Report of the CTA/ISNAR Workshop

How to Write a Convincing Proposal:
Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations and Resources Mobilization in Agricultural Research

The Hague, The Netherlands

JULY 22-27, 2002

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Some Comments from Participants

From the workshop on "How to Write a Convincing Proposal"
The Hague, Netherlands July 22-27, 2002

"This was a truly wonderful workshop. It lived up to my expectations, following my colleagues glowing reports after attending last years session. It was most impressed by the professionalism of the facilitators, their well-conceived approach to the topic, and the high quality of the materials and exercises used. Well done, and thank you "

"The exercise comparing writing to inform vs. writing to convince has been one of the most exciting, entertaining and useful of the course so far."

"I learned a lot about project titles, beneficiaries & salient components of a concept note."

"Having the representative from CTA as a resource person has been a "value added" to the course content. His comments are always timely and appropriate."

"ISNAR is very pro-active in responding to the suggestions and I admire the cordial manner of the faculty."

"This is the best cours have ever attended. It is one of the most useful ones, because it provides hand-on experiences from the participants. PAPA is a useful tool to follow up"

"Link up the natural scientists with the social scientists and compare with the commercial approaches of project proposal writing."

Preface

There was a time when national agricultural research systems (NARS) could count on sufficient funds fom their treasuries to undertake full research programs. Those days are gone almost everywhere. Transportation, energy, education, health, and many other sectors are clamoring for funds and competing with agriculture for increasingly scarce research funds.

At the same time, research is becoming more complex, requiring partnerships to assemble the necessary skills and facilities. The private sector is carving out large sections of the agricultural research landscape for its own, profit-seeking future.

In such a context, it is important for individual agricultural scientists and their organizations to find new sources of funds. Luckily, a number of international donors and investors are still willing to support research in developing countries. This training workshop was designed to help scientists and administrators of NARS learn how to access funds from these sources. It not only provided information and exercises to help participants learn the skills needed to write convincing research proposals, but also discussed such related topics as donor relations and resource mobilization in general.

Like other ISNAR training workshops, it included learning objectives for each day's activities, and descriptions of the training approach, methods, and techniques; the participants were also given evaluation sheets and a recommended bibliography. Material was gathered from many sources, which were acknowledged wherever possible.

We hope and expect such workshops to evolve and increase in response to the changing needs of NARS scientists and leaders as they struggle to fund the work of their organizations.

Acknowledgements

The workshop on How to Write a Convincing Proposal, which was held at ISNAR in The Hague from July 22 to 27, owes its success to the strong partnership between the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and ISNAR.

ISNAR gratefully acknowledge the CTA's sponsorship of 13 agricultural managers involved in research and rural development projects from Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) countries, who participated in the workshop.

ISNAR particularly wishes to thank Dr. Rodger Obubo, the CTA officer responsible for the ICM Skills and Systems Programme. Dr. Obubo assisted ISNAR throughout the planning and implementation of the workshop. His active participation in the group and plenary discussions also greatly enriched the event.

Special thanks also go to the main actors in this workshop, Dr. Simbarashe Sibanda, Professor in the Department of Animal Science, University of Zimbabwe, and Dr. Howard Elliott, Principal Research Officer, ISNAR, for their competent performance and constant devotion during the delivery of the workshop. Their excellent performance was recorded by the participants during the feedback session every day.

In addition, the support of Dr. Stein Bie, Director General, ISNAR, and Dr. Willem Janssen, Program Director, ISNAR, was highly appreciated by the participants and by the Learning Team. Their close interaction with the participants during the lunches, dinners, opening, and closing of the workshop motivated everyone and created a pleasant social environment.

I would also like to gratefully single out ISNAR's workshop coordinator, Ms. Jacobine Verhage, for her important role in the success of the workshop. She was always attentive and interested in responding to the needs of the participants. Her professional performance, commitment and dedication were very much appreciated

On behalf of everyone involved, I would also like to thank Ms. Cristina Sette for her assistance to the participants and for working long hours to compile and summarize the daily evaluation of the workshop. Many thanks, too, to Dr. Alvaro Moreno, who wrote the first draft of this report, and to the ISNAR Learning for Institutional Innovation team for the preparatory work for the event and production of the training materials, in particular to Ms. Mirela Zoita, Miss Mai-Britt Nielsen, Ms.Esther Absalom Greco (temporary workshop coordinator) and Mr. Ruperts Wanjala (temporary assistant). Thanks to Amin Kassam for editing the final version of this report.

Finally, this report would not have been possible without the work of the 23 participants during the workshop. ISNAR is very grateful to the participants, who are listed in Annex D of this report, comprising agricultural managers from 17 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas. Their efforts have ensured further development of their knowledge, attitudes and skills in proposal writing. In addition, they have taken home with them a solid action plan to facilitate the application of the newly developed skills in their organizations.

Zenete Peixoto França, Leader of Learning for Institutional Innovation Project , ISNAR

Executive Summary

Twenty-three agricultural researchers, research managers and support staff from 17 countries in Africa (11 countries), Asia (1), Europe (2) and the Americas (3), gathered in The Hague, Netherlands, from July 22 to 27, 2002 to participate in the workshop on How to Write a Convincing Proposal.

Overall, the workshop aimed to provide the participants with knowledge, attitudes and skills to:
- Design good projects and write convincing project proposals.
- Establish and maintain good donor relations.
- Help strengthen the project design and donor relations efforts within their organizations.

All these objectives were achieved, and the participants received adequate training and practice in all aspects of writing project proposals as outlined in Part III. The participants enjoyed the course and gave it a high rating (95% rated it "excellent" and 5% rated it "good").

During the six-day workshop, the ISNAR team of facilitators presented information and conducted group exercises designed to allow the participants to learn new approaches to writing project proposals, preparing budgets, and maintaining donor relations relevant to their research projects.

The workshop was designed to provide an interactive learning environment where brief presentations were followed by interactive exercises that contributed to the sharing of participants' experiences. It was a learner-centered approach involving active experience followed by a process of reviewing, reflecting, and applying what had been learned through the experience. This approach encouraged communication and group work.

An integral aspect of the workshop was the ultimate application of the skills learned by the participants in the work environment. The participant action plan approach (PAPA) was used to help participants consider specific applications of lessons learned during the training to their organizations. Participants committed themselves to action through a written plan developed at the end of the workshop. This action plan approach is expected to facilitate participants' efforts to transfer what they learned in the workshop to their jobs.

By the end of the six days, participants demonstrated that they had acquired the skills and knowledge to help them write convincing concept notes and proposals. In addition, important tools and strategies for establishing and maintaining good donor relations were thoroughly discussed by the participants, for putting into practice in their research organizations.

The present report summarizes the main elements of each day. The workshop days were divided into sessions on the basis of the theme being presented. Each session began with a brief presentation. A summary of the daily objectives and a sample of exercises, group results, participants' feedback and summary of the final evaluation is presented in the main part of this report. In addition, the list of participants and resource persons, workshop

schedule, exercise sheets, handouts, exercise results, and daily evaluations are included in the attachments at the end of the report.

PART I: Background and Overview of the Workshop

1 Background

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This training workshop on How to Write a Convincing Proposal for research managers, program leaders, fundraisers, and senior managers arose from a training needs assessment (TNA) exercise that involved 10 francophone countries in Africa. The TNA was sponsored by the African Development Bank. Proposal writing was considered the first priority by the TNA participants, who clearly expressed their need for ISNAR to enable them to successfully bid for more research funds through competitive grant schemes. The prospective funding sources include external donors such as USAID and the internal competitive grant schemes that have been set up within their countries

1.2 The International Service for National Agricultural Research

1.2.1 ISNAR – The International Service for National Agricultural Research seeks to contribute to the generation and use of knowledge that fosters sustainable and equitable agricultural development. ISNAR's mission is to help bring about innovation in agricultural research institutions to increase the contribution of research to agricultural development for the poor. ISNAR conducts its work on institutional innovation through the following six thematic areas of work: (1) Policies for institutional innovation for agricultural research, (2) Linking research organizations and stakeholders in a changing context, (3) Learning for institutional innovation, (4) Management of new technologies for agricultural research, (5) Building capacity to respond to cross-sector demands, and (6) Entrepreneurial partnerships to support agricultural research.

1.3 The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation

1.3.1 CTA – The Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation's tasks are to develop and provide services that improve access to information for agricultural and rural development, and to strengthen the capacity of ACO countries to produce, acquire, exchange and utilize information in this area. CTA's programmes are organized around four principal themes: developing information management and partnership strategies needs for policy formulation and implementation; promoting contact and exchange of experience; providing ACP partners with information on demand; and strengthening their information and communication capacities.

1.4 Workshop Partners: ISNAR & CTA

1.4.1 CTA and ISNAR have been working in partnership and sharing resources to promote capacity building in information and communications management (ICM) for several years. This partnership enables ISNAR to maximize the impact of capacity building among its agricultural partners in the ACP countries. ISNAR intends to continue working with CTA to strengthen the participation of agricultural professionals in the annual workshops on How to Write a Convincing Proposal in English, French and Spanish

2 Overview of the Training Workshop

2.1 Objectives, Structure and Approach of the Workshop

2.1.1 The course aimed to provide the participants with the skills and information to:
- Design good projects and write convincing project proposals.
- Establish and maintain good donor relations
- Help strengthen the project design and donor relations efforts of their organization.

2.1.2 The joint ISNAR-CTA training workshop was based on the ISNAR workshop on Writing Convincing Proposals, which was also designed to be delivered in six days. The workshop structure provided participants with opportunities to contribute while making the best use of the skills of the trainers who were leading the event. The format was one of instruction followed by participation. The program was varied and included formal presentations, discussions, small-group exercises, role-playing, and other types of group dynamics

2.1.3 This enabled a variety of activities to be practiced each day. An informal approach was adopted, with participants being encouraged to communicate with each other and with the workshop trainers. While the aim of the workshop was to enhance the participants' ability to write project proposals, it also improved their written and verbal communication skills and built up confidence. Every participant was involved in most of the above activities at least once. Selected participants also presented the daily review of the course. Each participant was awarded a certificate on completion of the course.

2.1.4 Training Approach. The training module provided trainers with the information, specific activities, and materials needed to plan and deliver a training program effectively. Because each trainer and each training situation is unique, planning is critical to the success of any program. The module encouraged participation and provided hands-on problem-solving experiences and exercises.

2.1.5 The workshop applied the experiential learning theory, which promotes active participation through the process of reviewing, reflecting on, and applying what has been learned through the training experience. Participatory methods keep the participants active in the learning process. The experiential and participatory approach was chosen to enhance effective skill transfer, to facilitate conceptual and attitudinal development, and to encourage appropriate changes in participants' behavior.

2.1.6 The role of the trainer/facilitator was to manage or guide the training process. The participants shared the responsibility for their learning with the trainer.

2.1.7 The participant action plan approach (PAPA) exercise was also carried out during the workshop. This is an integral part of the training process and contributes to motivating the participants to apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills learned during the workshop in their work environment. Participants committed themselves to implementing special actions identified throughout the workshop. The commitment was in the form of a written plan, the final version of which was developed at the end

of the workshop. Some examples of these action items are: "Conduct a seminar on how to write a convincing proposal; write concept note to colleague; conduct a clinic on how to write a budget; modify format for submitting research proposals; conduct a clinic on how to write a convincing proposal on sections; revise an HIV/AIDS proposal that is being sent to Bristol-Meyer in South Africa". The PAPA forms used during the workshop are presented in Annex 1a. A few months from now, ISNAR will send the participants a special questionnaire on the implementation of the actions. The participants will be asked which of their planned activities they have been able to implement, and which other new activities they have attempted as a result of attending the workshop. They will also be asked what effect their new activities have had on their work environment, and what problems, if any, they have encountered in trying them.

2.1.8 . Formative Evaluation. At the end of each day, the participants were asked to write down the strengths and weaknesses of the day. This process, called formative evaluation, gives participants the opportunity to share their individual assessments on the content and process of the event with the trainers and organizers. The individual assessments are compiled, analyzed, and reported to the participants the next day. This process contributes to the improvement of the workshop every day. The results of the daily formative evaluation are presented in Annexes that are referred to in the relevant parts of this report.

PART II: Content of the Workshop

3. Summary of Activities of Day 1

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 During the first day, the trainers introduced the workshop background and rationale, goals, general objectives, and expected outputs. The participants were given the opportunity to get to know each other and formulate their expectations of the workshop. In addition, they discussed the effects of the current funding crisis on agricultural research, with particular emphasis on Africa, and gained awareness of how important it is for scientists to develop skills in writing successful proposals

3.2 Interactive Exercise

3.2.1 The interactive exercise (Annexes 1b and 1c) enabled the participants to get acquainted with one another and facilitated their participation. The exercise also encouraged the participants to (a) conduct a self-analysis of their feelings and behavior with regard to writing proposals and dealing with the donor community, and (b) express their expectations of the six-day workshop.

3.2.2 Different statements to be completed by the participants related to (1) feelings, for example, of liking or dislike for oneself, or for things and situations; and of self-disappointment, irritation, happiness, cheer, etc. (2) perceptions of why peers and subordinates like or dislike the participant, etc.

3.2.3 The results of this exercise were very encouraging. The participants sincerely expressed their feelings and perceptions about their knowledge, attitudes, skills, and experience in writing proposals and dealing with donors. This session set the stage for the entire workshop, which required self-analysis, identification, and acceptance of personal shortcomings in terms of knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

3.2.4 To illustrate, during the first part of this exercise, statements such as the following were distributed to participants: (a) "I am sure I could do a better job in preparing research proposals if: ……………," which elicited responses such as, "I am able to sharpen my writing skills". (b) "As a researcher, if I were to describe myself in one sentence, I would say: ....," which produced answers such as, "I am a person who believes that people can get out from poverty through a proper education."

3.2.5 The second part of the interactive exercise aimed at assessing the participants' expectations of the workshop. The main expectations related to improving the ability to organize ideas and use them to write a proposal. For example, participants said: (a)"To enhance my capacity on major issues concerning research proposal donor funding and impact of research for scrutiny / Donor community," (b)"To learn how to organize my ideas when writing."

3.3   Funding for Agricultural Research: The Need for Scientists to Become Proposal Writers and Fundraisers

3.3.1   This session consisted of an exercise to explore the need for scientist to develop proposal-writing skills

3.3.2   The participants were divided into four small groups and each group was asked to discuss the following questions related to (a) the knowledge and skills scientists need to develop and write a convincing proposal, (b) fundraising roles and responsibilities of individual NARS scientists, (c) fundraising roles and responsibilities NARS management, and (d) how a fundraising plan relates to a strategic plan and the five key elements of any fundraising plan.

3.3.3   The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 2a and 2b. The main points raised in each group discussion were: Group A raised points such as knowledge on reporting, consumers and the logframe (objectives, workplan, budgets). Group B emphasized the identification of donors and government policies and facilitation of participation by other scientists; Group C brought up the facilitator's role in ensuring that scientists are on the right track and able to write proposals in a conducive environment, and the management's responsibility to encourage scientists to write good proposals. Group D raised the key elements on fundraising, such as finance, communication, and stakeholder support..

3.4   Evaluation of Day 1.

3.4.1.   The complete results of this evaluation are presented in Annex 2c. Some strengths of Day 1 related to the (a) usefulness and relevance of the content (this was mentioned 12 times) and (b) excellent facilitation and enthusiasm of the trainers (this was mentioned nine times). The main weakness of Day 1 was the short time allowed for the exercises (that was mentioned 10 times). Asked how the workshop could be improved, the participants asked for more time for the exercises (this was mentioned six times). The participants were also very appreciative of the overall process of the workshop, with comments such as, "Maintain the mode of operation" and "Congratulations, excellent work!"

4. Summary of Activities, Day 2

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 The activities of Day 2 related to international donor offices and staffing, problems that arise in submitting research proposals; the importance of partnership in research, and the key elements that make up a project.

4.1.2 The day started with a summary of the previous day's activities by one of the participants, followed by a summary on the group's evaluation of Day 1. This activity, which was carried out every day, enabled participants and trainers to track the progress of the workshop.

4.1.3 The participants then focused on "Types of Donors," which had been moved from the first day to give participants extra time to continue group discussions and analysis. This session included practical tips on how to use the Internet to find information on funding sources and an exercise to identify the person(s) responsible for maintaining donor relations in each NARI

4.1.4 A general overview of the types of donors or "investors," including a summary of their mechanisms and funding parameters, was presented. Some issues of policymaking and ethical concerns were raised and discussed by the group during a plenary session.

