold later workshops on each organization's home ground.

If the budget permits, a hotel should be selected in a location that represents a welcome change of pace for participants. But be aware of the drawbacks. Workshops at seaside resorts or locations with evening
entertainment often result in a group of participants who are daydreaming about the sandy beach or dragging themselves to the workshop in the morning, exhausted from the festivities of the evening before. To reduce this problem, free time should be scheduled as a reward for hard work (which, in turn, adds to the length of the workshop).

Workshop Facilities

The layout of the room(s) in which the workshop will be conducted affects learning. Before the workshop begins, the layout should be arranged to stimulate discussion. The traditional classroom style of neat rows of tables all facing the same direction should be avoided; that arrangement limits discussion. Tables should be arranged so participants can easily see each other by turning their heads.

The workshop room(s) should have the following features:

(a) Good lighting and ventilation;
(b) Walls to which charts can be taped;
(c) Curtains or shades to darken the room when needed;
(d) Adequate table space to spread out charts and papers;
(e) Movable tables large enough for 5 to 8 individuals and their working materials;
(f) Room for side tables for materials and registration; and
(g) Space to set up coffee and snacks.

The ideal layout is a large "U" shaped table with charts around the outside. This format permits the facilitator to walk into the "U" and lets participants see each other. Tables for subgroup work should be set up around the edges. Having both a large U-shaped table for presentation sessions and small tables for work groups makes it easy to move between small group and plenary group activities.

If there is not enough room for both a "U" and subgroup tables, the tables can either be moved back and forth for the large and small group sessions, or small tables can be arranged in a fan-like pattern (Figure 2). Crowding should be avoided; each participant should have adequate space for papers and a notebook. A separate table should be placed at the side of the room for workshop materials and handouts. If the presence of resource persons (p. 6-7) is expected, a table should be set aside for them.

The facilitators should not sit behind a large table; tables create both a physical and psychological communication barrier. Most of the time, facilitators should be standing and walking around the room rather than sitting behind a large table. A small table should be available for facilitators' working papers and, if used, an overhead projector. However, avoid large tables that inhibit movement.
FIGURE 2

TRAINING ROOM LAYOUT

DON'T DO THIS

DO THIS

AND/OR THIS

- 26 -
Designing Workshop Content and Process

Responsibility for the actual design and conduct of Action-Planning Workshops would normally be assigned to consultants with appropriate experience (p. 5-6,11-12). Thus, the guidelines which follow (p. 27-42) are provided primarily so that sponsors can know what to include within TORs and what to expect in terms of consultant behavior.

Guidelines for Workshop Design. Good workshops flow smoothly in terms of both content and process. Achieving smooth content flow means considering the logical sequence of activities needed for participants to develop common understandings, formulate agreements, and prepare plans. To do this, certain modules must logically precede others.

For example, participants cannot decide on roles and responsibilities until they first agree on project strategies and objectives, develop a detailed list of activities and tasks, and understand such tools as Linear Responsibility Charting. To cite another example, the group must first clarify the project organization structure and information needs before designing a reporting system.

Achieving a logical process flow means considering how to actively involve participants in the workshop. This means deciding what activities should be done together in the large group and what can be done in small groups, selecting who should be in what work groups, deciding when work group composition should be changed, and so forth.

The workshop design should be based on the following three basic principles.

(a) Keep It Simple. The workshop design should not be too complex or ambitious. Rather, emphasis should be placed on a few key related objectives that can be realistically achieved given the time available and the background of participants.

(b) Keep It Flexible. The artful workshop designer uses the principle of "structured flexibility" and develops the agenda knowing that certain activities might need more time and that some might be shortened. An overly rigid design causes problems; certain activities will need more time than initially anticipated and new opportunities may spring from the workshop. A tentative plan should be prepared, in writing, beforehand. However, the agenda should have "time cushions" built into it.

(c) Keep It Active. Maximum use should be made of small group exercises, discussion, presentation, and decision-making on the part of participants. Absolute minimum use should be made of lectures. At least 60% of the workshop time should involve active participation. As a rule of thumb, no single person should "lecture" for more than 10 minutes at a time and never should more than one person "lecture" in series; longer presentations should involve active participation and discussion.
Clarifying Workshop Objectives. In discussions among sponsors, the general objectives to be achieved during the Action-Planning process should have already been established (p.23). Nevertheless, at this point, the objectives for the particular workshop must be described in specific, measurable terms. A typical list of objectives for a program/project preparation workshop might include the following:

(a) All participants clearly agree on and can clearly describe the major objectives of the project;

(b) The group has identified a basic strategy for implementing the project;

(c) The roles and responsibilities of each participating agency are clearly defined and agreed to;

(d) Specific documents needed for project implementation (such as an implementation schedule or list of equipment needs) are produced by the group;

(e) The group has decided on the timing, content, and participants for future workshops; and

(f) A short-term action plan, which identifies specifically who does what and when, is produced by the group.

Preparing Detailed Design and Agenda. A process of "mental visualization" should be used to develop the detailed workshop design. The workshop should be imagined as if in action, with a mental picture of the activities taking place. How the information shared by participants will logically flow should be thought through. In that way, decisions about the activity sequence, timing, the pattern of small groups and large groups, and so forth are more easily made. From this mental visualization, an agenda can be prepared.

Examples of descriptive agendas, which should be distributed to participants, are provided in Annex B. For complex workshops, annotated agendas (examples in Annex C) are an excellent tool for helping the facilitation team mentally visualize the details of each activity (although, such detailed agendas should not be distributed to participants).

Workshops need not, cannot, and should not be planned down to the smallest details during the design phase. Every workshop has internal decision points and certain choices are best deferred until they must be made. For example, decisions concerning the composition of small work groups should not normally be made until work groups need actually to be formed. Criteria should be established in advance (e.g., group by similar job functions). Nevertheless, decisions as to who to put in what groups after the first day, are best made after observing the participants in action.
The draft agenda should be reviewed with all members of the facilitation team and senior officials of the sponsoring agency. Revisions should be made based on those reviews. After the first draft, for example, it might be observed that not all the workshop objectives have been covered, that too little time has been given to certain activities, or that break times were forgotten. It might also be noticed that there is too little group discussion or that inadequate time is given for "processing" the results. By reviewing and revising the agenda several times, such problems become apparent and can be solved.

Preparing Materials. After the workshop design is completed, needed materials should be prepared, such as:

(a) Visual aids for presentation (flip charts, overhead transparencies, etc.);
(b) Participant working materials and handouts;
(c) Blank exercise forms; and
(d) Cases or examples.

Existing project documents, budgets, and schedules which will be used by participants in the workshop should also be identified and arrangements made so that they will be available when needed. However, it is important to note that the content of most materials should be produced by participants in the workshop itself. Therefore, case materials and other documents prepared prior to the workshop should be kept to an absolutely necessary minimum. The natural tendency of conventional trainers to prepare as much material as possible for presentation or use during the workshop should be avoided so as to not prejudice the analysis and outcome.

V. CONDUCTING ACTION-PLANNING WORKSHOPS

This section presents some general guidelines for conducting effective Action-Planning workshops. The topics of this chapter are general and apply to all types of Action-Planning workshops. The topics described here include:

(a) Creating and maintaining an active learning climate;
(b) Explaining and processing small work group tasks;
(c) Leading discussions and processing the learning; and
(d) Working smoothly as a member of a facilitation team.
Creating and Maintaining an Active Learning Climate

Successful Action-Planning programs depend on establishing an active and participatory learning climate. Understanding and influencing the workshop climate is one of the facilitators’ most important tasks. To build an active climate, the effective facilitator:

(a) Works from a prepared strategy and agenda, but remains flexible to capture new opportunities;

(b) Monitors progress and revises schedules to achieve major learning objectives;

c) Identifies key participants and develops personal relationships with all;

d) Monitors degree and nature of participation and checks body language;

(e) Begins each day with climate-setting activities and the presentation of the day’s objectives and agenda;

(f) Summarizes frequently, processes and helps participants discover their learning;

(g) Posts key charts produced by participants to wall and makes frequent reference to them;

(h) Encourages participation; and

(i) Closes each day with review and process checks.

Maintaining Appropriate Relationships

Facilitators should get to know the participants. They should begin by studying the information on the roster and follow-up by observing participants’ comments during the workshop and talking to them during breaks and meal times. Facilitators should also make a special effort to know (and influence) “key” persons; those with seniority, important positions, or who appear to have significant influence. Trust should be built with these individuals and they should be encouraged to be open on issues concerning them. A good workshop experience for these key participants can be fostered by calling on them to present their work group results, give the morning review of the day before, or otherwise be actively involved.

Monitoring Progress

The Agenda. The agenda is only a guideline, not a blueprint. It is important that facilitators watch and listen carefully and use what they discover to shift the emphasis, expand or contract certain activities, rearrange the order, and so forth. They should make tactical adjustments and mid-course corrections to keep on track. They should remain flexible and open to new opportunities.
The superior facilitator maintains "real-time" awareness of workshop dynamics and uses that information to make adjustments on a continuing basis. He/she lets the agenda guide but not constrain. Sensitivity to various types of feedback, participant body language, facial expressions, degree of participation, and so forth is important. If the discussion is particularly active, it may be allowed to continue beyond the scheduled time. If participants are tiring, an unscheduled break may be announced.

While working from a prepared strategy and structured agenda, the facilitator should revise when necessary to capture new opportunities and meet time constraints. The clock, the agenda, and the planned objectives must be constantly monitored to measure progress and decide what changes are needed. Effective facilitators plan and monitor on a daily basis, an activity by activity basis, and a total workshop basis.

On a daily basis, the facilitation team plans the day's activities and allocates time to each. Tentative decisions are made as to sub-group topics, what should be covered before lunch, and so forth.

Each workshop activity should be monitored as well. During each activity, progress should be monitored and an attempt made to complete it within the time allocated. If the activity is particularly rich and valuable, it should be allowed to continue longer. However, increased time given to any activity must be taken from a later activity. There is never enough time to cover all the discussion points that participants will raise, so the facilitator must be willing and able to gently cut off discussion.

After each activity, the facilitation team should—if time permits—review the agenda and decide how to proceed next. For example, if an activity takes longer than expected and there is only a half-hour till the lunch break and the next activity scheduled will take an hour, the team must make a decision; delay lunch, shorten the activity, or substitute something else.

In addition to monitoring and adjusting on a daily and hourly basis, the team needs to monitor the entire workshop to make sure that key objectives will be accomplished before the workshop is over. To do this, it is useful to "schedule in reverse". This means mentally scheduling backwards from the end of the workshop and allocating time to the key activities, then determining what activities need to be shortened or dropped, or done in parallel in small groups.

Because the time scheduled to complete an activity is only a rough estimate, there may be time gaps of 15 minutes to a half hour before lunch or the end of the day; not long enough to start a new activity. These gaps should be filled by lengthening the discussion on a particular activity or by returning to a topic that was covered earlier but warrants more discussion. As a last resort, the facilitation team might prepare "fillers"—such as simple games, exercises, or learning experiences—to use during these time gaps.
**Participation.** The effective facilitator will closely watch and influence the degree and nature of participation. Discussions should be balanced; a few people should not be allowed to completely dominate the discussion. Participation can be influenced by directing questions to those who have been silent (p. 39-41). Quiet persons can also be given more prominent roles, such as presenting the results of their small work group. However, a word of caution is necessary here; the interpersonal dynamics occurring in the groups often reflect the situation in the actual work place. To the extent that that is the case, too much interference/manipulation by the facilitator might result in a product which is of little use for follow-up action by the participants. The individuals who tend to dominate in the workshop are likely to prevail in the work place as well. A very delicate balancing act is, therefore, often required of the facilitators.

"Body language" should be watched. If participants appear sleepy, or bored, the reasons should be determined. Signs of tiredness may mean it is time for a break or that there are other more pressing issues. The "mini-break" is effective if an activity is taking a long time but should not be interrupted by a long break. Everyone should simply be asked to stand up and noisily yawn (facilitators should demonstrate this with them), jog around the room a couple of times (the jogging line led by a facilitator), or practice another brief, culturally appropriate, physical activity. This produces humor and relaxation and restores attention to the tasks at hand.

**Daily Climate Setting**

A few minutes should be spent each morning on some transition activities to put participants into the proper frame of mind for active learning. Early in the morning participants may be thinking of other things; a few minutes should be taken to get their attention.

There are several climate-setting activities that can be used: An enthusiastic welcome, informal discussion about what participants did the night before, telling a funny story, or a simple exercise or game. When exercises are used, they should begin with an explanation of the problem and sufficient time should be given to participants to solve it. Progress should be monitored by facilitators as they walk around the room. After everyone has had a chance to work on the problem, someone should be identified who has solved it and he/she should be asked to come to the front of the room and explain the solution. Such warm-up exercises should be brief—no more than ten minutes.

Following this, a participant should be asked to summarize the previous day (he/she should be alerted to prepare ahead of time). This serves several objectives—it reinforces the previous day’s activities, it generates involvement, it shows the facilitators’ interest in feedback. Criticisms and suggestions for improvement should be listened to attentively and carefully.

After participant feedback, a "transition comment" should be made followed by presentation of the agenda for the day. The daily agenda should be written down on a flip chart prior to the beginning of each day’s activities and posted on the wall for reference.
Summarizing and Processing Learning

Action-Planning workshops frequently involve a great amount of detail on various topics. One of the facilitator's jobs is to summarize the details, relate them to the broader picture of the program/project at the current stage of design or implementation, and help participants become aware of what they are learning and deciding. To do this, frequent summarization is necessary. The current discussion should be linked forward by showing how it relates to a topic that will be covered later and linked backward by an explanation of how it relates to a concept that was covered earlier.

Building Group Spirit

Each group develops its own unique spirit and personality, which contributes much to the effectiveness of learning and the enjoyment of the workshop. The facilitators can help develop this spirit by making jokes about themselves and friendly references to workshop personalities. The use of games, role-plays, and similar activities can also contribute to group spirit. Nevertheless, different cultural values and norms of behavior can determine the appropriateness of specific jokes and activities, and, therefore, cultural sensitivity is a crucial attribute of effective facilitation.

Daily Closing

Each day should be concluded by a review of the day's activities and the objectives (posted on the wall). The group should be asked how they felt about the day, what parts were effective, what parts were not, and why. An attempt should be made to draw out some "lessons learned" from the day and to help the group identify decisions and agreements reached. Each day should be closed with warm words and commendations to the group as a whole on progress.

Managing Small Work Group Tasks

Action-Planning workshops alternate between large group discussion, problem-solving in small groups, and presentation of small group results to the large group. This basic cycle continues throughout the workshop.

Small groups are the heart of the workshop. In small groups, participants can efficiently address real issues and prepare work products; e.g., budgets, schedules, technical plans, and so forth. The facilitator's role with small groups consists of two parts--explaining the task and processing their work. The facilitator should accomplish the following when managing small group tasks:

(a) Divide the large group into small groups;

(b) Give clear task instructions to groups;
(c) Circulate to monitor progress and pace groups to reach closure; and

(d) Prepare groups to present their results.

**Small Group Composition.** During the workshops, there should be several small group problem-solving and discussion activities. During the early part of the workshop, groups may tackle the same task to develop a common base of understanding. During later stages, they will frequently address different issues to make better use of time.

The composition of the small groups will usually be changed several times during the workshop. Participants enjoy working with different people and new groups add a fresh perspective. But while there are benefits to changing groups, there are also costs. Each new group needs time to get to know each other, feel comfortable, develop their own procedures, identify the leadership structure, and produce effective work. Thus, a newly formed group will not be as productive initially as one that has already worked together.

Group members can be selected in one of four ways:

(a) **Random Distribution.** Participants can be asked to count off "1-2-3, 1-2-3", and so forth. Random selection is appropriate when no particular background is necessary for the task. Random choice is a good way to select the first small groups (such as for characteristics of successful projects or problem identification and prioritization). Random selection is completely arbitrary and reduces participant anxiety about how the groups were chosen. Random selection is normally used only for the first few small group exercises; after that, more structured selection methods should be used.

(b) **Structured Distribution for Group Diversity.** This approach distributes participants as uniformly as possible so that each group has persons from different organizations, units or levels within organizations. Structured distribution for diversity is usually the best method, but it requires that facilitators gather data on participants to make the selection. Groups should also be balanced so as to ensure that each group has some active members.