4.1.5 Participants gained a good understanding of the need to get to know their donors and of the importance of developing a good fundraising plan and obtaining information on funding sources

4.1.6 The day continued with activities to define the importance of partnerships in fundraising and research, and discussion of important guidelines on working with partners.

4.1.7 A visitor from IFAD gave a brief presentation on the Fund's criteria for grant allocation. This was followed by a presentation and group discussion on the elements of good project proposal in which the importance of linking development objectives with research objectives was analyzed.

4.2 Standardization of Vocabulary and Concepts

4.2.1 During this session the participants were given an understanding and definitions of the different terms used in project development and fundraising plans.

4.2.2 The differences between bilateral and multilateral donors were explained, and the way private foundations and international funding institutions operate was outlined.

4.2.3 The participants were also given an understanding of the different types of funding and the importance of public awareness activities and donor relations.

4.2.4   An exercise on assessing institutional fundraising performance was carried out by the participants. The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 3a and 3b.

4.2.5   In the exercise, four small groups were formed to discuss, summarize and report to the plenary on: (a) the advantages and disadvantages of obtaining funds from bilateral, multilateral, and private-sector donors, (b) accounts of successful and unsuccessful "interaction with donors, (c) non-science-related factors that were responsible for success or failure in obtaining funds, and (d) strong recommendations on how to ensure success in raising funds.

4.2.6   Group A found limited resources and lack of investment capital disadvantages of private-sector donors such as the Rockefeller Foundation. They also pinpointed the difficulties caused by very complicated procedures to access funds from multilateral donors such as the World Bank. On the positive side, Group A found private-sector donors less bureaucratic and multilateral ones a good source of investment capital. As an example of success, Group A cited a World Bank grant of $90 million (you need to say to which country and for what). As an example of failure, Group A pointed to poor financial management (in which project and where?). The group identified many non-science factors influencing fundraising, two of which were the image of the organization and the personal reputation of the individuals directly involved. The group made two recommendations for ensuring success: "write convincing proposals" and "meeting donor conditions."

4.2.7   Group B identified the World Bank, ADB, DGIS and IFAD as main investors. One of the advantages of bilateral donors raised by the group was the "one-to-one" relationship. However, there was also a disadvantage: "strings linked." Private-sector donors were found to have financial flexibility, but their funds had the disadvantage of being hard to get. "Why do chickens die?" was an example of success cited by Group B (you need to say what and where the project was). Failure was typified by negotiations with donors (in which project, where?). Among non-science factors responsible for success, Group B cited inclusion of females and younger researchers in the project. The group recommended recognizing the value of "keeping your comparative advantage" as a way of ensuring success.

4.2.8   Group C found that private-sector donors could generate some ethical concerns and had a narrow scope, but their specialization and lower level of bureaucracy could be advantages. The group identified strong communication skills of the project manager as an important factor in a successful relationship with the donor. The group recommended drawing up an organizational profile, demonstrating research impact, and keeping updated on funding trends as ways of maintaining relationships with donors and ensuring success in fundraising.

4.2.9   Group D found that private donor could generate some ethical concerns, narrow scope but also could have specialized scope and be less bureaucratic. In accordance to Group D, strong communication skills of the project manager allows for a successful relationship with the donor. For a strong recommendations, Group D pointed the organization's profile, demonstrating research impact and keep updated on funding, trends   maintain   relationships

4.3   All about Donors

4.3.1   This session enabled the participants to gain a better understanding of the way donors work and of the current trends in funding.

4.3.2   A group exercise and discussion followed information presented in a brief lecture. It became clear that there are fundamental differences between the main donors, based on historical factors as well as cultural trends. The participants analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of NARIs' fundraising programs, , stressing the importance of donor relations, as well as the need for public awareness about the activities of the NARIs.

4.3.3   In an exercise on how well institutes manage donor relations, the participants formed four groups to discuss questions assigned to each group. After the groups interacted through the dynamic process of a "trip around the tables," the rapporteurs presented their conclusions to the audience. The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 4a and 4 b.

4.3.4   The questions enabled participants to analyze several themes relevant to the management of donor relations at the institutional level. These themes related, for example, to the strengths and weaknesses in the performance of NARS officers currently responsible for donor relations; open proposal reviews in institutes; major advantages and disadvantages of a proposal review; and NARS public awareness office and PR mechanisms (brochure, annual report, and logo).

4.3.5   The results of this exercise were as follows: Group A said that the staff responsible for donor relations were basically the Director General, Executive Director, Fundraising Director and program leaders. The group saw more weaknesses than strengths in the maintenance of donor relations in the context of this situation, citing, for example, "no clear role of donor relation" and "no qualified human resource."

4.3.6   Group B discussed the issue of an open proposal review and found that the quality of the proposal would be improved by including other perspectives. The disadvantage, however, was the possibility of unnecessary competition.

4.3.7   On the issue of public awareness activities, Group C believed that "most organizations will have someone to do the functions of a public awareness officer, could be designated officer or additional responsibility given to a researcher. If donors know what you are doing is in the interest of the public domain, they identify with you and give support."

4.3.8   On communication between NARS and farmers, Group D said farmers' groups pay attention to NARS speeches and thus there is effective communication. However, gender issues and strong traditions can undermine such communication.

4.4   All about Partners

4.4.1   During this session the participants were able to discuss the importance of partnerships in research and to analyze the ICLARM policy on partnerships in research and related activities. Interactive group exercises stimulated discussion about the advantages of formulating a policy on partnership in the agricultural research organization, and about some of the advantages and disadvantages of working in partnership with other organizations.

4.4.2   An exercise on the importance of partnerships was carried out by the participants. On the basis of a handout on ICLARM's Policy on Partnerships in Research and Related Activities (see Annexes 5a and 5b) participants were asked to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of formulating policies on partnerships and to assess their own experience. Finally, the participants were invited to discuss and decide on elements (such as principles, criteria for selection of partners, etc) that would help the organizations to develop effective partnerships.

4.4.3   The groups identified several major advantages of formulating partnership policies: protection of the interests of the institution and of researchers; cost-effectiveness, leading to better results and faster adaptation; and clarity and definition.

4.4.4   The disadvantages were that partnership policies may be inflexible/inhibitive and may not necessarily meet the needs of donors and/or stakeholders.

4.4.5   The elements that could determine the success or failure of an organization in developing effective partnerships were identified as the criteria for selecting partners and the mechanisms for establishing and maintaining partnerships. These results are presented in Annex 5b

4.5   All about Projects

4.5.1   In this session the participants discussed the key elements that make up a project and identified good project principles and skills. The participants analyzed what NARS management can do to support the development of good projects, and were given an understanding of the project design principles required to write a successful project proposal.

4.5.2   An exercise on good project principles was carried out. Participants were invited to form small groups to reflect on the eight project principles presented by the trainers and decide those in which their organizations were strong and those in which they needed improvement. The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 6a and 6b.

4.5.3   Among several strengths, development of partnerships was cited as the most important.

4.6   Evaluation of the Day 2.

4.6.1. In evaluating of Day 2, the participants listed a number of strengths. These included the description of the plenary session led by the IFAD agent as very positive, relevant and useful. The participants found it a good idea to invite the agent of a donor agency to give practical, good information (this was mentioned seven times). They also found information about the donor agency on the Internet highly beneficial. The participants said they had increased their understanding of donors and the relationship with donors (this was mentioned seven times).

4.6.2   The main weakness of Day 2 identified by the participants was the arrangements at the cafeteria, specifically a delay at lunchtime and time constraints (this was mentioned eight times). The participants made very useful suggestions to improve the workshop, among which were the inclusion of more practical situations and case analysis. They expressed their appreciation of the workshop with comments such as, "The workshop is going very well" and "Congratulations! This day was much better than yesterday!" The complete results of the evaluation of Day 2 are presented in Annex 6c.

5. Summary of Activities, Day 3

5.1 Overview

5.1.1 During the third day, the workshop focused on identifying project topics that would be attractive to donors. Through a role-playing exercise, participants were able to experience the kind of questions asked by donors and to identify the characteristics that donors look for in a project proposal.

5.1.2 Advice on writing, , such as the use of simple language, and active instead of passive voice, was put into practice. Participants were able to identify the differences between documents written to inform and documents written to persuade. The importance of passion and emotive language was stressed.

5.1.3 The day started with a summary of the previous day's activities by one of the participants, followed by a summary of the group's evaluation of Day 1

5.2 Picking the Right Topics

5.2.1 Next came a session on identifying the types of topics that would be attractive to international donors.

5.2.2 Six criteria were suggested for analyzing topics. They should be: (1) sufficiently important to be worth doing; (2) internally approved by the NARS management; (3) useful and viewed as a priority by the project beneficiaries; (4) "manageable," i.e. have a reasonable chance of achieving results within a limited amount of time, with a reasonable quantity of available inputs; (5) have the right balance of risk and return; (6) attract research partners that have a comparative advantage to carry out the project.

5.2.3 The most important components of a project were also discussed, in order to understand what makes a project manageable and to weigh the balance between risk and return in a project. The participants were then asked to do an exercise on identifying project topics of potential interest, which is presented in Annexes 7a and 7b.

5.2.4 The exercise was carried out by four small groups who played the role of donors. They were asked to select two topics that would be most likely to attract the interest and funding of an external donor. Each group reported to the plenary, listing at least three criteria used to make their selection. The complete results of this exercise are presented in the Annex 7b.

5.2.5 The groups selected the following topics: (1) Developing a program in your NARS to address HIV/AIDS – because the problem is important, the beneficiary is a priority and there is the right balance risk/return; (2) Building 1000 schools in poorest areas of Cameroon – because there is the right balance risk/return, it is very manageable and the beneficiary is a priority; and (3) Training on writing proposals – because there is a low risk and high return.

5.3 General Writing Tips

5.3.1 This session was composed of two exercises (individual and in pairs), which enabled the participants to review their knowledge of and discuss and apply simple rules about writing. In plenary, the trainers guided a discussion, participants were given several texts to analyze and eliminate unnecessary words and phrases, in order to understand the importance of the use of simple language in project proposals. The exercises are presented in Annexes 8a and 8b.

5.4. Writing to Inform, Writing to Persuade

5.4.1 In this session the participants analyzed and discussed the differences between writing to inform and writing to persuade. A brief presentation explained the importance of writing while keeping in mind the self-interest of the reader.

5.4.2 The session was composed of two exercises on writing with passion and the difference between active and passive sentences, followed by a group discussion which facilitated sharing of the individual exercises. The exercises and their results are presented in Annexes 9a, 9b and 9c.

5.5 Evaluation of Day 3.

5.5.1 The evaluation of Day 3 identified a number of strengths. Among these were that the participants had clearly understood the sessions, especially the one on differences between writing to inform and writing to persuade (this was mentioned nine times). The participants also described the content as very useful, relevant and interesting (mentioned six times).

5.5.2 In addition, the participants appreciated the timekeeping/management, with some considering it excellent. The main weakness of Day 3 related to time allocation/workload. The participants found the day too long. Among the suggestions for improvement was more time for exercises and clarification of some group discussion questions. Finally, the participants made encouraging comments such as: "So far so good, keep it up; good work; going very well so far" The complete results of the evaluation of Day 3 are presented in Annex 9d.

6.   Summary of Activities, Day 4

6.1   Overview

6.1.1   The main focus of the day was on writing a good concept note. Eight steps for the production of a concept note were presented, and through interactive exercises, the participants had the opportunity to practice writing the different components of the concept note, including *SMART* objectives

6.1.2   Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of writing proposal titles that would attract the attention of donors. The participants practiced creative title writing, using several fictitious proposals from "Rainbow Land" for the purpose.

6.1.3   The features of a concept note and proposal reviews were presented and analyzed through a role-playing exercise. The processes of internal reviews and peer reviews were emphasized and the participants discussed the importance of these reviews.

6.1.4   The day started with a summary of the previous day's activities by one of the participants, followed by a summary of the group's evaluation of Day 3.

6.2   How to Prepare a Concept Note

6.2.1   During this session, the participants discussed the eight steps involved in preparing a concept note; identified the key parts of a concept note; prepared objectives for a concept note; identified the beneficiaries and impacts of a project; and were given advice on how to write a good background section, which they put into practice.

6.2.3.   Three exercises enabled the participants to discuss the eight steps involved in preparing a concept note and to identify its key parts. They were given six proposals from fictitious places, on the basis of which they learnt how to prepare objectives for a concept note and identify the beneficiaries and impacts of a project.

6.2.4   The first exercise aimed to develop skills in writing clear, measurable, and realistic objectives. The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 10a and 10b.

6.2.5   The participants were divided into three groups. Two project examples from the Rainbow Lands (a set of six fictitious geographical areas with particular project needs) were assigned to each group for analysis and identification of the best-written objectives. The participants had to provide justification for their choices. In addition, they were asked to improve the objectives in the better of the two project descriptions, making them as clear, measurable, and realistic as possible.

6.2.6   For example Group A considered the best-written objectives to be those in the "Blue Land Project: Transmission of African cassava mosaic virus," because it had a clear link to outputs, and was specific/straightforward, measurable, and achievable. The overall goal was to enhance food security by improving control of ACMV (African cassava mosaic virus) insect transmission on cassava, a staple crop of the Southern Coast. The complete answers to this exercise are presented in Annex 10b.

6.2.7   In the next exercise, the same three groups had to identify the beneficiaries and expected impacts of the project, and write a good background section. They listed anticipated impacts, defined how the impacts would be measured, and gave three suggestions on how these components could be strengthened in the proposals. The exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 10c and 10d.

6.2.8   Another project example was then used for content analysis and repackaging of the information under two headings: "the problem and why it is urgent" and "what has already been done."

6.2.9   For example, the group that worked on the Blue Land Project considered the small holders and cassava consumers to be the primary beneficiaries and the Government and plant protection agencies to be the secondary beneficiaries. The anticipated impacts were poverty alleviation and employment in cottage industries processing cassava.

6.2.10 The third exercise focused on writing project titles that would catch a donor's attention and make the project seem more attractive to read and fund. This exercise and its results are presented in Annexes 10e and 10f.

6.2.11 The "colon trick" was suggested to make titles both catchy (first part, before the colon) and informative.

6.2.12 A number of catchy titles were developed by the participants during the session. For example, the "Green Land Project" was modified to "Green Land is the future: Putting technologies for transforming eroded grazing land to increase productivity" and "More rice on the table: Improve rice production systems for poor farmers." (Does the original say "improve" or "improving"?)

6.2.13 The Brown Land Project title became "Solution to red tide bloom in Brown Land: Isolation and purification of saxitoxin-binding protein" and "Frogs to the rescue of red tide victims: Survey, isolation and purification of saxitoxin from marine organism."

6.2.14 The Blue Land Project new title was rewritten as "Guilty or not guilty? Transmission of the African cassava mosaic virus by bemisia hancocki (white fly)" and "Who killed cassava? Is bemisia hancocki a vector for African cassava mosaic virus (ACMV)?"

6.2.15 The Grey Land Project options were "Saving our soil heritage: Evaluation of pitting technology for renovation, revegetation and increased productivity" and "Pitting Technology and Eroded Grasslands."

6.2.16 The new Pink Land Project title choices were "Disease-free potatoes: Developing a viable system of producing free seed tubers" and "Healthy potatoes for healthy people: Development of technologies for certified potato seed tubers."

6.2.17 Finally, the White Land project title became "Coconut Havors: Evaluating the adaptability of selected essence cultivars under coconut canopies" and "Cultivation under coconut: Effect of canopy shade and nitrogen fertilization rate on yield and quality of essence". Additional information on the results of this exercise is presented in Annex 10f.

6.3   Reviewing the Concept Note and Proposal

6.3.1   After a brief presentation to explain the value of open reviews, the participants engaged in role-playing that enabled them to identify the purpose and possible outcomes of a concept note or proposal review and to practice some skills required to explain and defend their proposals during a review. For this exercise (see Annex 11a) the participants formed three groups.

6.3.2   The results, which were presented orally, were very encouraging. The participants provided positive feedback on the learning strategy

6.4   Evaluation of Day 4.

6.4.1   The strengths listed in the evaluation of Day 4 included the content, the relevance of the topics, and the information on how to write concept notes, all of which were described by the participants as very useful and "very aspiring" (mentioned 12 times). The "role-playing" exercise on concept note review was labeled "one of the best" (it was mentioned seven times).