(c) **Structured Selection for Group Specialization.** It is often important to group people according to how their position, background, and experience relates to the specific group task. For example, people may group by similar job function (all extension agents) or by organization level (all unit heads or persons in the same department). This grouping is best when the small groups address specialized technical aspects of the project. It might also be desirable, under some circumstances, for participants to self-select the membership of groups. This is often particularly useful in the early stages of the Workshop if facilitators do not know
the participants well enough to assign them. Self-selection can be accomplished by announcing the tasks, placing a paper on the wall, with space to enter the appropriate number of names, and having each person sign up for the group of his/her choice ("first come, first served").

(d) **Key Persons.** Sometimes it is best to group all "key" persons together; such as when preparing a master project schedule. When key persons must be together, the remaining persons should be assigned tasks that do not require the presence of those key people.

**Group Instructions.** The tasks to be done in small groups derive from the overall workshop objectives. First, the whole group reaches a common understanding of program/project objectives and strategy. It also defines major components of the project to the extent appropriate to the stage of the program/project cycle at which the workshop is being conducted. Second, small groups are assigned the task of developing the detailed activity lists, schedules, and so forth which are also appropriate to that stage.

Tasks should be assigned to the small groups while participants are still together in the large groups. Each person should understand the task, know to which group he/she is assigned, and where that group will meet. Groups should be informed about the time available to complete the task. Each task should be summarized by the facilitators on flip chart paper and posted where the small group will meet so they can refer to it.

**Monitoring Small Group Progress.** When the participants begin their small group work, the facilitators should circulate and make themselves available to clarify the task, help participants get started, observe progress, and otherwise assist. While the groups work, their progress should be monitored against time. The time remaining should be periodically announced to the groups ("you have 15 more minutes to finish"). Facilitators should be somewhat flexible if it is observed that all the groups need more time. However, participants should be urged in a considerate manner to move on and attempt to finish their task as best they can.

**Preparation for Reporting Back.** The presentation approach and time limits should be explained to each group. Each group should be encouraged to write down their work on flip charts and choose their own presenters.

There will always be groups who finish early and those that need more time. Those which finish early should be encouraged to review their work and see where it might be improved. Slow groups should be encouraged to summarize and complete their work.

It is a good idea, if possible, to take a break before the small groups present. During the breaks, the slower groups can catch up and someone from each group can neatly write their work on flip charts for presentation after the break.
Managing Plenary Reporting Back Sessions

**Processing Small Group Results.** An important part of the process during Action-Planning workshops is the presentation by the small groups of their work to the large group for review, critique, and discussion. The following are some key activities for the facilitators during this part of the process:

(a) Help move charts and visuals to center stage;

(b) Call participants together and select order of presentation;

(c) Explain context and suggest what the audience should look and listen for;

(d) Enforce time limits to give all groups equal time;

(e) Moderate plenary discussions and make "learning points";

(f) Make sure key products are saved, posted to wall, and/or written up.

**Charts and Visuals.** Facilitators should make all logistics arrangements before the presentations begin. The flip chart stands should be moved to the center where they can be easily seen. The charts from each group should be ready to put up as soon as the previous group is finished. The Administrative Officer and/or messenger, if available (p. 44-45), can assist the Facilitation Team in this regard.

**Reporting Back.** When the logistics are ready, the participants should be called together. It is best not to sit participants behind the U-shaped table. Rather, the tables should be moved out of the way so the chairs can be moved close enough to the flip charts to be easily read.

The facilitator should review the work of all the groups beforehand and decide on the order of presentation. If the groups have identical tasks, the strongest group should present first and the weakest group last (this gives the weakest group a chance to improve their verbal presentation "on their feet" based on their exposure to the stronger presentation). If the groups have different tasks, topics should be presented in a logical order or, if there is no apparent logical sequence, the least controversial or those that are likely to involve less discussion should be presented first.

**Providing a Context.** Each group should be introduced with an explanation of their task. If appropriate, the facilitator can explain what the audience should look for. As an example, the facilitator might instruct the audience to look for proper hierarchy of objectives, complete indicators, and realistic assumptions.

If appropriate to the task, a participant can be selected to play the role of "minister" or other senior official to whom the presentation is made. Participants often enjoy this and the selection of a quiet but capable individual is a way to overcome shyness. If someone is selected as
"minister", it is sometimes a good idea if some "fanfare" is added to it by giving him a special chair and a cup of tea. Prior agreement of the person selected is necessary and he/she should be coached by the facilitator concerning what to look for in the presentations.

**Enforcing Time Limits.** Time limits should be set so that all groups have roughly equal time. Each group should know, for example, that it will have ten minutes for presentation, followed by ten minutes of discussion. An aid to enforcing time limits is the use of a kitchen timer with a bell or a participant can be selected to watch the time and announce when the ten minutes are up.

Time limits for verbal presentations should be enforced. If they are not enforced, most of the time will be spent on the first group or two. If the topics are identical, the most interesting issues will have been discussed before the last group presents. In any event, if time limits are not set and enforced, the schedule will certainly slip badly. If the group tasks are different, discussion should follow after each presentation. If the tasks are identical, some short period of time should be permitted for direct questions and answers after each presentation; but full discussion should be reserved until after all the groups have presented.

**Moderating Discussion.** During the presentations, facilitators should take notes on the approach taken by each group. After all the presentations, they should initiate a discussion which compares and contrasts the various group products (assuming the same tasks). If possible, the work of all the groups should be posted so it is visible at the same time.

The audience should be allowed to make their own comments first. The facilitators should save their own analysis for last. They should point out one or two strong points of each group and mention effective use of concepts ("here is an example of a complete indicator which includes quality, quantity, and time measures").

Each group should be asked what they discovered from the experience. In addition to discoveries concerning substantive matters, they can be asked for their observations about the process of working together in the group.

**Retention of Products.** Working products developed by participants (such as schedules and responsibility charts) should be collected to be posted, typed, distributed, and perhaps included in the workshop report.

Interim products should be posted on the walls, so participants can review and refer to them. If administrative support capabilities permit (p. 45), key products should be typed and returned to participants. It is essential that work products (such as Objective Trees, Logical Frameworks, Agreement Charts, and Schedules) are collected, reproduced, and distributed.
Products developed in the workshop will normally be written on flip chart paper. To simplify reproduction and distribution, one member of each group should write their work down on paper (using clear writing and black ink). Such products can easily be photocopied.

The facilitation team should look for and save exemplary products which demonstrate effective use of the management concepts. These make good handouts and reference materials for future workshops.

**Processing the Learning**

The most important role of the facilitator is to help participants discover what they have accomplished, and how. This is called "processing"—turning the "raw" data of discussion into the "cooked" data of agreements and understanding. Processing occurs at many points during the workshop. For example, at the end of small group presentations, at the end of each day, and whenever else it is useful.

Effective processing requires close attention to what is happening and skillful posing of questions to participants. The facilitator should begin with a general sense of the specific objective of the discussion; e.g., to resolve a problem, develop understanding of a concept, make a decision, and so forth. The general purpose of the discussion should be stated; for instance "we have heard three different presentations on the project strategy, let's see if we can combine these into one by identifying the common themes".

The facilitator can lead the discussion and encourage participation through the use of directed questions (p. 39-41) and an open atmosphere. However, if the discussion is evolving in a spontaneous manner without direct involvement by the facilitator, it should be allowed to do so. Sometimes, a "free-wheeling" atmosphere can be productive. Nevertheless, the facilitator should keep the discussion moving. The discussion flow should be among the group members rather than between the facilitator and group members. Nevertheless, resource persons (p. 6-7) should be encouraged to participate; that is one of the main reasons they are present. Facilitators should use flip charts to record the discussion's highlights and key points.

At appropriate points during discussion, the facilitator should introduce an analytic framework in order to process more effectively. Without an efficient means of structuring the discussion, it is likely to fragment and results will be easily lost. The analytic framework can be as simple as a heading on a flip chart (such as "issues", "problems", etc.) under which discussion results are summarized.

Simple matrices often provide useful analytic frameworks. For example, if there is a discussion of potential problems, the facilitator might draw a matrix with columns entitled "potential problems", "ways of recognizing problems", "preventive actions", and "corrective actions" on a flip chart, list previously identified problems in rows under the first column, and then use the matrix to structure the discussion.
When the key points have been resolved (or there is no more time),
discussion should be brought to a close by reviewing the highlights. Any
conclusions which have been reached should be reviewed and clarified. Any
minority viewpoints should also be restated and agreement reached for any
action proposed.