6.4.2   A few participants found the day too long. The suggestions for improvement included some interesting comments, such as "ISNAR is very proactive in responding to the suggestions and I admire the cordial manner of the faculty" or "I wish all the exercises are like what we have today." The complete results of the evaluation of Day 4 are presented in Annex 11b.

7. Summary of Activities, Day 5

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 Three main themes were analyzed and discussed: How to write proposals for donors, the use of the Logical Framework as a tool for writing proposals, and how to write budgets for research proposals. The importance of prioritizing the order in which the different components of a proposal are presented was highlighted, as was the importance of setting "milestones" in a calendar of activities to help monitor the progress of the project.

7.1.2 The use of the "logframe" as a program planning tool was reviewed and practiced in the context of proposal writing. Finally, the importance of writing appropriate budgets was demonstrated through group exercises and a lively discussion on the rules for good budgeting.

7.1.3 The day started with a summary of the previous day's activities by one of the participants, followed by a summary of the group's evaluation of Day 4.

7.2 Writing Proposals

7.2.1 The key steps for writing proposals were presented and discussed in this session. A group exercise related to writing up activities and milestones was carried out, using several examples of project activities. The exercise and the participants' responses are presented in Annexes 12a and 12b.

7.3 Logical Framework for a Research Project

7.3.1 The trainer outlined the importance of using the logical framework approach to break down the project objectives into specific objectives and to establish links between activities, the objective, and the goal.

7.3.2 The participants then engaged in a group exercise to facilitate the analysis and discussion on establishing these links in a project. A sample of logframe and possible answers for phases 1 and 2 of the exercise are given in Annexes 13a and 13b

7.4   How to Prepare Proposal Budgets

7.4.1   During this session the participants discussed pointers on preparing good proposal budgets and identified formats that facilitate the presentation of clear and transparent budgets. Using the sample proposals from "Rainbow Lands," they worked in small groups to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of several budgets. They also analyzed and discussed different budget guidelines and then produced an improved version of the original budget.

7.4 .2   The participants discussed the importance of minimum budget requirements. The message was that every proposal, no matter how small the project, should have at least one summary budget. This should include the following elements: a title; currency denomination; degree of rounding; totals for each year and each line item; a grand total; footnotes for each line item; all costs that will not be requested from the donor – including partners' costs and all contributions (even in-kind contributions).

7.4.3   In the exercise (see Annexes 14a and 14b) the participants worked in four groups to analyze and improve proposal budgets on the basis of the minimum budget requirements listed above. Group A, for example, looked at Green Land and found the inclusion of partners as one of the strengths of its budget. Group B found the following weaknesses: the budget overhead was not included, the budget was uniform throughout, there were no footnotes (explanations) and the title was not appropriate. The participants also gave some suggestions for improvement of the budgets: inclusion of administrative costs; improvement of the title ("summary budget"); and provision for communication costs..

7.5   Evaluation of Day 5.

7.5.1   There was no evaluation at the end of Day 5 because there was going to be a thorough evaluation of the entire workshop on Day 6.

7.6   Farewell Dinner at Le Strasbourg Restaurant

7.6.1   The participants were invited to a dinner to celebrate their excellent work and to say good bye. The ISNAR Director General , the CTA officer, the trainers, and the ISNAR Learning Team joined the participants. Speeches given by the Director General and a representative of the participants were very encouraging and contributed   to   the   general   atmosphere   of   bonhomie.

8. Summary of Activities, Day 6

8.1 Overview

8.1.1 The participants were able to develop a good understanding of how to write a summary of a research proposal, and how to write a covering letter. An example of a covering letter was provided to the participants to facilitate analysis and discussion of its components. The trainers gave some pointers on writing these documents.

8.1.2 The participants discussed the strengths and weaknesses of their institution's donor relations strategies and gave suggestions on how to maintain good donor relations. The trainers pointed out (a) the importance of submitting an adequate report to donors, (b) presenting a clear plan to monitor and evaluate the projects, and (c) how to maintain good donor relations.

8.1.3 The day started with a summary of the previous day by one of the participants.

8.2 Preparing the Executive Summary

8.2.1 The executive summary outlines what the proposal is all about. It is a vital selling tool for the project, since it comes first in the presentation. It may also be the only part that some people ever read. Although it comes first, it cannot be written until all the other sections of the proposal are complete. After a brief presentation of these points by the facilitators, the participants used the "White Land" proposal to practice the preparation of a good executive summary.

8.2.2 During the discussion that followed, the participants learnt that they should take great care with the wording of an executive summary, refer to all other sections of the proposal, and be very brief. A maximum length of two pages was laid down, with the participants being told that one page would be even better.

8.2.3 The trainers provided the participants with an outline of an executive summary for any type of proposal. The participants were then invited individually to use the outline to write an executive summary of a project proposal titled "Sweet Smells and Tangy Tastes: Reviving the essential oil industry in White Land's coconut areas." This exercise and a possible executive summary are presented in Annexes 15a and 15b.

8.3   Submitting and Following up Project Proposals

8.3.1   This session allowed participants to practice preparing a good covering letter. Working in pairs, they assessed their institution's strengths and weaknesses in following up submitted proposals and suggested some actions to improve the situation.

8.3.2   The trainers gave some pointers about writing a good covering letter. The most important one was to write the letter with the reader in mind.

8.3.3   Additional tips given by the trainers were: The participants should (1) refer to the donor's interests and related projects; (2) if possible, show how the proposed project builds on work that has been funded by the donor; (3) refer to any previous interaction with the person to whom the letter is addressed; (4) highlight the importance and urgency of the problem; (5) explain how eager the scientists, their partners, and the beneficiaries are to have the project start soon.

8.3.4   The participants should conclude with a sentence that would leave the door open for them to follow up the proposal later, For example: "If we have not heard from you by next month, we propose to contact you by phone to get your impressions and suggestions on how the proposal could be improved." This exercise and an example of a good covering letter are presented in Annexes 16a and 16b.

8.3.5   Another important bit of advice was that once the proposal had been submitted, the researchers should be patient because the reply would normally take weeks, if not months.

8.3.6   The value of a donor relations office in sustaining this process was discussed. The process of tracking, negotiating and revising proposals is time consuming. If the participants' institutes are going to be heavily involved in seeking external funding through proposals, it makes sense to have a specially constituted office to coordinate the effort. The tasks of such an office would include seeking, recording, and disseminating donor intelligence, tracking all projects through the development cycle, keeping files on each project under development, recording the outcomes of concept and proposal reviews, and advising scientists and administrators of donor opportunities, changes, and information

8.4   How to maintain good donor relations

8.4.1   This session had three themes: (1) *negotiating with donors, (2) the importance of monitoring and evaluation, and (3) how to write a good report.*

8.4.2   The session was led by the participants. Divided into three groups, they had been asked to prepare and make brief presentations on the above themes. The exercise is presented in Annex 17a.

8.4.3   One of the important points made was that the relationship with the donor should be viewed as a long-term one in which the donor learns more and more about the researchers' work and becomes a steady, long-term supporter, providing multiple

grants over a period of time. Achieving this requires constant attention to the relationship. It requires time, effort, and imagination.

8.4.3 The most important thing is to recognize that the relationship does not end with the submission of the proposal. This in fact, is where the relationship really begins! The first step comes with the negotiation process. It is important to conduct negotiations in a friendly and open manner, recognizing the limitations under which the donor is operating and trying to see matters from both points of view. A satisfactory negotiation over the first proposal to a donor is a fine basis for building a long-term relationship.

8.4.4 Some suggestions for successful negotiations with donors were made and discussed thoroughly. These included ensuring that the organization always speaks with one voice. If a donor is likely to meet with several people in a NARS on different occasions, all those people need to know the "party line" on each project. A team should be designated for each project negotiation and care should be taken to ensure that each person plays his/her role.

8.4.5 The participants discussed some useful tips for monitoring and evaluating their own projects. They decided that openness, transparency, and sharing of results, even if they are other than expected, are most important for this.

8.5 PAPA

8.5.1 The aim of this final session of the workshop was to gather information on how each participant planned to implement an action relating to writing successful proposals in his/her institution. .

8.5.2 With the help of a handout and ideas they had jotted down during the course of the workshop, the participants shared some of the actions to be implemented "within two months", "after two months", or "as the opportunity arises." With this time frame as a guideline, the participants then set clear deadlines for the various stages of implementation. The facilitators committed themselves to doing a follow-up with each institution in order to support the implementation of the actions. Annex 18a presents five actions listed by a participant. These actions will be followed up in few months' time as described in the introduction to this report.

PART III: Major Conclusions and Workshop Evaluation

9.   Conclusions and Workshop Evaluation

9.1. Conclusions

9.1.1 A common concern to build capacity among agricultural managers involved in research and rural development underlies the ISNAR/CTA partnership to conduct the six-day training workshop on How to Write a Convincing Proposal" at ISNAR from July 22-27, 2002.

9.1.2 CTA, which has a mandate to help strengthen agricultural information capacity in the ACP countries, was approached by ISNAR to help increase the number of participants in the workshop. CTA also contributed a trainer to the workshop.

9.1.3 With increasing competition for scarce research and development funding, it is vital for agricultural professionals to design projects that can attract external funding.

9.1.4 The major objective of the training workshop was to provide an opportunity for the participants to review the necessary steps of project design and strengthen their ability to write up projects in a way that would convince donors to fund them.

9.1.5 The workshop achieved its major objectives. Participants felt that it had strengthened their overall capacity to mobilize resources, and had transferred practices and procedures that would help them to improve and coordinate fundraising, create good donor relations, and develop strong and fundable research and development programs.

9.2 Workshop Evaluation

9.2.1 The evaluation below shows that the workshop was generally rated as excellent and that 95% of the participants felt the objectives had been achieved.

9.2.2 The evaluation also shows that the content, process, performance of trainers and facilitators, the facilities and the overall organization of the event met the participants' expectations and needs.

Workshop Evaluation

General rate of the workshop

Good
23%

Excellent
77%
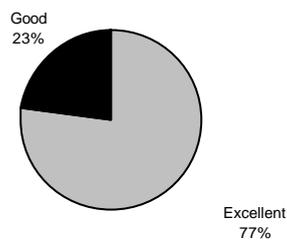
Were the workshop objectives achieved

Partially
5%

Yes
95%
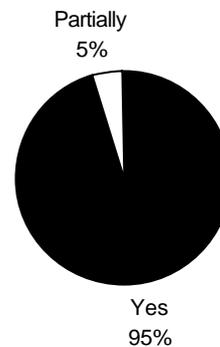
(22 people filled in and returned the questionnaire)

Specific objectives

4.8	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.3	4.2	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.5	4.2	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.9	4.4	4.3	4.4

Scoring rate

The scale ranges from 1 (the objective has not been achieved), to 5 (the objective has been achieved)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18
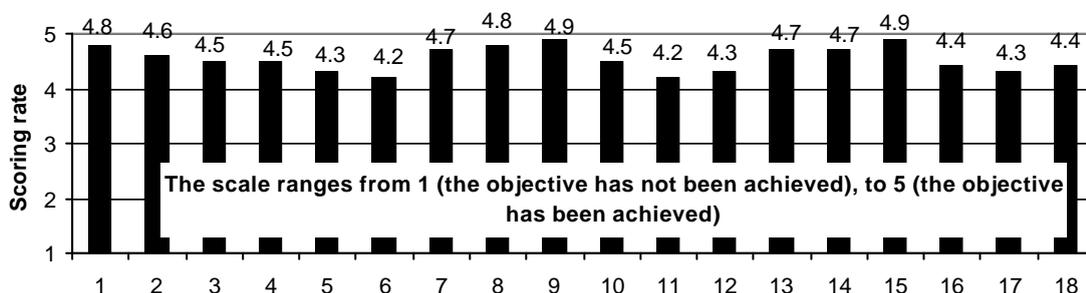
Objectives:
1. Identify the information and skills needed to write a good research proposal
2. Discuss major benefits from learning to design good projects and write them up in good proposals
3. Define terms used in project development fund-raising
4. Explain where you can get information about donor goals and objectives
5. Plan actions to be implemented to improve donor relations in your place of work
6. Discuss the advantages of formatting a policy on partnerships in research and related activities
7. Discuss the key elements that make up a project

8. Discuss the difference between writing to inform and writing to persuade
9. Discuss the 8 steps involved in preparing concept note
10. Identify the beneficiaries and impacts of a proposal
11. Demonstrate how to use the logical framework in the research project planning process
12. Discuss the concepts of evaluation and milestones
13. Describe the qualities of a good budget
14. Prepare the executive summary of a proposal
15. Prepare a good covering letter
16. Explain the value of a donor relation office
17. Explain the importance of monitoring and evaluation of projects
18. Plan actions for future activities related to writing convincing proposals

Strengths of the How to Write a Convincing Proposal Workshop

Logistical arrangements

Well organized workshop, useful and educative (2)[*]
Facilities and logistical support are very efficient (2)
Resourceful facilitation/support by ISNAR and resource persons
Workshop environment was conductive to learning
Atmosphere was very good.

Interaction/participation

Experienced researchers and participants with lively inputs and interaction (2)
Group exercises were very good and interactive (2)
The interaction between project managers (participants) and get to share our experiences in a suitable learning environment that promotes participation (2)
Participants interacted freely (2)
Full participation of participants – facilitators fully informed with the significant roles
Changing group composition to share personal experiences of almost all participants
The feedback of workshop proceedings from participants and trainees
The re-information of the presentations with group and individual work and presentation – interactive
Learning by doing approach – this is acquired through report and role and plenary sessions (2)

Trainers/Facilitators

The training techniques were varied and this kept the participants involved and stimulating (3)
Determination of all the people running the workshop and their high degree and dedication and professionalism (3)
Knowledgeable, competent and cordial faculty and facilitators of the workshop (3)
Presentation of the workshop material was very good
Balancing of lecture and group discussions excellent
Very experienced facilitators with good teaching skills and proposal writing (4)
Punctuality excellent – even if difficult to keep (2)
Preparation of concept note was excellent
Major strength: Approach to learning that contains balance between presentations and exercises. Liked very much the facilitators giving feedback to participants each morning. Also appreciated that facilitators learned our names

Material/Content

Good and well written training materials, which are very relevant (8)
Contents of the material covered by the workshop are very useful and interactive
Excellent methodology
Useful reading materials/well prepared and enabling training environment (5)
Liked examples used and were very useful as experiences. Good lessons learned
Relevant and timely topic/training – writing a convincing research proposal (2)
Excellent mix of exercises, particularly those that included the examples of project proposals from rainbow land

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[*] The number between brackets indicates how often the participants have written similar remarks.

Inclusion of entire process, from fund-raising strategy through donor intelligence, partnerships, concept note, log frames all the way to evaluation

Miscellaneous

The opportunity to replicate this course in my own setting because I have been provided not only with the tools and developed skills, but also because I carry with me all the pertinent teaching materials (2)

Weaknesses of the How to Write a Convincing Proposal Workshop

Time allocation

Short time is given to the exercises (2)
Time limitation (4)
Too little free time, intensity is good, but need a break at least one afternoon - Participants had no time to even visit the city (2)
Occasionally pressed for time, but process was well managed – good improvisation (2)
Very long working days (2)
Would suggest a 2-3 days addition to the duration of the training with a day break in between (2)
The length of the workshop was short – 3 weeks is ideal
The logical framework required more time

Materials/content

Some of the exercise questions need to be improved for clarity
Some activities need fine tuning
Perhaps reduce the "language sets" aspect of writing in order to increase work/exercises on logframes
Topics like the logframe and M & E need a little bit more time and in-depth analysis
I wish the clinic component of the course had been included
Absence of an exercise on preparing a CN and proposal on the cause
Could we open the course to include other aspects of fundraising in addition to fundraising
Participants could have been requested to come to the course with a proposal either submitted or about to be submitted

Logistical arrangements/lack of social activities

Project facilitators did everything possible to overcome the small logistic problems experienced. For example, when a PowerPoint presentation could not be found they used their own experience as facilitators and used other audiovisuals that they had already prepared
Lunch had minimum variation
Transport arrangement could have been better - however we are grateful, it seems that it is all that could be done (3)
Should have made more effort maybe to get together after workshop – opportunity for more social interaction and getting to know the participants
A field trip would have been nice to introduce the participants to the Netherlands

Miscellaneous

It is hard to find weaknesses in this well organized workshop
The cost was too much. It took much convincing to solicit the funds to attend
The good workshop could have been planned to end immediately after lunch
Perhaps being in one or two more "visiting experts" like the IFAD representative. This gives other perspectives to topics

General workshop features
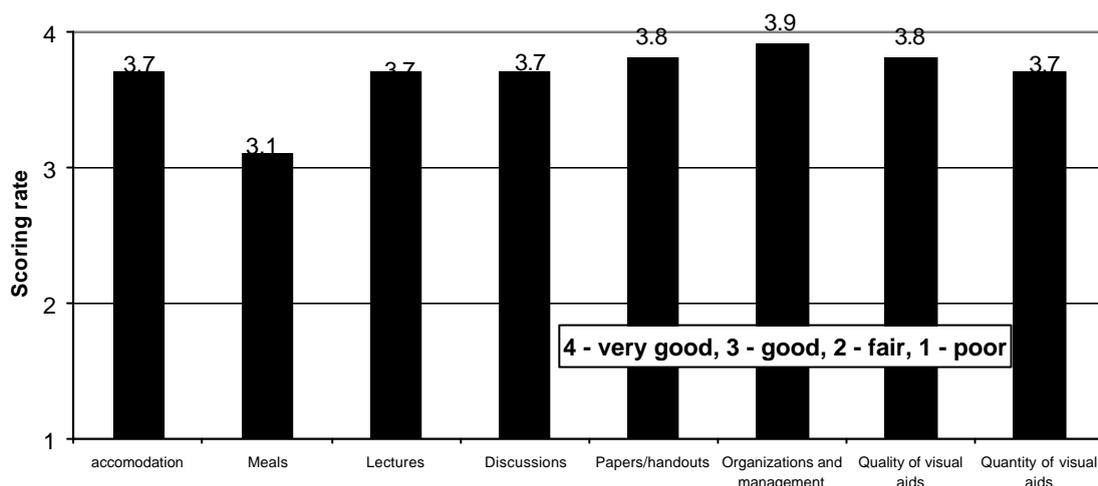
What additional topics would you have liked included in this activity?

- ? Project management (2)
- ? More information on logframes
- ? Video presentation on scientific writing and Style
- ? Scientific writing of reports
- ? Tips on partnership agreements – policy outline
- ? Give key topics e.g. logframe ample time. Also internet searching
- ? A resource: List of donors interacted in agricultural research
- ? Other aspects of fundraising – not only proposal writing
- ? Impact assessment of agricultural research projects
- ? The clinic on writing research proposal
- ? Group dynamics
- ? Information management
- ? Management of research projects (Mainly financial management)
- ? Not enough time in workshop to include any additional activities (2)

On what other management topics would you like to receive training in future? events?

- ? Project management (3)
- ? Research management (3)
- ? Time management and quality report writing
- ? The role of research managers in the global economy
- ? Planning other projects
- ? Monitoring and evaluation of projects (2)
- ? Conflict transformation
- ? Fundraising strategies for research centers
- ? Facilitation skills
- ? Negotiation skills
- ? Policy in research management – strategic planning and RM
- ? Agriculture research programme management and impact assessment
- ? Management of Agricultural research personal and resources
- ? Project management for research programme leaders

Comments:

Positive reactions

- ✓ *You have done a good job. Please keep it up*
- ✓ *I am very grateful to ISNAR for the opportunity provided to participate in the workshop*
- ✓ *This is the best course I have ever attended. It is one of the most useful ones, because it provides hand-on experiences from the participants. PAPA is a useful tool to follow up.*
- ✓ *Congratulations on an excellent workshop. Please evaluate the methodology you use to explain the log frame – it needs some improvements, as the exercise doesn't really clarify how the "logic" operates. It might be better to ask participants to do a matrix for out of the rainbow land projects. Thank you*
- ✓ *This was a truly wonderful workshop. It lived up to my expectations, following my colleagues glowing reports after attending last years session. It was most impressed by the professionalism of the facilitators, their well-conceived approach to the topic, and the high quality of the materials and exercises used. Well done, and thank you*
- ✓ *This was an excellent course and I hope to use it immediately to enhance my performance at work*
- ✓ *This was an excellent course and I hope to use it immediately to enhance my performance at work*
- ✓ *I have tremendously benefited from the training and enjoyed the experience of the facilitators. The support staff (Christina and Jacobine) have been extremely helpful. Thank you both. ISNAR has now become a home away from home for me. Your institutions matter and knowledge makes the difference*
- ✓ *The workshop is an eye-opener. It has improved me to address some of the weaknesses in the management of the research Center of the University of Swaziland, in which I am the acting Director*

Time allocation

- ✓ *This is a very good course if the period could be considered, so that the practical work is thorough done and share participant experiences. The observation is that most of the topics that were put are the end of the day were rushed through*
- ✓ *To achieve much impact it is better the course should be covered over two weeks instead (3)*
- ✓ *In order to optimize time for the benefit of both organizers and participants; Reduce Group work and increase plenary discussions*

Miscellaneous

- ✓ *Link up the natural scientists with the social scientists and compare with the commercial approaches of project proposal writing*
- ✓ *Spread the course to NARS to cut costs*
- ✓ *ISNAR should encourage setting up regional partnerships amongst the trainees*
- ✓ *Please continue with the current composition of participants vis-à-vis: professions, PhD holders, MSc holders, Undergraduates. This type of combination provides an excellent learning Environment*
- ✓ *For persons sitting in the back on the right side it is sometimes hard to see the person point presentations – maybe the extension could be longer to put the projector in the middle of the room. Thank you for a great work*
- ✓ *The participants who in future may risk to hold bigger workshops should be facilitated by ISNAR where possible*
- ✓ *Include other aspects of fundraising*
- ✓ *Let facilitators develop their case studies for use in their course and in-build most aspects from their cases in their lectures*
- ✓ *Please inform me of future workshops and training by ISNAR. Information on where to get funding grants to attend would also be helpful – does ISNAR carry out any workshop in the Caribbean or Latin America in English!*
- ✓ *Information of this type must be shared more efficiently*
- ✓ *The systems and signs are so perfect in Holland that a newcomer from a developed country it is quite refreshing to experience and enjoy*

Annexes Part I

Annex   **A**   **Welcome Letter**
            B   **Workshop Prospectus**
            C   **Workshop Schedule**
            D   **List of Participants**

Welcome Letter

Dear Participant:

Welcome to the ISNAR Workshop on **How to Write a Convincing Proposal: Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research**.

Over the coming six days, you will be presented with information to absorb and exercises to do. You will learn new terms and approaches to writing, budgeting, and negotiating projects. At the end, we aim to provide you with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to go back to your organizations and, with your colleagues, begin a sustained and successful search for outside funding for your research efforts.

As the world becomes more and more competitive, knowing how to write convincing research proposals is becoming as important for people in agricultural research as knowing how to write papers for refereed journals. This workshop hopes to show you how.

We wish you a pleasant and productive workshop.

Best wishes,

ISNAR Learning for Institutional Innovation Project

How to Write a Convincing Proposal:
Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research

Workshop Prospectus

Introduction

Every scientist, everywhere, needs to know how to write convincing proposals. In times of increasing competition for scarce research funding, it is vital for the staff of agricultural research organizations to design projects that can attract external project funding for specific agricultural research efforts.

Agricultural research organizations and systems need to strengthen their overall capacity to mobilize resources by developing the skills of their staff and establishing practices and procedures that can improve and coordinate fund-raising, create good donor relations, and develop strong and fundable research programs.

The skills and knowledge needed to achieve these aims are not difficult to acquire. But to date, information and exercises on what to do have not been brought together in a single publication or training module. "How to Write a Convincing Proposal: Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research" aims to provide participants with a single source for acquiring these new and useful skills and knowledge.

Goal of the of the Workshop

To strengthen project development, donor relations, and resource mobilization in agricultural research.

Objectives of the of the Workshop

To provide participants with information and skills to enable them to:
1. design projects and write them up in a way that will convince donors to fund them.
2. establish and maintain good relations with funding agencies.
3. help strengthen the project design and donor relations efforts in their organization.

Duration

The workshop is planned for six days.

Participants/Target Group

A training workshop for Research Program Leaders, Fund-raisers, and Senior Managers.

Workshop Format

The workshop is designed to provide an interactive learning environment. Sessions generally include a brief presentation and participatory exercises. The participant action plan approach (PAPA) is integrated throughout the workshop to encourage participants to consider the application of newly acquired skills in their organization.

Expected Outputs

The expected outputs of the workshop are the following:

1. Improved knowledge of and skills in writing convincing concept notes and proposals.
2. Knowledge of how to establish and maintain good donor relations
3. Strengthened project development and donor relations efforts by the organization.

How to Write a Convincing Proposal — Tentative Workshop Schedule

Day One	Day Two	Day Three	Day Four	Day Five	Day Six
08:30 – 09:00 Welcome	**08:30 – 09:00** Opening of the Day's Activities	**08:30 – 09:00** Opening of the Day's Activities	**08:30 – 09:00** Opening of the Day's Activities	**08:30 – 09:00** Opening of the Day's Activities	**08:30 – 09:00** Opening of the Day's Activities
09:00 – 10:30 Session 1. Introduction to the workshop and PAPA Exercise 1	**09:00 – 10:30** Session 4. All about Donors Exercise 4	**09:00 – 10:30** Session 7. Picking the Right Topics Exercise 7	**09:00 – 10:30** Session 10. How to Prepare a Concept Note Exercise 10a	**09:00 – 10:00** Session 12. Writing Proposals (Exercise 12) **10:00 – 10:30** Session 13. Logical Framework for a Research Project Exercise 13	**09:00 – 10:00** Session 15. Preparing the Executive Summary Exercise 15 **10:00 – 10:30** Session 16. Submitting and Following-up on Project Proposals Exercise 16
Tea/Coffee Break					
10:45 – 13:00 Session 2. Scientists as Proposal Writers and Fund Raisers Exercise 2 **12:00 – 13:00** Session 3. All about Partners Exercise 3	**10:45 – 12:00** Session 4. (Continued) **12:00 – 13:00** Session 5. All about Partners Exercise 5	**10:45 – 13:00** Session 8. General Writing Tips Exercise 8a and 8b	**10:45 – 13:00** Session 10. (Continued) Exercise 10b	**10:45 – 13:00** Session 13. (Continued)	**10:45 – 11:45** Session 16. (Continued) **11:45 – 13:00** Session 17. Maintaining Good Donor Relations Exercise 17
Lunch					
14:00 – 14:30 Session 2. (Continued) **14:30 – 15:30** Session 3. Standardization of Vocabulary and Concepts Exercise 3	**14:00 – 15:30** Session 5. (Continued)	**14:00 – 15:30** Session 9. Writing to Inform; Writing to Persuade Exercise 9a and 9b	**14:00 – 14:45** Session 10. (Continued) Exercise 10c **14:45 – 15:30** Session 11. Reviewing the Concept Note and Proposals Exercise 11	**14:00 – 15:30** Session 14. How to Prepare Proposal Budgets Exercise 14	**14:00 – 14:45** Session 17. (Continued) **14:45 – 15:45** Session 18. PAPA and Workshop Evaluation **15:45 – 16:15** Final Remarks and Closing
Tea/Coffee Break					
15:45 – 17:30 Session 3. (Continued) **17:30 – 18:00** Feedback on the Day's Activities and PAPA	**15:45 – 17:30** Session 6. All about Projects Exercise 6 **17:30 – 18:00** Feedback on the Day's Activities and PAPA	**15:45 – 17:30** Session 9. (Continued) **17:30 – 18:00** Feedback on the Day's Activities and PAPA	**15:45 – 17:30** Session 11. (Continued) **17:30 – 18:00** Feedback on the Day's Activities and PAPA	**15:45 – 17:30** Session 14. (Continued) **17:30 – 18:00** Feedback on the Day's Activities and PAPA	

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Annexes Part II

PAPA—FIRST STAGE

Ideas for Action Items

Workshop Title: **How to Write a Convincing Proposal: Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research**

Date/Venue
_____

Name
_____

Organization:
_____

Ideas I would like to try when I return to work at my research institute, based on what I have learned in this training workshop.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Note: You can use the workshop objectives, what you learn during the workshop, handouts, conversations with participants and trainers, etc., to come up with ideas.

Guidelines for Writing Action Items

The most important characteristic of an action item is that it is written so you—or someone else—*will know when it occurs*. One way to help achieve this is to use specific *action verbs*. The following is a list of such verbs:

Mental Skills		Physical Skills	Attitude
State	Demonstrate	Execute	Choose
Name	Discriminate	Operate	Volunteer
Describe	Classify	Repair	Allow
Relate	Generate (a solution)	Adjust	Recommend
Tell	Apply (a rule)	Manipulate	Defend
Write	Solve	Handle	Endorse
Express	Derive	Manufacture	Cooperate
Recount	Prove	Calibrate	Accept
	Analyze	Remove	Decide
	Evaluate	Replace	Agree

As you are working on the action items, ask yourself *Is the behavior described observable? Will it be obvious to me or others when it happens?*

The following are examples of action items. *As a result of being in this training I plan to:*

1. *Describe* this workshop to my superior within a week of returning to the job. As a result, my supervisor will know the contents of the training workshop, how I can apply what I learned to the job, and whether or not others in the organization will attend.

2. *Handle* every piece of paper only once to improve the management of my own time. I will begin as soon as I am back on the job.

3. *Apply* the principles of performance analysis to the problem of incomplete or tardy case reviews in my research institute and request assistance from the training unit, as needed. As a result I will know whether training is required and/or if some other solution is appropriate. Begin within a month after returning.

4. *Talk* with my employees directly about a problem which arises, rather than avoiding a confrontation; discuss the situation in order to reach mutual understanding.

5. Within two weeks after I return, I will *implement* a _____ research management procedure/process in my research institute.

Implementing the action item

As you proceed to develop action items, *be sure to think of yourself in your actual job setting*, implementing the activity you have described.

If you have an idea of *when* you will be able to begin implementing the action items, make a note of it. Three categories can be chosen: 1) within two months, 2) after two months, and 3) as the opportunity arises (you do not know when the opportunity to try this item will occur).
You may find that you cannot try out your ideas exactly as you envisioned them, or that it is difficult to be specific. That is all right. It is still important to write out your *intent*, as a tentative plan, knowing you may have to modify it once you are back on the job. *Try to develop at least two or three action items.* One may not work, so it is handy to have others.

PAPA—SECOND STAGE

Ideas for Action Items

Date

Workshop Title: **How to Write a Convincing Proposal: Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research**

Date/Venue

Name

Organization:

Action Items	Start to implement action plan (check if known)		
I plan to:	Within 2 months	After 2 months	As opportunity arises

Participant Action Plan Approach

Supervisor's Contact Address

Name:	
Organization/Center:	
Name of Immediate Superior:	
Title of Immediate Superior:	
Address:	
Tel. No.:	
Fax No.:	
E-mail:	

Questions About Your Action Items

1. *Preliminary nature of plan*
   - Were you specific in writing the action item?
   - What will you need to do when you return to work to determine which actions are possible?

2. *Resources*
   - Who will be carrying out the proposed action, or helping with it (formally or informally)?
     - Are the skills for carrying it out available?
     - How much time would this take?
     - Are special materials or equipment required?
     - What is involved in obtaining them?
     - Will you be using a tool or system or aid from this training workshop?
     - If so, how much adaptation is required?
     - Is continual monitoring or follow-through required?
     - If so, who will do it?

2. *Implementation*
   - Do you have the authority to implement the action?
   - If not, who does
   - How do you think you can go about getting approval?
   - What do you think the degree of support is for your idea?
   - Will you need to sell people on it?
   - If so, who?

4. *Effects*
   - Whom will this action affect?
   - How will it affect them?
   - Will anyone be the worse for the results?
   - Will anyone be better off?
   - What will be affected?