Questions are a key tool for guiding discussion. They can be used
to:

(a) Involve all members of the group;
(b) Draw out quiet, shy, or hesitant members;
(c) Keep people awake and thinking;
(d) Keep the discussion moving;
(e) Stop private conversation or prevent domination by one
    member;
(f) Draw out members' experience; and
(g) Check on the group's understanding of the subject matter.

There are two basic types of questions. The general question is
addressed to the group as a whole, the direct question is addressed to an
individual by name.

The general question stimulates thinking by all members of the
group. By putting the question to the group as a whole, every member of
the group has to think. If a specific person is asked to answer the
question, all the other members can mentally loaf. It is best if topics
are introduced with general questions. General questions are also best
used in earlier workshop activities rather than in later ones. Using
direct questions too early may embarrass participants if they are not yet
ready to answer.

The direct question, addressed to an individual by name, must be
used carefully to avoid embarrassment when the person cannot answer. Direct
questions should be used to draw upon the experience of those most
knowledgeable. Direct questions can also be used to bring shy members into
the discussion, but the question should be one which he/she is able to
answer. Direct questions can also be used to break up private
conversations or to interrupt a discussion monopolized by one person by
asking someone else to comment.

A useful technique is to phrase the question as a general question
first, pause to allow participants to think, then name the individual who
should answer--("What do you think the minister should do - (pause) - Mr.
Agus").
The pick-up question (another form of the direct question) is used to refer back to a contribution which was passed over in the heat of the discussion. This sometimes happens when a participant who speaks quietly is interrupted by a more vocal participant. The facilitator should make a mental note at the time and come back to the point later; if only to give recognition to the contributor. Here is an example: "I believe you said a few minutes ago, Mr. Farkle, that you once encountered this same situation. Would you like to tell us a little more about it?"

While every question is either a general or a direct question, questions can be further divided into a number of categories.

An open question is expressed in broad terms and is open to a wide variety of answers. It usually begins with who, what, when, where, how, or why ("Who should be responsible for acting in this type of situation?", "Why is it important that the agency should have a shared definition of strategy?", "What are the advantages of regular team meetings?").

When participants ask questions of the facilitators, it is often effective to redirect the question back to the group. The re-directed question keeps the group active and prevents a dialogue between the discussion leader and only one participant. ("That's an excellent question. Who would like to answer it?").

The factual question seeks facts, data, or information ("How does that conclusion fit with the formal project submissions?").

Closed questions should be avoided. The closed question is one that can be answered by a yes-no response, or gives a choice of only two options, or is a rhetorical question which doesn't need an answer ("That's a poor way to proceed, isn't it?" "Should he tell the minister or tell his boss?"). Note that a closed question can easily be made into an open question ("How should he proceed?", "Who should he tell?").

Open and redirected questions should be used frequently. However, closed questions should be avoided because they do not provoke active thinking or stimulate further discussion.

Here are some general tips for using questions:

(a) Questions should be brief, clear and simply worded;
(b) Direct questions should be randomly distributed rather than using a fixed order, such as clockwise around the room;
(c) Questions should be distributed evenly among the members of the group;
(d) Questions should cover one point only, and be single rather than multiple or compound questions;
(e) Questions should relate to the ability and experience of the person to whom they are addressed; and
(f) After asking a question, participants should be given time to think before an answer is expected.

The Facilitation Team Approach

Action-Planning requires a team approach. Because workshops are intensive and demanding, the facilitators must work together and coordinate their efforts to achieve the workshop objectives. Here are some things the effective team does:

(a) Meets each morning to review agenda, objectives, and responsibilities;

(b) Anticipates next activity, prepares to move tables, etc., and maintain flow;

(c) Uses team-teaching approach and supports each other;

(d) Gently critiques colleagues' performance and openly accepts critiques from others;

(e) Collects, posts, types, and distributes key participants' products; and

(f) Reviews at end of each day, analyzes results, clarifies approach for next day.

Morning Meetings. An important discipline for the training team is to meet each morning to review the plan for the day. In advance, the lead facilitator prepares the day's suggested agenda and timing. The facilitators review this and discuss who will be involved in each activity, the potential problems, and other issues.

In addition to the substance of the workshop, there are many important "housekeeping" items to accomplish; such as materials duplication and typing of interim work products. Responsibility for these should be assigned to specific members of the facilitation team or administrative staff.

Anticipating Activities and Maintaining Workshop Flow. One measure of an effective facilitation team is that there is little time wasted moving tables, handing out materials, bringing whiteboards to the front, and so forth. When valuable time is taken up by such logistical activities, the facilitators appear disorganized.

Facilitators who are not "on" should be aware of what is to happen next and be ready to act. This awareness comes from the plan discussed during the morning meeting and from paying close attention to what is happening.

Team-Teaching Approach. Because facilitators are obviously "on" for only short periods during a workshop, participants and resource persons often think it is an easy job. In fact, the more skilled a facilitator is, the easier his job should appear to be. However, in the case of Action-
Planning workshops, such appearances are deceiving. As experienced Action-Planning facilitators know, conducting workshops is, in fact, very difficult and mentally exhausting. The difficulty should be reduced by using at least two (preferably three) facilitators in a team-teaching mode. Team-teaching also provides greater variety for the participants since it is easier to get bored with only one facilitator.

Two persons are especially valuable for processing the discussions which follow small group presentations. During these discussions, facilitators must concentrate on many different things at once. A single facilitator might miss an important point or a probing question, or not notice a shy participant who has been trying to enter the discussion. The second facilitator views the discussion from a different perspective and is in a good position to intervene. The second facilitator can also write things on the board while the other leads the discussion.

It is always a good idea to include a local consultant, preferably from a local university or training institute, as a member of the facilitation team (p. 12). However, it is also important that the local facilitator is not him/herself a staff member of the organizations directly involved as participants in the Action-Planning process.

Performance Critiques. Effective facilitators are always interested in knowing how they can improve. Even the highly experienced facilitator can improve and should be willing to listen to constructive criticism from his fellow facilitators. During each activity, one or more co-facilitators should observe and evaluate the activity. He/she should provide feedback on how well the session objectives were achieved and highlight comments or opportunities that might have been missed.

Evening Meetings. At the end of each day, the facilitation team should meet to review the day. Senior Government officials and selected participants may be part of the review; although that is seldom feasible. The team should ask themselves:

(a) How well were the intended objectives achieved? How do we know?
(b) What were the strengths of the day? The weaknesses?
(c) What happened that was unexpected? What new problems or opportunities emerged?
(d) Given what happened today, what is the plan for tomorrow?

The end of the day is the best time to develop a tentative plan for the following day. If everything happened as planned and there are no surprises, the next day's plan will be easy to develop. But if (as usually happens) there are unexpected problems or new opportunities, the plan for the next day will need revision. Thus, the next day's plan should be discussed and the lead facilitator should develop an agenda to present to the group during the morning meeting.
Workshop Evaluation

Every workshop should be formally evaluated--in writing--by each participant. Written evaluations should be completed and submitted anonymously. An example of evaluation formats which have been used in Action-Planning workshops are included in these guidelines as Annex D. It is usually a good idea for the evaluation forms to be distributed to the participants by the facilitators during the opening session of the workshop. Distributing the evaluation forms during the first morning of the workshop provides participants the opportunity to make their own notes pertinent to the evaluation as the workshop proceeds. It also helps to establish the fact from the outset that the facilitators are sincerely interested in feedback from participants.

The participants should be requested to submit the completed evaluation questionnaires--without identifying notations--to the facilitation team at an appropriate point on the last day (or, if only a half-day is scheduled for the final day, at the end of the penultimate day). Allowing for some additional time following collection of the completed evaluation forms permits the facilitation team to quickly review the questionnaires and report the aggregate responses, in summary terms, back to the participants prior to the final close of the workshop. In that regard, it is a good idea to allow--in the concluding session--approximately one hour for discussion following the feedback by the facilitators.

VI. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

As outlined in Section IV and Section V, organizing and conducting Action-Planning Workshops is a complex undertaking. Experience suggests that, all too often, Action-Planning Workshops that are well conceived fail in execution because organizers give insufficient attention to financial and administrative requirements.

Administrative Requirements

Experience indicates that three key administrative functions must be performed for a Workshop to proceed smoothly:

(a) Distribution of invitations in a timely manner;

(b) Arrangements for venue, participants' meals and lodging, and supplies; and

(c) Logistics support during the Workshop.