5. *Environment*
   - What factors in the organizational environment might interfere with your doing this?
   - What factors in the organization will support your effort

Interactive Exercise

Sample of Questions

1. I feel the need to write a research proposal when _____

   _____

   However, _____

2. When writing research proposals, I feel disappointed with myself when _____

   _____

   However, my reaction is _____

   _____

3. As a researcher, if I were to describe myself in one sentence, I would say _____

   _____

   because_____

4. My best professional quality is _____

   _____

   This helps me to _____

5. When writing a research proposal, I perceive myself as a person who _____

   _____

6. As a writer of proposals to donors, I think I am _____

   _____

   because_____

7. I think that my peers perceive me as _____

   _____

   because_____

8. When I discuss my research proposals with peers, I _____

   _____

   because_____

9. I think my proposal-writing skills are _____

   _____

   because_____

Exercise 1: Introductory Statements and Expectations

Statements:

<u>I like discussing my research ideas when:</u>   I have passed my findings and standards to the technology transfer officers and farmers.
<u>Because:</u> We develop standards and provide solutions to farmer's problem as applied researchers.

<u>I like discussing my research ideas when:</u> Others could give their comments and share their experiences
<u>Because:</u> It's an area of work which is exciting and much has to be learned

<u>I am sure I could do a better job in preparing research proposals if:</u> I am able to sharpen my writing skills
<u>This would make me:</u> A good communicator of ideas

<u>When I am discussing my research ideas, I feel irritated when:</u> There are constraints in searching local farmers
<u>Because:</u> Otherwise results are not relevant to the reality

<u>When I am discussing my research ideas, I feel irritated when</u> People start to give less attention to it.
<u>Because:</u> I want them to understand what I do is important

<u>I think that my peers perceive me as</u> Being non-partisan i.e. in what goes on and in our system
<u>Because:</u> I talk about all positives and negatives of different approaches in research

<u>My best professional quality is:</u> I am very committed to my work and try to be as thorough as possible
<u>This helps me to:</u> Struggle hard to achieve almost everything I set to do

<u>When I am among new peers, I feel</u> Happy
<u>Because:</u> I share experience and learn

<u>During this introductory exercise, I feel:</u> Hopeful of acquiring practical skills in attracting supplementary research fund
<u>Because:</u> Financial resources are limiting and materials are costly to procure and maintain.

<u>As a research, if I were to describe myself in one sentence, I would say:</u> I am a person who believes that people can get out from poverty through a proper education.

<u>As a research, if I were to describe myself in one sentence, I would say:</u> On-farm research is complex.
<u>Because:</u> Farmers' expectations are not met.

<u>People who really get to know me as a researcher say I am:</u> Practical person

Because:

<u>People who really get to know me as a researcher say I am:</u> Hard working and a taskmaster, people person
<u>Because:</u> Output oriented and I don't like to be alone, I don't like my friends to confuse 'friendship' and 'professional commitment'.

<u>When I know I must write a research proposal, I feel:</u> I must put together a convincing objective and rational
<u>Because</u> This is what will catch the donor.

<u>When I am writing a research proposal, I perceive myself as a person who:</u> Is responsible to facilitate / coordinate / promote / advise planning execution monitoring and evaluation

<u>When I design projects in a group, I tend to be:</u> Very perfectionist, look for inconsistencies, ensure that logic
<u>This is why I expect my team members to be:</u> More experienced in proposal writing

<u>When I submit my proposal to my supervisor for approval, I feel</u> Very surprised
<u>Because:</u> I am usually helping others to write their proposals

<u>When I am sharing my research proposal with partners, I feel pleased when:</u> There are as enthusiastic about the ideas as I am
<u>However:</u> I worry that people will not fulfill promised tasks

<u>I think my writing proposal skill are:</u> Not tip top and appealing enough
<u>Because:</u> I have not been able to mobilize fund adequately

<u>I think my writing proposal skill are:</u> Knowing the frame work of the concept notes
<u>Because:</u> I have done before.

<u>While writing a research proposal, I dislike being frustrated. That is why I:</u> Would like to expand my knowledge on how to write a convincing proposal through participatory workshops discussions.

<u>When writing a research proposal, I feel disappointed with myself when:</u> I am unable to distinguish effectively between justification and objectives at the proposal
<u>However, my reaction is:</u> I need to find a solution and get on with the proposal.

<u>While writing a research proposal, I prefer to discuss my thoughts and doubts with:</u> colleagues
<u>Because:</u> They share a vision, experience and commitment, but I need to consult more widely

<u>While writing a research proposal, I prefer to discuss my thoughts and doubts with:</u> my colleagues and farmers
<u>Because:</u> of getting appropriate and correct information.

<u>While writing proposals, I like myself when:</u> Facts that are put in a proposal capture/represent the views of the people I represent,

And I dislike myself when: Not responded to when spent more time. Preparing a concept paper.

While writing proposals, I like myself when: I have done my homework and have all the information I need.
And I dislike myself when: I have to spend too much time on one thing because I was not well prepared.

I feel the need to write a research proposal when: The proposal is lacking the donor guidelines
However: I interact and wait for the clearance

Expectations of the workshop

To be able to write a proposal to attract donor funds from local and external donor agencies and improve training skills.

Learn from the participants the facilitators and assist in whenever and whatever I can.
- share some social ethics in fundraising

 to acquire / Learn how to prepare concept notes and how to persuade / convince donors

To see participants become sufficiently empowered to write good proposals

To apply the knowledge of this workshop in reviewer budget and proposals and later back in Ecuador to continue working with or for NGO

To improve my proposal-writing skills learning from others

To acquire the necessary information and skills on how to develop a convincing research proposal.

Acquire practical knowledge in writing successful proposals and possible donors.

To acquire / learn tools and develop skills that help me do my job more efficiently, especially in fund raising and improving donor relations.

To learn new technologies of writing a convincing proposal.

For my newly farming organization, to be able to begin to feel / identify program/project areas which can easily get funded.

That the participants share their knowledge and experience openly to enrich the workshop results and its application afterwards.

To acquire skills in this proposal-writing workshop.

To help me in raising funds for doing research, writing good proposals. a) To learn more out how the workshop is being conducted (learning is a continuous process) b) Learn more about

the experiences of the participants c) Get to know the participants to identify areas for future collaboration.

To gain skills in writing proposals and increase my success rate in grant sourcing, more skilled work for all

To enhance my capacity on major issues concerning research proposal donor funding and impact of research for scrutiny / Donor community

Learn more about proposal writing, I haven't done much of it. ISNAR also working in much more comp. Environment

Get information about donors, new funding possibilities, trends in funding and to learn important tools, new to write proposal and maybe to find new partners for my institutions.

New perspectives on organizing grant-based funding strategies.

To improve my ability to writ a convincing proposal.

To learn how to organize my ideas when writing.

To be able to write valid convincing research training proposals and train others to write the same.

To acquire skills for writing effect research proposals.

Learn from other participants about their unique experiences in fund raising proposal writing "The devil is in the detail".

To get more knowledge and skills on the way of writing "convincing Proposals" and sustain donors.

Improving the skills/confidence on proposal writing and fund raising.

That we will all have a good time and go on to write convincing proposals.

Enhancement of my knowledge and skills in donor relations and resource mobilization.

Exercise 2. How prepared are you to write a convincing proposal? ("trip around the tables")

1. Form four groups of participants, each group electing a rapporteur.
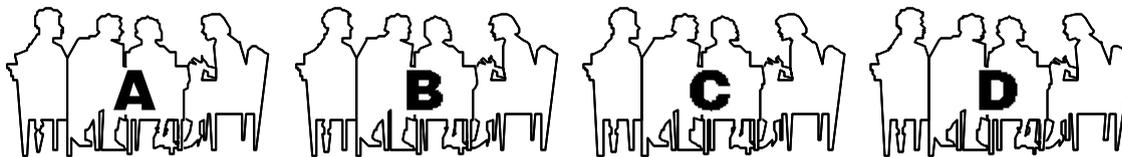
Phase 1. Group work (35 minutes)

2. Discuss your experience of writing research proposals to raise external funds in your organization and read briefly 1.2.4 to complete this exercise.

3. Each group works on the questions assigned to it as follows: (35 minutes)

Group A:	What knowledge and skills do scientists need to develop and write a convincing proposal?
Group B:	What are the fund-raising roles and responsibilities of individual NARS scientists?
Group C:	What are the fund-raising roles and responsibilities of NARS management?
Group D:	How does a fund raising plan relate to a strategic plan? What are the five key elements of any fund raising plan?

The rapporteurs compile the groups' inputs on the worksheet (handout 1.2.3).

Phase 2. "Trip around the tables" (45 minutes)

4. The rapporteurs begin their "trip around the tables." They have ten minutes to visit each table. They present their group's inputs and collect contributions to improve their list of responses. (30 minutes)

5. After visiting the three other tables, the rapporteurs return to their own group to share the contributions collected during the "trip" and decide on the *three* best answers. (10 minutes)

6. The rapporteurs write the results on the flipchart and prepare to present their group's results. (5 minutes)

Phase 3. Reporting and discussion (40 minutes)

7. The rapporteurs present the results to the audience. About five minutes are available for each presentation. (20 minutes)

8. The trainer distributes handout 1.2.5 and invites participants to join in a brief discussion (15 minutes).

9. The trainer provides feedback on the content of the presentations and closes the session (5 minutes).

Possible answers to exercise 2 are presented in this paper titled:
NARI Scientists as Proposal Writers and Fundraisers

Introduction

No NARS ever has enough money to fund all the research that the staff want to do. No researcher ever has enough money to do everything she or he wants to do. This course is designed to help NARS institutes and NARS scientists to obtain external grant funding to supplement the funds they receive internally from their Treasuries. To obtain these grants, NARS and their staff need to learn how to write convincing proposals.

To write a convincing proposal, you will need to:

(a) understand as much as you can about the donor agencies and their interests;
(b) develop an effective method of interacting with these agencies within your organization;
(c) understand the qualities of a good project;
(d) learn the elements of project design;
(e) appreciate the difference between writing to inform and writing to persuade;
(f) learn how to use what you know about donors to prepare convincing concept notes and proposals;
(g) learn to be patient and accept that not all proposals get funded; an
(h) maintain good donor relations by carefully monitoring projects and reporting on them to donors.

This course will help you with all these things, and will make it easier for you to develop good relations with the organizations that give research grants. In total, there are hundreds of organizations that provide grant funding to groups and individuals involved in agricultural research in the developing world. In this course, you will learn about how to approach the largest and best-known of these donor groups for funding for your research.

The International Service for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR), a member of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), has been working with NARS and their scientists in a number of related fields, providing training in areas like Research Program Formulation and Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation. ISNAR has also published a Sourcebook on "Financing Agricultural Research." This training course builds on the content of previous ISNAR training and draws on the sourcebook materials.

What Will You Learn?

Some of the things you will learn in this course include:

- How agricultural research is funded
- Where donors get their money
- The difference between research and development objectives
- What "public awareness" can do for your institute
- The importance of establishing a donor intelligence unit
- Why you should write a concept note before preparing a proposal

- In which order to write up your ideas
- What makes a "good" proposal budget
- The difference between writing to inform and writing to persuade

What Will You Practice?

During the course you will have hands-on experience with all of the following (and more!):

- Picking a good topic
- Preparing a concept note that will attract top-quality partners
- Holding a review meeting that strengthens the quality of a project design
- Writing a convincing title
- Preparing a logical framework matrix
- Using donor intelligence to improve your project write-up
- Judging the quality of project reports

Who Is Involved in Obtaining Grants from External Donors?

Everyone in a NARS has a role to play in raising external funds. Only individual scientists can provide the enthusiasm and expertise for the research, but without the resources of the whole system, scientists cannot do their work or raise the funds they need. So fund-raising is both a group and an individual activity. Here are some of the fund-raising roles and responsibilities of different people in the NARS:

Individual scientists are responsible for:

- working in groups, with technical partners and beneficiaries, to design research projects that (a) fit within the plans and programs of the NARS, (b) are of value to the beneficiaries, (c) are cost-effective, and (d) can attract donor interest and funding
- writing up their project ideas in appropriate formats for submission to external donors
- contributing to the NARS Donor Intelligence Unit
- contributing to the maintenance of good donor relations
- helping with NARS public awareness efforts
- revising concept notes and proposals to accommodate the views of donors
- attending the reviews of their colleagues' concept notes and proposals, and providing constructive criticism
- helping to track their proposals with donors
- monitoring funded projects carefully, and preparing good progress reports to donors
- preparing follow-on proposals in a timely manner, to ensure seamless funding for research activities

NARS administrative staff and management will be responsible for:

- creating and maintaining a Donor Intelligence Unit
- creating and maintaining a NARS public awareness effort
- preparing strategic plans and research programs, including a strategic plan for raising funds
- preparing project development and budget guidelines

- preparing a partnership policy
- reviewing concept notes and proposals in open reviews
- coordinating the tracking of donor proposals
- reviewing project reports before submission to donors
- maintaining a steady flow of proposals from various departments within the NARS

What Are the Benefits?

Convincing proposals yield more than just money for a research project. There are many wider benefits that accrue to NARS and scientists who learn to design good projects, write them up in good proposals, receive external funding, and over time, establish strong relationships with donor agencies, based on mutual understanding and trust. These include:

- Linkages with scientists and institutions in donor agency countries
- Creativity of NARS scientists fostered by access to funds, partners, overseas linkages
- Improved writing and other communications skills for individuals
- An invaluable source of useful foreign exchange
- Possible source of capital improvements, such as computer hard- and software
- Research that yields politically popular impacts
- Higher profile outputs and impacts in turn result in higher visibility for NARS, which in turn may result in improved Treasury funding

The importance of a Fund Raising Plan

Every research organization has a strategic plan. These plans usually cover a period of some five yeas ahead, and present information on the following topics: research targets for each program areas, brief description of each program, and the proposed allocation of resources to each program for each of the plan years.

The fund raising plan (sometimes called the resource mobilization plan) identified the sources of funding of the strategic pan act ivies, and presents information on what will need to be done, by whom, to access the funds. Without a plan for raising the necessary funds, a strategic plan is little more than a wish list!

The Key Elements for a Fund Raising Plan

Although the details may vary, all good fund raising plans need to the following elements:

- Annual financial targets—the cost of achieving the strategic plan research targets.
- A list of current and potential sources of funds, with reasons why these sources might fund the organization.
- The activities the organization plans to undertake to secure funds from the sources on the list, along with quantified financial targets.
- The proposed tasks and responsibilities of specific individuals in the organization who will undertake the fund raising activities.
- The anticipated cost of raising the funds.

A good way of organizing a fund raising plan is to outline these elements for each program. So if the organization has five programs, there will be individual plans and targets for how each program expects to secure the funds it needs to achieve its research targets. Together these program plans make up the overall fund raising plan for the organization.

Results of the Exercise 2

Group A. What knowledge and skills do scientists need to develop and write a convincing proposal?

1) Knowledge versus skills
- Communication skills
- Package project proposal appropriate
- Scientific quality
- Consumers
- Policymakers
- Reporting
- Dissemination

2) Scanning the environment
- Donors – themes, formats, buzz words
- Partnerships – national, regional, international.
- Teamwork – multidisciplinary
- Scientists/clients
- Development agents
- Socio-economic/biometrical

3) Formats and themes
- Appropriate and relevant (concept note)
- Problem versus solution (output)
- Knowledge – cultural /ethical
- Logframe (objectives, workplan, budgets)
- Project cost line items

4) Capacity
- Resources and facilities
- Complementarity – matching
- Sustainability – continuity
- M&E versus baseline survey

Don'ts
- Lobbying versus information dissemination
- Individualism
- Selfishness

Group B. What are the fund-raising roles and responsibilities of individual NARS scientists?

Role of scientists:
- Participation in problem identification
- Proposal development
- Identification of donors for making contact
- Maintaining donor relations

- Understanding donor and government policies
- Reputation as a scientist
- Facilitate participation of other scientists
- Provision of information to managers
- Be able to speak the language of stakeholders
- Identification and collaboration with institutes
- Making sure the successful implementation of the project and reporting

Group C: What are the fund-raising roles and responsibilities of NARS management?

Roles
- Ensure that national and beneficiary needs are considered.
- Decides which funding sources to approach – implies being well informed/aware.
- Lobby/network with potential funders.
- Facilitator roles: ensure that scientists are on right track and able to write proposals in a conducive environment.

Responsibilities
- General management (deadlines, formatting, M&^E, reporting, accountability, etc.
- Encourage scientists to write good proposals
- provide info
- be receptive to new ideas
- stimulate/support, provide incentives
- Develop fundraising strategy for org.
- I.d. funding sources maintain funding database
- Public relations/awareness – maintain good accountability communication with all stakeholders
- Be involved in budget prep. + allocation
- Delegating some of the above
- Removing/ minimizing bureaucratic obstacles
- Cost sharing/counterpart funding (cash of kind)

Group D: How does a fund raising plan relate to a strategic plan? What are the five key elements of any fund raising plan?

A, Relation to Strategic plan
- Provide financial means to achieve strategic objectives
- Synchronize fund raising and strategic milestones

B, Key elements
- 5 elements in handout: Financial targets for each year of the Strategic Plan, by program, in the light of research targets; Sources of funds, with justifications for why these sources are likely to support the Institute; Activities needed to access funds from the identified sources, including quantified dollar targets; Tasks and responsibilities of specific people in the Institute needed to undertake the fund-raising activities; Fund Raising Plan budget.
- Partnerships
- SPL. Knowledge
- Technical

- Donors
- Finance
- Communication
- Stakeholder support
- Collaborative & collective

Strengths and Weaknesses

List three strengths of day one

1.
2.
3.

List three weaknesses of day one

1.
2.
3.

Suggestions to improve the workshop

Guidelines to Provide Feedback on the Workshop

1. The module
Content
■ usefulness/relevance
■ amount of information

Structure
■ sequence
■ duration
■ balance between trainers' and trainees' participation
■ instruction to trainers
■ visual aids
■ handouts
■ extra readings
■ PAPA
■ evaluation

2. Process: training techniques and direction
■ usefulness/relevance/effectiveness
■ group interaction
■ clarity of questions, exercises, instructions
■ opening and closure of the days

3. Trainers', facilitators', and trainees' performance
■ presentation/communication skills
■ interaction/effective participation
■ punctuality/interest/commitment/willingness to facilitate learning/willingness to participate
■ other attitudes

4. Logistical support
■ organization
■ accuracy
■ punctuality
■ willingness to assist participants, services provided in general

5. Workshop environment
■ physical (training facilities, training material, hotel facilities in general)
■ psychological (personal feelings such as self-motivation, interest, satisfaction, self-achievement), social (development of friendships, relaxed, comfortable among participants, etc.)

6. Workshop results/outputs
■ personal and professional assessment
■ recommendations

7. General comments

Strengths and Weaknesses of Day One

Strengths day 1

Content[1]
Good introduction to the topic; goals of workshop (5)
Usefulness/relevance; types of donors; understanding donors; failures of projects; very informative; I have learnt a lot (12)

Structure
Organization of days session (3)
Good layout/presentation (visual aids) (3)
Handouts readily available; informative (5)

Process: training techniques and direction
Active exercise are useful; trip around the table (3)
Sharing experiences; highly group interaction (8)
Participant driven exercises (4)

Trainer's/facilitators performance & materials
Exciting presentation (4)
Knowledgeable & friendly faculty; strong training team; excellent facilitation; enthusiasm of facilitators was contagious and allowed participants to start with energy (9)
Time keeping is excellent (2)
Materials given out (you just listen & think) (2)
Commitments of trainers/facilitators (1)

Trainee's performance
Interest of other participants to share experience (1)
Effective participation (6)

Logistical support
Excellent (2)

Workshop environment
Very conductive; very accommodative (3)

General comments
Good interaction with ISNAR team over lunch (2)
Getting to know about the library resources (1)

Weaknesses of day 1

Organization
Travel to workshop venue; transport not well arranged (3)

Participants
Limited participation by group members (1)
Male/Female composition of trainees very low (1)
Time allocation/workload

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[1] The number between brackets indicates how many times the statements were mentioned.

Self introduction was rather long (1)
Time for exercises could have been longer (10)
The program is too squeezed to allow time for library or computer (1)
Days are quite long (during the whole week) (1)
Speed sessions; long presentation (2)
Presentation right after lunch was a bit too long – some participants were tired (1)

<u>Materials/Content</u>
Questions in the exercises were not clear (3)
Handouts are not very clear
Questions for discussion can further be improved
Guidelines for group work not always absolutely clear
Presentations were so good that I would have liked to listen more (there was not more presentations)
More room for experience is needed from participants
More example needed from workshop organizers
Specific knowledge dissemination of donors agencies
List of references for access to information
Handouts better to be given complete and all at once (set for day one still appears incomplete)
Perhaps more synthesis from exercise results

Suggestions to improve the workshop

Facilitate more interaction among group members by introducing exercises that allow to share work experiences of relevance to the topic (2)
Congratulations, excellent work!
Give more precise instructions about the exercises to avoid waste of time
Give more time for exercises and discussion (6)
Allow participants to share experiences
Maintain the mode of operation
In future organize a van to pick the participants from Hotel
The program need to relax a bit
Material should be available for participants before the workshop
Summarizing the presentation with facilitators own experience
Microphone (2)
Improve exercise instructions for clarify & to focus content
More emphasis on (re)stating what was done & main lessons of the day. For re-enforcement.
Short presentation

Exercise 3. Assessing the institutional performance in fund-raising (modified panel)

1. Form four groups of participants.
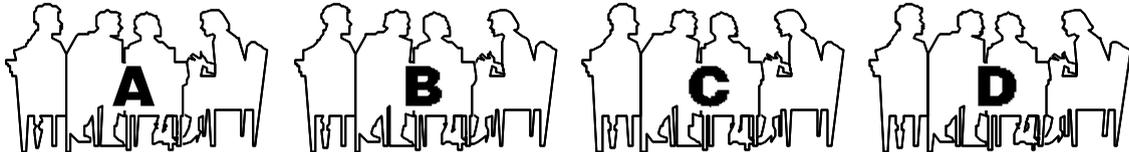
2. Each group elects a rapporteur. The rapporteurs will form a panel during this exercise.

Phase 1. Group work (55 minutes)

3. Your task is to read handout 1.3.1 briefly and to identify three donors which support the research programs in your organization. Respond to the following:
   a. List two advantages and two disadvantages of having funds from bilateral, multilateral, and private donors.
   b. Summarize "stories" of one successful and one unsuccessful interaction while dealing with donors.
   c. List two non-science-related factors which enabled you to succeed in obtaining funds and two factors which made you fail.
   d. Write down one strong recommendation on how to ensure your success in raising funding.
4. The rapporteurs summarize the groups' results on a flipchart.

Phase 2. Reporting and discussion (1 hour 10 minutes)

5. The rapporteurs sit in a semi-circle in front of the audience and each presents the results of his/her group's discussions; first group A, then B, C, and D. (20 minutes)

6. After the four groups' reports are over, there is a five-minute discussion of the results among the panelists (rapporteurs) followed by a discussion with the audience. (5 minutes)

7. The trainer invites the audience to compare the results and discusses the four group results displayed on the flipcharts. (30 minutes)

8. At the end of this discussion, the trainer invites a few volunteers to share the major lessons learned during this exercise. (10 minutes)

9. Finally, the trainer welcomes feedback on this session and summarizes the results. (5 minutes)

Exercise 3 results. Assessing the institutional performance in fund-raising

Group A

Item a) donors

Type of donor	Advantages	Disadvantages
Bilateral - USAID	Resource mobilization Addresses national agenda	Less flexible
Multilateral - World Bank	Big grants Capital investments	Very complicated to access funding
Private donors - Rockefeller Foundation	Less tied to local policies Less bureaucratic	Limited resources No capital investments

Item b) stories

- Successful story - World Bank grant, huge grant - $90 million
- Unsuccessful story – Poor financial management – one pool account

Item c) non-science factors
Non-science factors – succeed
- image of the organization
- personal reputation

Non-science factor – fail
- not meeting deadlines
- not meeting policy requirements

Item d) recommendations
- write convincing proposals
- meeting donor conditions

Group B

a) Donors (investors)
- World Bank
- ADB
- DGIS
- IFAD

Type of donors	Advantages	Disadvantages
Bilateral	List of countries One to one	List of countries, strings linked
Multilateral	Stability Hassle free	Grant funds, limited No salaries/no recruitment
Private	No strings Financial flexibility	IPR (share in) Hard to get

b) stories

- Successful stories: Why do chickens die?/ Developing low toxin/ Aflatoxin kits for/ Food and feed
- Unsuccessful stories: Negotiations with donors tough/bargain

c) non-science factors – success:
- to include female in the project, good reputation

Non-science factors – failure:
- personality clash, private donors prefer younger researchers

d) Strong recommendation:
- keep your comparative advantage

Group C

a) donors

Type of donors	Advantages	Disadvantages
Bilateral	Vested interest Modification of requirements is easier	Overshadowing protocol Politically agenda
Multilateral	More institutions can access Greater funds	Difficulties to modify and easily blocked Much more people competing for the same fund
Private	Flexible Easy to deal with	Very specific and small grants Funds can be misused

b) stories
- Successful stories: prepared beforehand
- Unsuccessful stories: too much bureaucracy

c) non-science factors
- successful: Reputation/ Preparedness
- unsuccessful: Bureaucracy/ Institutional politics

Group D

a) donors

Type of donors	Advantages	Disadvantages
Bilateral	Limited to one country Favored by political relations between countries Not limited to specific funding areas Strengthening partnership between countries	Restricted to one country Subject to political instability Unequal access due to political bias
Multilateral	Larger amounts ($) available Better proposal quality	More competition Longer process Subject to political interests
Private	Specialized scope Less bureaucratic	Could generate some ethical concerns Narrow scope

b) stories

- successful: Strong communication skills of the project manager allowed for a successful relationship with the donor
- unsuccessful: A proposal submitted on time, on the topic; it was rejected and no explanation provided as of why. Frustration!

c) non-science factors
- successful: good project management/ good communications/networking
- unsuccessful: changes within organization affected the relationship/ Lack of public awareness about the institution

d) strong recommendations:
- Raise organization's profile/ demonstrate research impact
- Keep updated on funding, trends/ maintain relationships

Exercise 4. How well does your institute manage donor relations?

("trip around the tables")

10. Form four groups of participants, each group electing a rapporteur. (5 minutes)

11. Discuss the experience of your institutes in managing donor relations.

Phase 1. Group work (35 minutes)

12. Each group works on the questions assigned to it as follows:
    Group A:
    ∣ Who in your NARS is currently responsible for donor relations? List his/her strengths and weaknesses while performing the job.
    ∣ How many people in your NARS meet donors? Describe the results.

    Group B:
    ∣ Do you have open proposal reviews in your institute?
        - If yes, explain and list the major advantages and disadvantages of a proposal review.
        - If not, would you like to have such reviews and why?

    Group C:
    ∣ Does your NARS have a public awareness officer? Do you have a brochure? An annual report? A logo?
    ∣ How and why is public awareness linked to donor relations in your organization?
    ∣ How effective are these efforts in your organization? Give examples.

    Group D:
    ∣ Does anyone in your NARS go around giving speeches about your work? In schools? To farmers' groups? To others?
        – If yes, how would you describe the results? Would you recommend this practice to other institutes? Why?
        – If not, how would you anticipate the impact of this activity on your institute? (List strengths and weaknesses.) Would you be interested in initiating this kind of activity? Why?
    ∣ If you wanted to know more about donors, whom in your institute would you ask?

13. The rapporteurs compile the groups' inputs on the worksheets.

Phase 2. "Trip around the tables" (45 minutes)

14. The rapporteurs begin their "trip around the tables." They have ten minutes to visit each table. They present their group's inputs and collect contributions to improve their list of responses. (30 minutes)

15. After visiting the three other tables, the rapporteurs return to their own group to share the contributions collected during the "trip" and decide on the best answers. (10 minutes)

16. The rapporteurs write the results on the flipchart and prepare to present their groups' results. (5 minutes)

Phase 3. Reporting and discussion (40 minutes)

17. The rapporteurs present the results to the audience. About five minutes are available for each presentation. (20 minutes)

18. The trainer distributes handout 2.4.9 and you will be invited to participate in a brief discussion. (15 minutes)

19. The trainer provides feedback on the content of the presentations and closes the session. (5 minutes)

Possible answers to exercise 4 are presented in this paper titled:
Donor Relations in Your Institute[1]

Earlier we outlined some of the roles and responsibilities related to donor relations in NARS. Here is this material again.

Individual scientists are responsible for:

- Working in groups, with technical partners and beneficiaries, to design research projects that (a) fit within the plans and programs of the NARS, (b) are of value to the beneficiaries, (c) are cost-effective, and (d) can attract donor interest and funding
- Writing up their project ideas in appropriate formats for submission to external donors
- Contributing to the NARS Donor Intelligence Unit
- Contributing to the maintenance of good donor relations
- Helping with NARS public awareness efforts
- Revising concept notes and proposals to accommodate the views of donors
- Attending the reviews of their colleagues' concept notes and proposals, and providing constructive criticism
- Helping to track their proposals with donors
- Monitoring funded projects, and preparing good progress reports to donors
- Preparing follow-on proposals in a timely manner to ensure seamless funding for research activities

NARS management and administrative staff are responsible for:

Creating and maintaining a Donor Intelligence Unit

- Creating and maintaining a NARS public awareness effort
- Preparing strategic plans and research programs, including a strategic fund-raising plan
- Preparing project development and budget guidelines
- Reviewing concept notes and proposals in open reviews
- Coordinating the tracking of donor proposals
- Reviewing project reports before submission to donors
- Maintaining a steady flow of proposals from various departments within the NARS

In this session, we want to find out how donor relations are managed in your institute, and how much you are already doing yourself. We also want you to think about what could be done to improve donor relations in your place of work.

As a background to your discussions, here are some concept definitions you might find helpful. You may also wish to refer back to the definitions in session 3.

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[1] Extracted from: M. Fuchs-Carsh. Training course materials used with IARC, NARS, universities, and NGOs in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. 1996-2000.

A Donor Intelligence Unit is an office which houses information about donors. It is usually staffed by a Donor Relations Officer, who coordinates the flow of information, collecting news from staff and providing information on demand. The unit will have a library of materials on donor agencies and a database of names, contact points and other information. The library will contain information such as donor proposal formats and guidelines, donor proposal review cycles and deadlines, lists of donor projects, and other material you will need when preparing proposals.

Proposal and Budget Guidelines need to be prepared for each institute, to ensure that all the proposals going out follow the same pattern and make the same budget assumptions. For instance, you cannot charge one donor more for a day of your time than another. You also want everyone in your institute to use a similar format, typeface, etc. This is part of "branding" your institute. There will be more discussion of proposal and budget guidelines in sessions 12 and 14.

Public Awareness is how your organization informs non-scientists—the general public—about its work. Good public awareness targets different audiences in different ways. You would not speak to children in schools in the same way as you would to government policymakers. You need different posters, brochures, speeches, and people. One special audience is made up of donors. Keeping donors informed of the outputs and impacts of your institute's work is an important part of donor relations. You may do this through a publication like "Research Highlights" or through your annual report. There may be a brochure that is specially written for donors.

Your **Strategic Plan** is the document in which your institute outlines its plans for a fairly long period—usually 5–10 years. It describes broad future programs and does not go into great detail. Most importantly, it presents the overall goals and objectives of your institute. Any project you design, any proposal you write, must cover activities that will contribute to these overall goals and objectives.

Research Programs consist of several projects all designed to achieve related objectives. There will be more information about projects in session 6.

Concept Note and Proposal Reviews are discussed later. These reviews are open meetings in which draft concept notes and proposals are discussed and improvements to the substance and presentation suggested. It is at these reviews that decisions are made about research partners, the size of the project, its budget, and which donor might be interested. At the reviews, the institute "buys into" the project you have designed.

NARI Strategic Fund-raising Plans need to be prepared to coordinate all the activities with respect to project development, proposal preparation, and donor relations with the institute. The plans will cover the roles and responsibilities of various individuals and groups within the NARI, and set targets for attracting funding from a wide mix of funding sources including national and regional sources, and bilateral and multilateral international donors.

Results of the Exercise 4. How well does your institute manage donor relations?

Four groups were formed for this exercise to discuss questions assigned to each group and then report their conclusions to the whole group. The questions allowed participants to analyze several themes of relevance for the management of donor relations at the institutional level, as follows:

Group A:
l   Who in your NARS is currently responsible for donor relations? List his/her strengths and weaknesses while performing the job.
l   How many people in your NARS meet donors? Describe the results.

Group B:
l   Do you have open proposal reviews in your institute?
   -   If yes, explain and list the major advantages and disadvantages of a proposal review.
   -   If not, would you like to have such reviews and why?

Group C:
l   Does your NARS have a public awareness officer? Do you have a brochure? An annual report? A logo?
l   How and why is public awareness linked to donor relations in your organization?
l   How effective are these efforts in your organization? Give examples.