It is normally inefficient for members of the facilitation team to be assigned primary responsibility for the performance of these functions. Their time should be used for the design and conduct of the workshop; not for administrative and logistical support. That latter responsibility should be assumed by the host agency.
**Invitations.** Invitations must be prepared in a format considered appropriate in the context of the local bureaucratic culture. Depending on local norms, they should be addressed either to potential participants directly or to their supervisors and should be signed by an appropriate senior official. Finally, invitations must be distributed so that potential participants are informed in sufficient time to arrange their schedules and they should be followed-up in order to determine as precisely as possible the number of participants who will actually attend. The execution of all these tasks, if properly performed so as to communicate a sense that the organizers know what they are doing, should commence approximately six weeks prior to the beginning of the workshop. Therefore, the host organization should assign responsibility to an administrative officer who, in turn, should be supported by a senior officer with adequate access to the Official designated to sign the invitations.

**Venue, Subsistence, and Supplies.** Arrangements must be made for a suitable workshop venue (p. 24-25). It is, of course, best if the host organization can provide the use of its own facilities; if they are suitable. That is often possible in East, Southeast, and South Asia and Latin America. However, it is seldom possible in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the event that facilities of the host organization are not available, an adequate venue must be rented well enough in advance to reserve facilities and process the necessary paperwork for the cash disbursement to pay the rent (or a substantial deposit) in advance. It is also important that arrangements are made to provide daily mid-morning and mid-afternoon "coffee breaks" and lunch for participants at the appropriate times in the workshop schedule. This is important because it is not a good idea to allow participants to make their own arrangements for breaks and meals during the workshop day. One reason for this is that once participants scatter, it is much less likely that they will all return within the time allotted. Another reason is that, if the group is kept together during such breaks, they can be profitably used by participants, facilitators, and resource persons to exchange views and get to know each other better in a more informal atmosphere. It is also a good idea to have a "cocktail party" hosted by the sponsoring organization on the first or second evening of the workshop and a more formal dinner with a very senior guest speaker on the last evening of the workshop. In order to avoid serious disruption of the daily workshop schedule, it is important that the suppliers of meals and refreshments know precisely what the daily schedule is and are informed at least one hour in advance about any changes as each day progresses.

For participants who might be attending the workshop from significant distances (and that might be everyone if the recommendation on p. 24 is accepted), it will be necessary to provide sufficient rooms for lodging. Again, the reservation of a large block of rooms requires sufficient advance notification.

Finally, arrangements must be made to produce the materials required during the workshop in sufficient copies for all participants. The type and quantities of such materials will depend on the workshop design (p. 27-29). That, in turn, requires sufficient lead time for both preparation and production of the materials.
Responsibility for the performance of these tasks can be assigned to the same administrative officer responsible for the invitations. The same six-week lead time required for the invitation process (p. 44) should be sufficient for these arrangements as well. If more than one workshop is conducted in series during the same phase of the program/project cycle (p. 24), the same six week period should be sufficient for completing the invitation process and other arrangements for the entire series concurrently. Nevertheless, a full week break should be provided between each workshop to allow for last-minute arrangements to be completed for the next workshop in the series.

Logistic Support. During the workshops, additional logistics support will be required. Typing and photocopying or reproduction of materials with ditto-masters (p. 37-38) will be necessary. In addition, persons responsible for serving refreshments and meals, guest speakers, and resource persons must be reminded of scheduled appearance times or informed of any relevant changes. This very often requires daily, if not hourly, communication in order to avoid wasting time. Thus, it is important that an administrative officer, typist(s), and messenger be available to the facilitation team on a full-time basis during the actual implementation of the workshops.

Financing

It is essential that agreements are reached at the earliest stage between the various sponsoring agencies concerning precisely who will pay for exactly what based on an explicit budget. This might seem obvious. Nevertheless, experience suggests that the planning and design process often proceeds over a substantial period of time on the basis of assumptions by one or more of the parties rather than explicit agreements between them.

At a minimum, a workshop budget should include the following items.

(a) Facilitators (p. 5-6).

(i) Fees
(ii) Subsistence.
(iii) Travel.
(iv) Local Transportation.

(b) Administrative/Logistics Support Staff (p. 43-45).

(i) Administrative Officer
(ii) Typist
(iii) Messenger
(iv) Driver(s); if any.
(c) Participant Expenses (p. 24-25, 44)

(i) Travel; if required.

(ii) Lodging; if required.

(iii) Subsistence (at a minimum, the total costs of "coffee break" refreshments, lunches, and "cocktail party"). For participants who travel from a distance, if any, sufficient funds for breakfasts and dinners.

(iv) If normal practice, a "sitting allowance" for participants who normally reside in the vicinity of the venue of the workshop.

(d) Materials and Supplies.

(e) Venue. (p. 24-26).

VII. POTENTIAL RISKS

Experience to date in the use of action-planning workshops has indicated that there are serious risks that can be prevented or minimized if certain precautions are taken. These risks are: (i) the perception that staff participation is threatening within the bureaucratic environments of the various stakeholder organizations; (ii) unrealistic expectations among participants and decision-makers; (iii) unacceptable proposals generated by the workshop; (iv) non-representation of beneficiary interests; and (v) inappropriate approach and inadequate skills among facilitators.

Participation as Threat. The mobilization of low ranking personnel through participation in workshops has sometimes been viewed as potentially threatening by a country's bureaucratic or political leadership. The potential risk can be reduced if:

(a) Persons proposing the use of Action-Planning Workshops clearly present the justification and strategy to senior officials and ensure that they fully understand the benefits (p. 22-23);

(b) Designers and implementors of Action-Planning Workshops demonstrate through their actual behavior that they understand the concerns of senior officials, that they consider those concerns legitimate, and endeavor to transfer overall ownership of the process to appropriate officials.

(c) Political leaders and senior officers are included in the process as resource persons (p. 6-7, 20, 24-25, 42); and
(d) The facilitation team shares the information resulting from the Workshop with appropriate senior officials.

Unrealistic Expectations. Participation of appropriate officials in workshops can generate among them a level of expectations and commitment regarding project/program coverage, financial support, and timing to which support staff and decision-makers in any or all stakeholder organizations may not be able to respond. Impatience with delays caused by follow-up procedures for drafting, reviewing, and approving preparation and appraisal reports is likely to be increased. It is, therefore, important that the procedures and schedule for follow-up are explained to all participants so that they understand where the workshop fits into those procedures.

Unacceptable Proposals. If specific program/project components recommended by participants in the workshops are misinterpreted, amended, ignored, or rejected by decision-makers in subsequent official reports, the view that the workshop sponsors were insincere and manipulative might be created or heightened. This risk can be reduced if participants clearly understand that Workshop results will not be the sole input into the program/project process. Therefore, the role of the workshop as only a part -- albeit an important part -- of the process should be clearly explained at the outset.

Thus, technical personnel and decision-makers do not, and should not, abdicate their responsibility to exercise their professional judgment when preparing program/project design documents or supervision reports. Aid agency staff should continue to prepare for missions by reading the available literature and, once in the field, conduct interviews with selected officials in order to identify appropriate initial agendas for workshops, categories of participants, and objectives. They should also retain their professional responsibilities vis-a-vis the aid agency in preparing appraisal and supervision reports and background papers to those reports.

Nevertheless, technical personnel and decision-makers should not be too quick to dismiss recommendations made by workshop participants. At a minimum, such recommendations indicate the assumptions, knowledge base, and desires of operational level staff who must be relied upon to implement any decisions and, thus, even if not acceptable, should be taken into account. Further, what might appear at first glance as unacceptable often turns out to be more than acceptable when subsequently investigated further and the various attitudinal and behavioral trade-offs are considered.

Involvement of Beneficiaries. Whether or not to include potential or actual beneficiaries in problem identification, project design, and implementation workshops is a difficult question. The main problem is to determine how representative is a particular group of beneficiaries. For example, if the beneficiaries are a large population of farmers, how can one ensure that the "representatives" accurately reflect: (i) the interests of smallholders, tenants, and landless laborers; (ii)
women; and (iii) the younger generation(s). Beneficiaries, such as farmers, are not as easily categorized, in terms of their socio-economic roles, as government civil servants or staff of private sector enterprises. Although these difficulties can be overcome, extreme care must be exercised in preparing, conducting, and assessing the results of workshops involving beneficiaries (especially during project design phases).