Group D:
l   Does anyone in your NARS go around giving speeches about your work? In schools? To farmers' groups? To others?
   –   If yes, how would you describe the results? Would you recommend this practice to other institutes? Why?
   –   If not, how would you anticipate the impact of this activity on your institute? (List strengths and weaknesses.) Would you be interested in initiating this kind of activity? Why?
   –   If you wanted to know more about donors, whom in your institute would you ask?

The following tables present a summary of the group presentations for this exercise.

Exercise 4. How well does your institute manage donor relations?

Group A

Who is responsible for donor relations (give staff category: e.g. DDG, Assistant to DG, etc.)	*His/her performance*		How many people meet donors?	*Describe results*
	Strengths	Weaknesses		
Executive Director Fund raising director Director General/ Program leader V.C. / D.V.C R&Ex. Universities Desk Officer (Min. of Agriculture)	Experienced D.G. E.D. Or program leaders	Lack of coordination Lack of technical know how – can't lobby effectively No clear role of donor relation No qualified human resource donor relation Lack of continuity in donor relation office	Same as no. 1	Positive results 50%

Group B

Do you have open proposal reviews?		
If yes		If not
Advantages	Disadvantages	Would you like to have them? Why
Improve the quality of the proposal by including other perspectives Increase competitiveness Can become learning process Improve the fitness to the institute goals	Unnecessary delay competition among people Diversion of objectives Personal agenda Free riders	Adaptive research – yes Commissioned research – peer review University research – s. committee

Increases transparency		

Group C

Does your NARS have a:	*How and why is public awareness linked to donor relations in your organization?*	*How effective are these efforts? Give examples*
Public Awareness Officer?	Most organizations will have someone to do the functions of a public awareness officer, could be designated officer or additional responsibility given to a researcher	We need to raise the profile of our organization. Both to the public (in order to get support) and also to donors (for funds). Donors are investors and would like to support demand-driven research and development initiatives.
Brochure?/ Annual Report?	Most organizations have annual or bi-annual publications or journals	If donors know what you are doing is in the interest of the public domain, they identify with you and give support.
Logo?	Most have logos to sell their identify. Some have corporate identity	The disadvantages of not linking the 2 sectors are many.
Others? (please list)		Where this has been done, some degree of success is noticeable, but more effort is needed in this direction.

Group D

Does anyone in your NARS go around giving speeches about your work?	IF YES		IF NO: Anticipated impact		Would you be interested in initiating this activity? Why?	If you wanted to know more about donors, whom in your institute would you ask?
	Describe results	Would you recommend this. Why?	Strengths	Weaknesses		
in schools?	Effective	Children listen – respect Children teach parents Investment to the future Public awareness Donors like		Loss of information during process Gender issues		Director General Office for public relations/international affairs Older researchers
to farmers' groups?		Listen well Effective communication Two-way communication How Wide spreading – publicity Farmers talk about their problems		Gender issues Strong tradition Loss of information		
to others? Policymakers media						

Exercise 5. The importance of partnerships
(modified panel technique)

1. Form four groups of participants, each group electing a rapporteur.

Phase 1. Group work (55 minutes)

2. Read briefly handout 2.5.4.

3. On the basis of the text ICLARM's Policy on Partnerships in Research and Related Activities (handout 2.5.4) respond to the following questions. You may use the attached worksheet (handout 2.5.3) to record your responses.

    A. 1) Does your organization have policies that reinforce (or could reinforce) the development of partnership in research? List two major ones.

    A. 2) Give one major advantage and disadvantage of formulating policies on partnerships. Explain.

    B) Has your organization worked with partners? What were your experiences in this regard, both positive and negative? List at least two lessons you have learned about working with partners.

    C) Discuss and decide on elements that would help your organization to develop partnerships. Use key words.
        – Define a major objective
        – List two:
            – good partnership principles
            – criteria for selection of partners
            – mechanisms for establishing and maintaining partnerships

4. The rapporteurs write the results on a flipchart.

Phase 2. Reporting and discussion (1 hours 10 minutes)

The rapporteurs sit in a semi-circle in front of the audience and each presents the results of his/her group's discussions; first group A, then B, C, and D. (20 minutes)

After the four groups' reports are over, there is a five-minute discussion of the results among the panelists (rapporteurs) followed by a discussion with the audience.
(5 minutes)

The trainer invites the audience to compare the results and discusses the four group results displayed on the flipcharts. (30 minutes)

At the end of this discussion, the trainer invites a few volunteers to share the major lessons learned during this exercise. (10 minutes)

Finally, the trainer welcomes feedback on this session and summarizes the results.
(5 minutes)

Results of Exercise 5. The importance of partnerships

A 1) *Elements of your organization's partnership policy:*

Group A: **-** no form policies for most org.

   - Fragmental policy statements in various forms

  Group feels that formal policies are important.

Group B: Policies / mechanism to re-enforce partnerships

   - Guidelines (institute level)

   - Incentive system (need not be monetary)

   - Formulating policies on partnerships

Group C: a) Search for partners → multi reasons: disciplinary teams (CGIAR – sub regional, NARI,

    farmers etc.)

  b) End – users are partners

Group D: 1. Research Advisory Council (zones)

  2. Canadian Council for Regulation of non-governmental org.

  3. Jamaica – Regional, national, Sectoral Agricultural org.

 2) *Advantage / Disadvantage of formulating policies*

Major advantage	Why?
Group A: Help protect the interest of institution/researchers	Avoids diversion from institutional goals or manipulation of goals by outside interests
	Ensure win-win partnerships are given priority → resource sharing
	Ensure mutuality and reciprocity
-----	------
Group B: Frame of reference or scientists	
→ Clarity	
→Spells out types of potential partners + partnerships	
→ Definitions	
→ Guidance	
Assumption : Policy well written + clear	

Group C: - Provide policy guidelines	
- Guidelines could be modified	

Group D: Cost effective, better results and faster adaptation	
Major disadvantage	**Why?**
Group A: Policies may be inflexible/inhibitive	Take time to be revised
------	----
Group B: - Maybe to restrictive	
- May not necessarily meet needs of donors and/or stakeholders	

---- **Group C:** - Policies might constrain you from other options - Policies can have unintended consequences. i.e. cost increases. ----- **Group D:** Development of guidelines for partnerships can be lengthy - Participation may be limited when a common vision is not in place	

B) _Summary of experience of working with external partners: universities, NGOs, private sector, CGIAR centers, etc._

Group A:

Positives *experiences:* -> Benefited in resources skills knowledge

Negatives e*xperiences :*-> Conflict over resources /resources use - Vested interests - Partners fail to
complete their assignments - Partner fail to produce report of financial
statement or time

Lessons: Partner should be selected carefully to ensure project success and ensure partner share
same values / visions - Partnership can be very beneficial and should be encouraged

Group B:

Positives experience working with partners -> involvement of other disciplines in project

Negatives experiences – initial, in-depth contact with partners was missing

Lessons: From positives experiences: Some projects require and greatly benefit from multidisciplinary
Partnership projects give young researchers the opportunity to participate and
acquire higher degrees and skills

From negative experiences: early discussion in preferably face-to-face situation very
important -> to clarify respective responsibilities + establish 'equal' relationship

Group C: All participant -> Yes

Positives experiences: Consolidated efforts to solve common problems – Money is available for the
consortium – Allows capacity building – share knowledge/experiences

Negatives experiences: Some passive partners are overshadowed by active partners
Partners that don't do their part can jeopardize the project
Could give rise to mistrust
There could be priority setting issues involved in partnership

Lessons learned from partnerships:
1.It is necessary to have a MOU (living / viable document) -> IPR -> legal framework
2. Conflict resolution mechanism should be ensured

Group D: Yes

Positives experiences: in Ethiopia with researchers /agro-industry workshop

Negatives experiences: Jamaica researchers / Extension service. – ES. Were not committed to task
of data collection because capabilities were not clearly documented.

Lessons: 1. Clarify roles and responsibilities and schedules in W.P.
2. Use experience and clear guidelines when choosing partners and assigning responsibility
3. Capabilities and will
4. Make provisions for modifications

C) *Major objective*:

Group A: To enter into productive, appropriate and mutually beneficial partnership to achieve goals of
institution

Group B: Co-production + sharing of knowledge strengthening collaboration between institutions and
Individuals **-** Increase efficiency – minimize duplication

Group C: Improve / maximize research capacity

Group D: To increase efficiency and improve the output, optimize cost and facilitate smooth transfer
results to target group.

Good partnership principles:

Group A: Shared vision -- Interdependence

Group B: Equity – Mutually beneficial – Resource sharing

Group C: Trust – Shared values / vision – Equity – Contribution of partners – Transparency

Group D: Participation ←> shared vision - Transparency

Criteria for selection of partners:

Group A: Should offer skills/ i.e. sources that the institution is weak
Should be compatible to organization and should enhance activities of org.

Group B: shared goal objectives - complimentarity of qualities – Good reputation – capacity to
provide part of the resources (cost-sharing)

Group C:

Group D: Complimentarity – compatibility – Commitment

Mechanisms for establishing and maintaining partnerships:

Group A: Identify potential key partners based on exiting strengths and weakness in project
Asses capabilities / Skills / resources being made available by partners
Develop MOU for partnership indicating responsibilities for each partner

Group B: Joint meetings / reviews - Regular communications / meetings – Formalizing partnerships
in a MOU

Group C: Consultation / Negotiation – MOU – Conflict resolution

Group D: Prepare precise WP – document decision in schedule meetings – MOU – Reports (Honest)

# Exercise 6. Reflecting on Good Project Principles

(take three for better brainstorming technique)

Phase 1. Individual work (10 minutes)

1. Put yourself in the position of a project designer and answer the following questions from that perspective. Use handout 2.6.3 to write down your answers. Reflect on the eight principles presented in handout 2.6.4.

    A. In which principles is your organization strong, and which need improvement? List three principles of each type.
    B. What recommendations would you make to your organization to improve the application of these principles? List three recommendations.

Phase 2. Group work (30 minutes)

2. Form four groups and have each group elect a rapporteur.
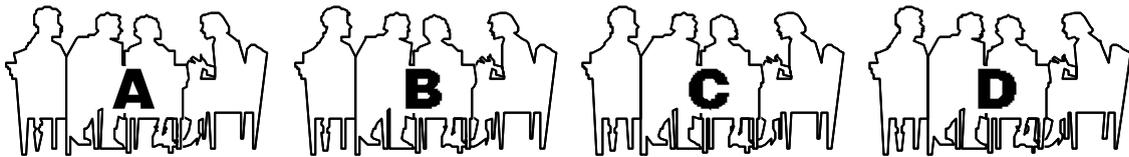
3. The group members discuss the list of contributions written on handout 2.6.3 and decide on:
    1) three most popular strong principles,
    2) three principles in which organizations need improvement,
    3) three major recommendations to improve the application of important principles for a better project design.

    The rapporteurs use flipcharts to write down their groups' results.

Phase 3. Reporting and discussion (25 minutes)

4. The rapporteurs present their groups' results to all the participants and initiate discussion.

5. The facilitator highlights the important issues of this exercise and provides feedback.

Results of Exercise 6. Reflecting on Good Project Principles

Strengths

- Project design in group process (9)
- Partnership (17)
- Demonstrating impact on development (8)
- Holistic thinking (6)
- Packaging in fundable parts (2)
- Proposal – Art and Science (8)
- Be prepared for failure (3)

Weaknesses

- Group process (5)
- Holistic thinking (7)
- Demonstrating (9)
- Packaging in parts (15)
- Art and science (8)
- Time for project design (10)
- Be prepared for failure (8)

Recommendations

- How to take time (4)
- Packaging (10)
- Training on teamwork for design team (all)
- Guidelines on proposal writing – short
- Seeking partnership regionally

Strengths and Weaknesses of Day Two

Strengths day 2

Content
Donor identification on Internet highly beneficial; understood well about the donors; new insights on donors relationship (7)
Getting information from the Horse's Mouth on PMD technical assistance grant screening criteria (1)
Learning experiences on the importance of partnerships; identify the key principles of good partnerships; policy on partnership, interesting subject; new ideas on partnership activities (6)
Very good content for the topic; very useful; excellent (4)
Examples were useful and relevant (1)

Structure
Useful handouts (2)
Excellent (1)

Process: training techniques and direction
Very interactive exercises (1)
Interesting discussions during group work; very productive; group interaction excellent (4)
Very good presentation enriching experiences; very useful and well articulated (3)
Good idea to invite donor agent to give very good information; very informative (7)
Good idea to postpone the topic on projects (1)
Group composition changes (1)

Trainer's/facilitators performance & materials
The presentations were excellent; clear; communication skills were excellent (3)
Trainers well organized; trainers skills (2)
Excellent use of time, this allowed participants to check e-mail, etc; time keeping was excellent. (8)
Handouts were given in an orderly manner (1)
Good balance between lectures and participation (1)
Very practical information that has immediate value to my organization (1)
Exercises very much useful (3)

Trainee's performance
More interaction of participants was observed, effective participation; own experiences came up (8)

Logistical support
Good continued support and co-operation from all the faculty & support staff of ISNAR (1)

General comments
A reflection on how partnership should be outered - importance of having clear policies & values of partnership (1)
Good team spirit (2)
Workshop results were very useful (1)

Weaknesses of day

Organization
Lunch was not that good (1)
Transportation was unusual, but I am adapting

Time allocation/workload
More time on internet searching; on PMD presentation (2)
We were not able to complete the day's program; it will pressure on next day (3)
Arrangements at the cafeteria delay lunchtime; only one worker giving and selling food (8)
Time constraints; limited time for group work (3)
Lunch break to short (1)
Sessions are too long (3)

Materials/Content
Inadequate explicit verification to place the term partnership for the Donors (1)
Overwhelming use of acronyms (some participants don't understand their meanings) (1)
Schedule was too tight, we could not follow (2)
PowerPoint presentation not animated (1)
Exercise handouts are hard to follow (1)
Too many interruptions for the exercise today (1)

Suggestions to improve the workshop

– Time keeping needs to be balanced; more time for participants discussion
– Practical situation required (2)
– Time was extremely short; the limiting factor for group work (2)
– When the participants start to get tired, please introduce some brief exercises (even physical) to increase energy levels
– Same case analysis could be interesting – some documents (good and bad ones) could be analyzed in groups
– Improve food serving tomorrow to avoid unnecessary delay (2)
– Perhaps the curtains could be open for a while to allow natural light in
– In future, computer for internet should be more that one; the hotel should also have computer facility for guest
– Keep up with the methods
– Lengthen lunch break to cope with fatigue
– Liked the improvisation (e.g. IFAD presentation, very practical)
– Maybe you should have a clock in the room and also a "chronometer" – groups tendency is to forget the "deadline"
– Increase exercises and participation of trainees.
– Keep it up, making the sharing more exciting
– The workshop is going very well; it should go on as planned; you are doing great!!! (3)
– Still going good on keep the momentum
– Congratulation! This day was much better that yesterday; excellent day (2)

Exercise 7. Identifying project topics of potential interest to donors
(group work)

1. Form four groups and have each group elect a rapporteur. (5 minutes)

Phase 1. Group work (35 minutes)

2. Imagine you are a donor. Each group considers the following four potential project topics, and evaluates each against items 1, 3, 4, and 6 in the checklist of six topic criteria in handout 3.7.3.

   a. Developing a cheap vaccine against AIDS.
   b. Building 100 new primary schools in the poorest areas of Cameroon.
   c. Research into alternative agricultural crops for small farmers growing opium poppies in Asia.
   d. Providing training in how to write convincing proposals for NARS scientists.
   e. Developing a program in your NARS to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic

3. On the basis of the evaluation, the group is asked to select two topics that it thinks will be most likely to attract the interest and funding of an external donor. List at least three criteria used to make this selection.