Inappropriate Design and Facilitation Skills. Workshops require both process (facilitator) skills and substantive knowledge of the field to be addressed. If designed and conducted solely by a knowledgeable expert who lacks experience and skills as a facilitator, a workshop can be counterproductive. Nevertheless, it is necessary that someone who is professionally familiar with the subject matter be included among the persons who design workshops. It is also important that a professional subject matter specialist is present as a resource person during the implementation of the workshop because much of the benefit of workshops is a result of observation of participants and the ability to sense the implications (or hidden agendas) of their discussions, analyses, and proposals.

On the basis of experience with action-planning efforts in the corporate sector in the United States and with governments in the less developed countries, certain precautions have proven necessary. In the design of an action-planning effort, a skilled facilitator does the following: (i) interviews the major actors, including the decision makers, on expectations of results and constraints with special concern for those of the relevant decision makers; (ii) if the expectations on desired results among the decision makers vary in significant ways, holds a short workshop or meeting to resolve the differences in results desired and the limitations of the effort; (iii) proceeds only if reasonable agreement is reached; (iv) permits decision makers who are unlikely clients to drop consideration of an Action-Planning Workshop; and (v) submits the basic design to the decision makers for their approval. Further, the facilitator then starts the workshop with a careful exchange of expectations and an honest attempt to reconcile the differences in expectations of participants and facilitators. To the extent that it is in their power, facilitators must be willing to stretch their own expectations to meet those of the participants. Where expectations of participants are not consistent with conditions laid down by the decision makers, the facilitators may offer to convey this to decision makers. It is very important that the facilitators scrupulously adhere to actions that will build trust among all relevant parties during and after the workshop. This takes great skill and experience. An understanding of the methodology is relatively easy as compared to having the skills to design and actually implement it.

Although the potential risks identified above should be considered in any decision to propose and conduct Action-Planning Workshops as part of the design and implementation process, they should not—in view of the benefits—be considered sufficient reason for rejecting the method altogether.
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ANNEX A

ILLUSTRATIVE CASES

Since January 1985, several pilot efforts have been initiated by the World Bank, in cooperation with its borrowers in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region, to apply the approach to technical assistance outlined in these Guidelines. For the purpose of illustration, brief descriptions of a few of these early experiences are provided below.

Case #1: National Economic Planning. The Government of a small country had not had any experience in national planning; indeed, it had no agency within the governmental structure responsible for planning at the national level. Faced with severe shortfalls in estimated revenues and the near certainty of not being able to meet debt-service obligations within a very few years, the need for establishing national planning priorities in the context of fiscal restraint became apparent. In the absence of a national planning body and with a reluctance to accept significant numbers of foreign long-term advisors, it was decided to create an informal planning work-group consisting of key middle-level officials from the major sectoral ministries and initiate a three phase process over a nine month period to address immediate needs, as follows: (i) enroll two members of the ad hoc work group in a six-week course at the Economic Development Institute (EDI) on national planning; (ii) assisted by a short-term consultant (i.e., a "Facilitator"), conduct a two week in-country residential action-planning workshop for all members of the work group to prepare recommendations concerning national planning objectives, priorities among them, summaries of appropriate pre-investments, and realistic economic and financial justifications; and (iii) based on the preliminary identification of priority investments, prepare proposals for an eventual donor conference to discuss Government's proposals. Through exposure to the analytical framework introduced in the EDI course and mobilization of a critical mass of key officials to address priority planning issues through participation in a structured workshop process, Government was able—with very limited technical assistance—to create an awareness of planning needs and effectively begin the development of its own planning capacity.

Case #2: Sectoral Planning. More than a year after the conclusion of a World Bank agricultural sector review, no action had been taken within another African country by several Government task forces which had been created to follow-up on recommendations in the Sector Report. Their task was to transform a set of broad strategy recommendations into the identification of specific priority pre-investment studies for further consideration by donors. Following a short one week follow-up visit by a consultant to ascertain the reasons for the prolonged delay, the Government agreed to sponsor a series of one week residential action-planning workshops to generate more specific terms of reference for the task forces and commitment to the work among their members. In the event, two workshops were conducted; the first for district and provincial level personnel representing a wide-range of institutions likely to be affected by subsequent planning decisions and the second for national level members.
of the task forces (including some representatives from the provincial level to provide overlap). Detailed action-plans for each task force were produced with the participation of more than 120 government officials at the operational level from district to national levels. An interesting feature of those action plans was the cooption of some lower ranking officials from the first workshop as full-fledged members of the task forces, something not previously envisaged. Another important result was the identification by the local officials themselves of desired short-term technical assistance support linked directly to specific tasks within their own work plans. External technical assistance for initiating and implementing the workshop series was limited to the financing of two consultants to design and conduct the workshops (i.e., as "Facilitators") and the participation, during plenary discussions, of the three World Bank project officers most directly responsible for agriculture sector work in that country (i.e., as "Resource Persons"). The results were: (i) the removal of procedural bottlenecks in the policy process; (ii) the integration of the strategic planning work of several government institutions both horizontally and vertically; and (iii) the production of an integrated and monitorable implementation plan for further planning activity on a rolling basis.

Case #3: Design of a Free-Standing Technical Assistance Credit. Inefficiencies among public enterprises across a very broad range of economic sectors within yet another country were so dramatic that the entire economy was being drained. Although several studies of the problem had been commissioned and published during the previous decade, by 1985 no effective action had been taken. That was due, in part, to both political sensitivities surrounding the whole subject of the appropriate role of the state in the productive economic sector and sincere disagreements among various parties concerning the best combination of responses to the problem. Nevertheless, because of the worsening economic situation in the country, the Government eventually did request the World Bank to assist it with, among other things, a technical assistance credit to address the many issues identified but not yet resolved in that regard. Although responding positively to that request, the Bank suggested that, due to the wide range of varying interests and opinions within the country regarding those issues, Government should design the project in the context of an initial policy review with the participation of persons representing that range of interests. In the event, five working groups were established with responsibility for producing, during an eight month period, recommendations for a government statement on parastatal policy and the design of the specific components of a technical assistance credit for the implementation of the policy. In order to determine the specific terms of reference and prepare a detailed operational plan for each working group, the eight-month preparation period was initiated by a five-day residential workshop for all members of the five groups. Technical assistance was limited to two consultants who designed and conducted the workshops (i.e., "Facilitators"), plus four additional consultants employed to participate in the workshop and assist in the finalization of workplans during the
immediate one week follow-up period (i.e., "Resource Persons") and two World Bank staff who attended the workshop during plenary discussions (i.e., also as "resource persons" with reference to Bank procedures). One interesting feature of that process was the decision by the local officials to conduct, themselves, after about three months of work, a three-day workshop to which a broader group of participants were invited to consider initial tentative policy recommendations and, soon after, a mid-term review workshop, limited to just the members of the work teams, to cross-check their overall progress. Although the preparation period described here has only recently been completed and, therefore, it is too early to judge the result of the process conclusively, early indications are that the process has provided a structure which enabled the borrower to effectively assume optimal responsibility for the preparation of policies and implementation strategies which are technically sound yet appropriately adapted to social, political, and cultural realities.

Case #4: Project Implementation Launch. In response to the recognition that the transition from the project design and negotiation stage to the implementation stage is often difficult—many times a totally new cast of characters comes on the scene—increasing emphasis has been placed on conducting "Project Launch Workshops". The primary purpose of such workshops is to provide the project's management team (vertically and horizontally between and among levels) an opportunity to prepare an operational action plan for the first phase (e.g., one year or, perhaps, an appropriate cropping or other production cycle). Using an integrated management team approach, those persons responsible for implementing the project are provided with an opportunity to think together about how the project's concept and strategy should be translated into a mutually reinforcing set of concrete actions. For example, in order to launch an agricultural research, extension, and planning project in one particular country, a series of meetings and workshops were designed so that preparation of action plans within departments at headquarter's level and within each district were interspersed with reviews by and guidance from the senior officials on the Steering Committee. In the process, those responsible for implementation were able to fully comprehend the nature of the project as designed while, at the same time, taking ownership of it through the translation of broad concepts into specific actions. An important feature of this approach is the recognition that once having launched a project in this manner, annual or cyclical planning on a regular basis—using the same techniques—provide effective tools for managing action in a dynamic environment.

ANNEX B.1
KHON KAEN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
PRE-IMPLEMENTATION WORKSHOP

AGENDA
FRIDAY, MAY 13

Morning

Registration
Introductions
Workshop Approach
Project Background & Objectives
Break
Elements of Successful Projects
Small Group Discussions

Afternoon

Small Group Discussion (Continued)
Small Group Presentations
Break
Linear Responsibility Charts
Day One Wrap-up

SATURDAY, MAY 14

Morning

Introduction & Issues
Small Groups Develop Implementation Plans
Break
Small Group Presentations
Wrap-up & Action Step Summary
ANNEX B.2
WORLD BANK STAFF TRAINING
PROCESS CONSULTATION - USE OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS

AGENDA

Wednesday, (April 24, 1985)

10:30-12:00  I. INTRODUCTION

(a) Participants
(b) Introduction by
(c) Facilitators
(d) Role of Facilitators
(e) Review of Objectives/Agenda

12:00-13:00  LUNCH

13:00-15:00  II. OBJECTIVES BY PHASES OF PROJECT/PROGRAM CYCLE

(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

15:00-15:15  COFFEE BREAK

15:15-17:15  III. PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/STAKEHOLDER ANALYSES

(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

17:15-17:30  COFFEE BREAK

17:30-19:00  IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

(a) Presentation (plenary)
(b) Discussion (plenary)

Thursday, (April 25, 1985)

08:30-09:00  V. PURPOSE OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS

(a) Presentation: Examples from Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda (plenary)
09:00-11:00 VI. PROBLEM/CONSTRAINT PRIORITIES
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

11:00-11:15 COFFEE BREAK

11:15-11:45 VII. UTILITY OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS
(a) Presentation: Examples from Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda (plenary)

11:45-12:45 VIII. RISKS IN USING WORKSHOPS
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group exercises

12:45-13:45 LUNCH

13:45-15:30 IX. SOLUTION/RESOLUTION OF RISKS
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

15:30-16:00 X. EXPERIENCE WITH RISKS
(a) Presentation: Examples from Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda (plenary)

16:00-16:15 COFFEE BREAK
16:15-18:00 XI. UTILITY OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

FRIDAY (April 26, 1985)

08:30-10:00 XII. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: IDENTIFYING ACTIVITIES
(a) Presentation: Example: from Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda (plenary)
(b) Introduction (plenary) Group Exercises

10:00-10:15 COFFEE BREAK

10:15-11:00 XIII. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: SEQUENCING ACTIVITIES
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises

11:00-12:30 XIV. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: RESPONSIBILITY CHARTING
(a) Introduction (plenary)
(b) Group Exercises
(c) Reporting Back (plenary)

12:30-14:00 LUNCH AND SPEAKERS

CONCLUSION
(a) Presentation: Alternative Workshop Techniques (plenary)
(b) Discussion
(c) Evaluation
ANNEX C.1
KHON KAEN UNIVERSITY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT PROJECT:
PRE-IMPLEMENTATION WORKSHOP
May 13-14, 1983
Rosesukon Hotel, Khon Kaen

PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

Workshop participants will be some 28 people concerned with the project from DTEC (5), RDI (6), USAID (6), the KK Rectors Office (2), KK Faculty (8), and Ford Foundation (1).

KK and RDI participants are those responsible for implementing the project. Some have been involved in the project design, but not all are familiar with it. Most hold a masters or doctorate in social science or agriculture and are in their 30's and 40's.

DTEC participants are primarily financial and administrative support personnel. USAID participants include the project officers, program staff, and a financial officer.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. Broaden project understanding among the major parties involved in the project;

2. Develop a strategy for addressing project conditions precedent and covenants;

3. Develop specific operational procedures for contracting, training, financial reporting, project monitoring, and procurement;

4. Develop specific research management procedures;

5. Develop and/or review job descriptions for six (6) new RDI support Staff and plan for their hiring;

6. Discuss/clarify roles of the various parties in the project.

WORKSHOP FORMAT:

1 1/2 day "Action-training" with extensive work in small sub-groups to develop specific products or working procedures. Brief presentation of key management concepts followed by application in small groups. At end of workshop, short-term action plans developed (with steps, timing, and responsibilities identified) for continued effort.
FRIDAY, MAY 13

8:00 - 8:45 ARRIVAL AND REGISTRATION
Arriving participants sign in and are given a name tag.

8:45 - 9:15 INTRODUCTIONS. Participants "interview" person sitting next to him/her, and get background, education, interests. Participants then introduce each other before the full group.

9:15 - 9:30 WORKSHOP APPROACH. Participants define their expectations for the workshop. Trainer lists these on the wall, along with a list of specific outcomes expected. Brief discussion of workshop agenda and approach.

9:30 - 10:00 PROJECT BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES. Presentation by Dr. Akin or J. Foti on project objectives and arrangements. Presentation supported by flip charts or view-graphs.

10:00 - 10:15 COFFEE BREAK

10:15 - 11:00 ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL PROJECTS. Brief presentation and group discussion on the characteristics of successful projects. Handout: 5 Steps Chart.

11:00 - 12:00 SMALL GROUPS DISCUSS/DEVELOP PROCEDURES. Participants divide into three or four subgroups of 6-7 persons each, based on their interests and role in the project. Probable sub-groups and objectives of each are:

Contracting for Research -- developing a flow-chart of steps to be used in reviewing and approving research proposals, and ensuring approved research is reflected in annual work plans.

Procurement -- discussion and understanding of USAID requirements for small value and local procurement. Additional discussion of applicable KKU and RTG procurement procedures.

Training -- develop agreed procedures for KKU to identify, select, and process training participants.

Financial Reporting -- discussion of USAID, DTEC, and KKU financial planning and reporting procedures.
12:00 - 1:30 LUNCH
1:30 - 2:00 SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS (Continued)
2:00 - 3:00 SUB GROUP PRESENTATIONS. Each group presents, to the large group, the results of their work. Questions, answers, and discussion.
3:00 - 3:15 COFFEE BREAK
3:15 - 3:45 TRAINER PRESENTATION: LINEAR RESPONSIBILITY CHART (LRC). Trainer briefly describes and illustrates use of this tool for clarifying authorities, relationships, and responsibilities. Tool will be used on Day 2.
3:45 - 4:30 DAY ONE WRAP UP: Trainer leads discussion in summarizing the key decisions and agreements made during the day. Topics and composition of sub-groups for Day 2 decided.

SATURDAY, MAY 14

8:30 - 8:45 INTRODUCTION AND ISSUES. Brief discussion of ideas, questions, based on Day One.
8:45 - 9:30 SMALL GROUPS DEVELOP IMPLEMENTATION PLANS. In sub-groups, participants identify key activities for the 6-12 months. Groups use a simple bar-chart format, listing action steps, timing, and responsibilities of key actors.
Possible sub-groups to include Conditions Precedent, and Organization Arrangements. Other sub-group topics to be decided.
9:45 -10:00 COFFEE BREAK
10:00 -11:00 SUB-GROUP PRESENTATION TO THE BIG GROUP: Action plans and responsibilities identified by small groups presented to large group for discussion.
11:00 -11:30 WRAP-UP. Review original objectives, evaluate workshop progress. Review agreements and decisions. Discuss unresolved issues, agree on next action steps and responsibilities.
These notes provide summary descriptions of each Workshop Session. The Headings correspond to the Agenda (attached).

Wednesday (April 24, 1985)

I. INTRODUCTION (45 minutes)

(a) Call to order by the Training Department Representative (TR), who will introduce the two Facilitators/Trainees (F.A. and F.B.).

(b) Participants. The participants will be asked by F.A. to introduce themselves and indicate the reason for attending this training program.

(c) Introduction by _______________. We should identify a guest speaker to open the Workshop.

(d) Role of Facilitators. F.B. will explain the Facilitation role; i.e., that Facilitators are concerned with process but do not take positions on content. The role will be contrasted with resource person's and participant's roles. An example, from Tanzania, will be given to illustrate how these roles sometimes merge and the consequences.

(e) Review of Objectives/Agenda. F.B. will continue by presenting the six objectives of the Training Program:

(i) Familiarize Bank staff with the potential use of Workshops in Bank work;

(ii) Familiarize Bank staff with Workshop techniques and methods;

(iii) Test the design of this Workshop for achieving (i) and (ii);

(iv) Produce appropriate checklists for the design; and

(v) Provide a technique for practical application of the Institutional Development Framework which is emerging from Bank experience.
II. **OBJECTIVES BY PHASES OF PROJECT/PROGRAM CYCLE** (Two hours, 15 minutes; including Coffee Break)

(a) **Introduction.** In plenary session, F.A. will assign one of the "phases" of the cycle (i.e., Identification, Preparation/Appraisal, Launch, and Supervision) to each working group. Each group will be asked to use the "Brainstorming Technique" in order to identify the objectives, in terms of their own experiences, of the Phase assigned to them. **Group exercises (b) will follow the introduction and a spokesman for each group will Report Back (c) in plenary.**

III. **PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION/STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS** (Two hours)

(a) **Introduction.** In plenary, F.B. will introduce a three-step process for this session. Participants will be asked to:

(i) Identify problems which they have encountered in meeting the objectives of the phase assigned to their group (in addition to the objectives identified by themselves in the previous exercise, they will receive the relevant Bank policy document, if any, for that phase) using a Nominal Group Technique (Round Robin Recording);

(ii) Using the Brainstorming Technique, indicate the source of the solution or resolution of the problem (e.g., Borrower, Donor, Consultants, etc.) next to the problem statement; and

(iii) identify all the sources so indicated and, using a Mapping Technique, illustrate the linkages between them.

(b) **Group exercises and Reporting Back (c) follow.**

IV. **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT** (Two Hours)

(a) **Presentation.** In plenary session, F.A. will respond to the "mess" produced by the participants in the previous exercises by presenting:
(i) The disaggregation of "Power" into the concepts of "Appreciation", "Influence", and "Control" (Figure 1 will be distributed);

(ii) The four "Arenas of Action" (Figure 2 will be distributed); and

(iii) The relationship of the four "Arenas of Action" to the Stakeholder Analysis provided by the participant groups.

(b) Discussion. Continuing the discussion, T.R. (as facilitator) will moderate a discussion among the participants and F.A./F.B. (as resource persons).

V. PURPOSE OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS (45 minutes)

(a) Presentation. In plenary session, F.B. (as resource person) will describe some specific examples from experience using Workshops in Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda at various stages in the Project/Program Cycle.

(b) Discussion. Continuing in plenary session, T.R. (as facilitator) will moderate a discussion among the participants and F.A./F.B. (as resource persons).

Thursday (April 25, 1985)

VI. PROBLEM/CONSTRAINT PRIORITIES (Two Hours)

(a) Introduction. In plenary session, T.R. will introduce a different three-step Nominal Group Technique for this session.

(1) Each individual in each group will choose the ten problems/constraints identified by the group earlier which are, in his/her own opinion, the most difficult to solve/resolve and which have the most negative impact on implementation. Following each individual's private selection of ten, they will individually rank order the ten (1 = most difficult solve/negative impact; 10 = least of top ten difficult solve/negative impact) on index cards.

(ii) After each individual completes their entries on the cards, an arithmetic priority list will be calculated within the group as a whole (lowest total number = most difficult solve/negative impact; highest number -- with 11 entered for each problem listed by one or more group members for each time it is not entered by other group members -- = least difficult solve/negative impact).
(iii) Following arithmetic scoring for group list, members of each group as a whole will apply qualitative judgements to revise the lists and agree on final ten priorities using Negotiation Techniques.

(b) Group Exercises and Report Back (c) follow.

VII. **UTILITY OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS (30 minutes)**

(a) Presentation. In plenary session, F.B. (as resource person) will continue a description of the examples introduced earlier. Having described "purposes" earlier, he will give examples of "appropriateness" and indicate results.

VIII. **RISKS IN USING WORKSHOPS (one hour)**

(a) Introduction. In plenary, F.B. will ask the group to use the Brainstorming technique to identify risks in the use of Workshops during the phase assigned to them. That will be followed by Group Exercises (b); but there will be no reporting back after this session.

IX. **SOLUTION/RESOLUTION OF RISKS (One hour, 45 minutes)**

(a) Introduction. In plenary, F.A. will ask the group to again use a charting technique to identify solutions/resolutions to the risks identified earlier. This will be followed by Group Exercises (b) and Reporting Back (c).

X. **EXPERIENCE WITH RISKS (30 minutes)**

(a) Presentation. In plenary, F.B. (as a resource person) will respond to the previous two sessions by describing specific experiences in the use of Workshops in Indonesia, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, and Uganda (as appropriate).

XI. **UTILITY OF ACTION PLANNING WORKSHOPS (One hour, 45 minutes)**

(a) Introduction. In plenary, F.A. will ask participants to refer to the list of problems/constraints previously prepared by them and to identify, using the Brainstorming technique, which of them might be ameliorated -- at least in part -- by using workshops. Group exercises (b) will follow.
XII. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: IDENTIFYING ACTIVITIES (One Hour, 30 minutes)

(a) Presentation. In plenary, F.B. (as resource person) will give examples from actual experience illustrating some of the activities which are often overlooked when organizing Workshops (e.g., finance, appropriate approvals, venue, etc.) and the consequences.

(b) Introduction. In plenary, F.B. will ask participants, using the Brainstorming technique, to comprehensively identify the specific activities which must be performed in order to organize, conduct, and analyze the results of Workshops during the phase assigned to their group. Group exercises (c) will follow.

(c) Reporting Back, in plenary, will focus on the production of a second checklist listing each of these activities by each phase of the Project/Program cycle.

XIII. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: SEQUENCING ACTIVITIES (45 minutes)

(a) Introduction. In plenary, F.A. will ask the working groups to relist the activities identified in the previous exercise according to the sequence in which they should be performed; including consideration of which activities can be carried-out concurrently with others. Group exercises (b) will follow, but there will be no reporting back for this session.

XIV. PLANNING WORKSHOPS: RESPONSIBILITY CHARTING (One hour, 30 minutes)

(a) Introduction. While Working Groups complete the activities sequencing exercise, F.A. and F.B. will ask them to continue by assigning responsibility for each activity to the appropriate "institutions" (e.g., Borrower, Donor, Consultants, etc.) in terms of what should normally be the case (recognizing that on a case-by-case basis exceptions should be made).

(b) Reporting Back, in plenary, will focus on the production of a third checklist identifying who ought normally to be responsible for each activity by each phase of the Project/Program cycle.
LUNCH AND GUEST SPEAKER (One hour, 30 minutes)

A senior manager within the Bank should be selected to whom a participant representative will report about the workshop and who will respond briefly with some unprepared comments supporting the use of Workshops as reviewed in the training program.

XI. CONCLUSION (One hour)

(a) Presentation. In plenary session, F.A. will stress the fact that many different techniques are available for use during Action Planning Workshops of the type briefly introduced in these sessions. The choice of specific techniques depends on such things as purpose, time, available materials, skills of participants relative to degree of difficulty, role of the participants in their own organizations, cultural factors, and so forth. Reference will be made to the book "Systems Tools for Project Planning" which will have been provided to all participants.

(b) Discussion. An open discussion will be conducted on any issues raised by participants in the time remaining.

NOTE: A Workshop Evaluation Form will have been distributed to all participants during the first session (Wednesday morning). The completed forms will be returned at the end of the final discussion session on Friday afternoon.
ANNEX D
MANR
REORGANIZATION WORKSHOP
(27/2 - 3/3/84)

EVALUATION

I. What do you understand the purpose of the Workshop to have been?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

II. In my view, the Workshop:
   (check one)
   (a) !____! Fully achieved its objectives
   (b) !____! Partially achieved its objectives
   (c) !____! Did not achieve its objectives
   (d) !____! Made the achievement of its objectives more difficult than would have been the case if it had not been held

   III. If you marked either II (c) or II (d) above, please tell us why
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

   IV. By participating in this Workshop I have learned the following about the new MANR structure.
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
V. The Workshop (check one) has enlightened  

has not enlightened  

me about my role and functions in the MANR structure.

VI. I feel I still need more clarification on the following issues regarding the new MANR structure.

VII. Please indicate your opinion concerning the value of the exercises used for each of the following agenda items:  

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<td>(i) Staffing Requirements</td>
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### (j) Proxy Staff Roles

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### (k) Proximity Mapping

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VIII. I think that workshops (check one) do __ _1_ _

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usefully contribute to the Region's implementation planning function.

IX. Please use the space below for any additional comments you might wish to make.

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