4. Use handout 3.7.5 to analyze the four potential project topics.

Phase 2. Reporting and discussion (25 minutes)

5. A rapporteur from each group presents the results to all the participants. Five minutes are allowed for each presentation. (20 minutes)

6. The trainer guides discussion of the results, to see if there can be consensus on which topics would be most attractive to external funders. (5 minutes)

Results of Exercise 7. Identifying project topics of potential interest to donors

Potential project topics	Topic Criteria: Selecting			
	1. Problem that is important	3. Project topic that is beneficiary priority	4. a manageable topic	6. Topic with the right balance of risk and return
A Developing a cheap vaccine against AIDS (12)	Topic is of great importance	The benefits will be great and extend beyond those infected	Other than developing the vaccine (which is not the mandate of NARS) other issues such as nutrition, education, home-based ? etc. are relevant and although internal capacity may not be there, this can be acquired through partnerships	Because of the topic addresses quality of life for both infected and affected the returns are higher than the risks
B) Building 100 new primary schools in the poorest areas of Cameroon (12)				

Results of Exercise 7. Worksheet (handout 3.7.5) (continued)

Potential project topics	Topic Criteria: Selecting			
	1. Problem that is important	3. Project topic that is beneficiary priority	4. a manageable topic	6. Topic with the right balance of risk and return
C) Research into alternative agricultural crops for small farmers growing opium poppies in Asia Group A: Opium is a lucrative business	It's an important topic for most developed countries who are largely the donors Its attractive to the donors; they would want to solve this problem because the constituents are affected by this problem.	Need to distinguish who is/are the beneficiaries - If opium grower, the project will not necessarily be beneficial unless they are compensated by alternative income - If developed xtries consumer the benefits are clear	Drugs are associated with crime - very difficult to manage unless the middlemen are convinced that there are moral grounds to disassociate themselves - the risk is very high	Risks high but returns will be high if the initiative is successful and sustainable
C) Alternative to opium Group B	Eradication of malnutrition high	Changing farmers' attitude high	Soil fertility improvements Very high	Orphan crops (high impact)

Results of Exercise 7. Worksheet (handout 3.7.5) (continued)

D) Providing training in how to write convincing proposals for NARS scientists (16)				
E) Developing a program in your NARS to address the HIV/AIDS pandemic	High – Alarming rate of spread – Loss of labor force – High rate of orphans – Spread to younger generation	High concern of the people	Med/moderate – High participation and execution – Support from cross-section stakeholders	Long-term impact
	Topic is of great importance	The benefits will be great & extend beyond those infected	Other than developing the vaccine (which is not the mandate of NARS) other issues such as nutrition, education, home-based ?, etc. are relevant. And although internal capacity may not be there, this can be acquired through	Because of the topic addresses quality of life for both infected and affected the returns are lighter than the risks.

			partnerships	

Results of Exercise 7. Worksheet (handout 3.7.6)

Two topics will be most likely to attract the interest of donors	Three (or more) criteria used to select the two topics
1. Developing a program in your NARS to address HIV/AIDS	− Problem important − Beneficiary priority − Right balance risk/return
2. Building 1000 schools in poorest areas of Cameroon	− Right balance risk/return − Very manageable − Beneficiary priority
3. Training on writing proposals	Low risk and high return

Summary of scores

TOT	1	3	4	6
A (12)	4	4	2	2
B (14)	3	3	4	4
C (5)	1	1	2	1
D (12)	2	3	4	3
E (13)	4	4	2	3

Exercise 8a. The use of definite, concrete words (individual exercise)

Phase 1. Individual work (20 minutes)

Find definite, concrete words for each of these phrases or words.

Prior to that time	_____
An abundance of	_____
Frequently	_____
In the event that	_____
For the purpose of	_____
In the majority	_____
Make enquiry regarding	_____
Utilization	_____
At the present time	_____
In view of the fact	_____
Terminate	_____
Hold a meeting	_____
Remunerate	_____
Close proximity to	_____
Employ	_____
Commence	_____
Necessitate	_____
At this point in time	_____
In the initial instance	_____
Magnitude	_____

Phase 2. Discussion (25 minutes)

The trainer will invite you to discuss the results of this exercise and finally distribute handout 3.8.4 with possible answers for this session.

Prose Style for Scientific Writing[1]

Verbiage

Review the text of the manuscript to eliminate phrases and words that are not needed. Although writing can be too compact and terse, wordiness is the more common fault. For example, a phrase such as "it is interesting to note that" adds no information and only delays getting to the point of the sentence. Change expressions such as "It was reported by Smith that..." to "Smith reported that ..." Below are some frequently used wordy phrases and their more concise equivalents.

A number of	few, many, several
An innumerable number of tiny veins	innumerable tiny veins
As far as our own observations are concerned they show	we observed
Ascertain the location of	find
At the present moment, at this moment in time	now
Bright green in color	bright green
By means of	by, with
(We) conducted inoculation experiments on	inoculated
Due to the fact that	because
During the time that	while
Fewer in number	fewer
For the purpose of examining	to examine
For the reason that	because, since
From the standpoint of	according to
Goes under the name of	is called
If conditions are such that	if
In all cases	always, invariably
In order to	to
In the course of	during
In the event that	if
In the near future	soon
In the vicinity of	near
In view of the fact that	because
It is this that	this
It would thus appear that	apparently
Large numbers of	many
Lenticular in character	lenticular
Masses are of large size	masses are large
Necessitates the inclusion of	needs, requires
Of such hardness that	so hard that
On the basis of	from, by, because
Oval in shape, oval-shaped	oval
Plants exhibited good growth	plants grew well
Prior to (in time)	before
Serves the function of being	is

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[1] Extracted from: CBE Style Manual Committee 1983. CBE style manual; A guide for authors, editors, and publishers in the biological sciences. 5th ed. rev. and expanded. Bethesda, MD: Council of Biology Editors, Inc.: 1983. pages 35-37.

Subsequent to	after
The fish in question	this fish
The tests have not as yet	the tests have not
The treatment having been performed	after treatment
There can be little doubt that this is throughout the entire area	this probably is throughout the area
Through the whole of the experiment	throughout the experiment
Two equal halves	halves

Exercise 8b. Work with words
(work in pairs)

1. Form a pair with your neighbor.
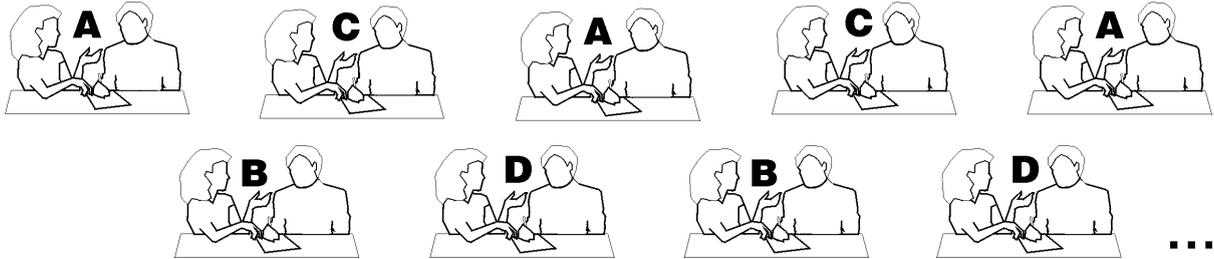
Phase 1. Work in pairs (30 minutes)

2. The trainer assigns letters A, B, C, and D to the pairs, repeatedly, until all pairs have letters.

3. Read carefully the sentences assigned to your pair (handout 3.8.6) and eliminate wordiness.

4. Write the improved statements on an overhead transparency provided by the trainer. Make sure you write clearly using large letters.

Phase 2. Reporting and discussion (35 minutes)

5. The trainer invites rapporteurs from the A, B, C, and D pairs to present the results to the audience.

6. The trainer invites other pairs who had different responses to share and discuss their results.

7. The trainer will assist the participants to analyze the responses, and at the end will ask for feedback on this exercise.

Eliminate wordiness in the following sentences:

PAIR A
1. An innumerable number of tiny veins were observed.
2. At the present time growers are more careful.
3. We first tested three samples at room temperature, and when these tests had been completed we heated the others to a temperature of 150 degrees C and subjected them to the same tests.

PAIR B
4. In view of the fact that time is short, please hurry.
5. During the time that the course is being given, silence is to be expected.
6. For the reason that men are careless, foolish deeds are often brought to accomplishment.

PAIR C
7. As far as our own observations are concerned, they show no effect.
8. When the choice of a new truck is made, the length of the body on the model chosen should be at least one-and-a-half times greater than the length of the body of the truck that we are using at the present time.
9. This tube serves the dual function of being both a trap and an outlet.

PAIR D
10. In terms of the illustrations, we will always find a whole spectrum of variety with regard to quality.
11. Due to the fact that time is short, please hurry.
12. There can be little doubt that these data are accurate

Exercise 9a. Active and passive sentences
(individual work)

Phase 1. Individual work (20 minutes)

1. Read the following sentences and mark them either A for Active, or P for Passive.

It is expected that the house will be painted white next year.

_____ I want to paint my house white next year.

_____ A prize of $1,000 will be given for the best short story published.

_____ The publishing house announced a prize of $1,000 for the best short story.

_____ The technician weighed the animals every day for a week.

_____ The animals were weighed each day for a week.

_____ Daily gains for pigs were found to be 0.5 kg.

The pigs gained at least 500 grams each day.

_____ Measurements were recorded each day.

_____ A lazy technician recorded the measurements each day.

_____ The number of plants was counted at the end of each month.

_____ He also counted the number of plants at the end of each month.

_____ The scientist asked the women farmers to plant the maize seed in straight rows, but they just laughed at him.

_____ The women farmers were asked to plant the maize seeds in straight rows; the scientist was laughed at for his trouble.

_____ The students recorded their findings and left for their holidays.

After the findings were recorded, the students were told they could leave.

_____ My proposal was reviewed twice, and each time it was criticized for being too short.

_____ My supervisor doesn't like me, and is always saying my proposals are too short.

_____

Phase 2. Results and discussion (30 minutes)

2. The trainer asks the participants to exchange papers with their neighbor, and to correct them.

3. The group members discuss whether, in general, they find that the active or the passive sentences (a) convey more meaning, and b) are easier to understand.

4. The trainer distributes handout 3.9.3 with the answers for this exercise.

Exercise 9a. Active and passive sentences (answers)

A for ACTIVE, or P for PASSIVE sentences.

Mark A   for ACTIVE sentence.

Mark P   for PASSIVE sentence.

P   It is expected that the house will be painted white next year.
A   *I want to paint my house white next year.*
P   A prize of $1,000 will be given for the best short story published.
A   *The publishing house announced a prize of $1,000 for the best short story.*
A   The technician weighed the animals every day for a week.
P   *The animals were weighed each day for a week.*
P   Daily gains for pigs were found to be 0.5 kg.
A   *The pigs gained at least 500 grams each day.*
P   Measurements were recorded each day.
A   *A lazy technician recorded the measurements each day.*
P   The number of plants was counted at the end of each month.
A   *He also counted the number of plants at the end of each month.*
A   The scientist asked the women farmers to plant the maize seed in straight rows, but they just laughed at him.
P   *The women farmers were asked to plant the maize seeds in straight rows; the scientist was laughed at for his trouble.*
A   The students recorded their findings and left for their holidays.
P   *After the findings were recorded, the students were told they could leave.*
P   My proposal was reviewed twice, and each time it was criticized for being too short.
A   *My supervisor doesn't like me, and is always saying my proposals are too short.*

Note to trainers: In general, active sentences both convey more meaning and are easier to understand. This is, because passive sentences often do not indicate who has been doing the action and because passive sentences may be longer and more complex than active ones.

Exercise 9b. Writing to persuade, writing to inform
(pair and group work)

> This exercise is designed to help you understand the difference between writing to persuade and writing to inform. Both are useful ways of writing. When writing a project proposal you are writing to try to persuade a donor to fund your work, so to write a good proposal, you need to know some of the tricks of writing to persuade. One of the tricks is to use strong words that convey emotion.

1.   Pair up with a neighbor.

Phase 1. Pair work (25 minutes)

1.   The trainer assigns a writing sample to each pair (from A to F), repeating if necessary. The sample sentences from handouts 3.9.5 through 3.9.10 were extracted from project proposals, as an example of writing to persuade using emotive words. Remember that emotive words convey feelings as well as meaning to persuade the reader to do something or adopt a particular point of view.

2.   Read the example below carefully. Identify the emotive words and compare them with the subsequent responses. Analyze the comments and the proposed statement without the emotive words.

Example:
Writing to persuade, using emotive words:
In many societies, fishers are the poorest of the poor—the landless who must live and make their meager livelihood on the fickle, frightening seas. Today, humble fisher-families are even worse off than before. Commercial fisheries, blind to all but immediate profits, are using bigger boats with smaller nets to scoop up every fish, leaving virtually nothing for the small fishers, and, even more alarming, no fish to spawn the future fish stocks.

Here is the example with all the emotive words underlined:
 In many societies, fishers are the <u>poorest</u> of the poor—the landless who must live and make their <u>meager</u> livelihood on the <u>fickle</u>, <u>frightening</u> seas. Today, <u>humble</u> fisher-families are even <u>worse off</u> than before. Commercial fisheries, <u>blind</u> to all but immediate profits, are using bigger boats with smaller nets to <u>scoop up</u> every fish, leaving virtually nothing for the small fishers, and, even more <u>alarming</u>, no fish to spawn the future fish stocks.

Analysis of the effect of the emotive words:
Notice that almost all the emotive words are negative, except perhaps "humble" to describe the small fisher families. It seems that the writer is trying to persuade the reader that the poorest of the poor are being made worse off, and someone should do something about it.   This might well come from a fisheries research project proposal.

Without the emotive words, this piece might be rewritten to inform, as follows:

In many societies, people without land have no alternative but to become fishers, living and earning their living at sea. As commercial fisheries, intent on short-term profits, increase their catch by using larger boats and smaller nets, there are ever fewer fish left to feed the subsistence fisher families and to breed future stocks.

3. Work on the sample that you have been assigned. Note that each sample contains some emotive words.
    a) Underline the emotive words.
    b) Analyze and describe what the writing is trying to persuade the reader to think, feel, or do.
    c) Rewrite the example as if you were writing to inform. Leave out all the emotive words, and try to lay out the information without favoring one point of view or trying to persuade the reader of anything but the facts of the matter.

4. Remember that in this exercise you are *not correcting* these examples; you are changing them to show the difference between two equally valuable and valid forms of writing.

Phase 2. Group work (40 minutes)

5. Your pair should join a neighboring pair. Now there will be four people in each group.

6. Share with each other the responses to the exercise. Remember that the neighboring pair could have worked on a different or the same statement as yours. Discuss the responses and summarize the major lessons learned during this exercise.

Phase 3. Plenary discussion (30 minutes)

7. The trainer presents the overheads with the results of these exercises and asks the groups to share their results as well. Note that any group member can respond to the trainer during this phase.

8. The trainer distributes handout 3.9.11 with possible answers for the exercise and asks for feedback on this exercise. He then summarizes the results and lessons learned.

Exercise 9b. Worksheet

Sample A.

1. Identify and underline the emotive words

The effect of the drought was catastrophic; after the rains failed for a second year, only the luckiest or the richest of the desert margin smallholders had any seeds left to plant when the short rains finally came.

2. Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

3. Rewrite the statement to inform

4. Two lessons learned

Sample B.

1.   Identify and underline the emotive words

Oil companies have now leased virtually all remaining tropical forest areas for exploration or production, and drilling has caused widespread and serious damage in the Amazon, West Africa, Papua New Guinea, etc.

2. Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

3. Rewrite the statement to inform

4. Two lessons learned

Sample C.

1.   Identify and underline the emotive words

Resource-poor land users are commonly both the victims and cause of unsustainable land management; more attention must be given to the roots of their problems if irreversible soil degradation is to be avoided.

2. Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

3. Rewrite the statement to inform

4. Two lessons learned

Sample D.

1. Identify and underline the emotive words

The economic and political requirements for delivering the sustainable development that Rio headlined as its central mantra does not dominate the world agenda. International competitiveness and improving investment conditions by cutting back social security benefits are the buzzwords in the debate on globalization. They drown out almost every question about ecology.

2. Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

3. Rewrite the statement to inform

4. Two lessons learned

Sample E.

1. Identify and underline the emotive words

Agency ABC works with local organizations in underprivileged countries to prevent suffering and hunger. By active promotion of animal health and welfare and improved husbandry, it aims to enhance the environment within which animals live, and that of people who depend upon livestock for their survival.

Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

Rewrite the statement to inform

Two lessons learned

Sample F.

1.   Identify and underline the emotive words

Awareness is growing that water is a scarce and precious resource, which must be carefully managed if frightening future water crises are to be avoided. Everyone agrees that water is vital to all life, and is therefore central to all efforts to eliminate poverty.

Analyze and describe what the writer is trying to do

Rewrite the statement to inform

Two lessons learned

Possible Answers to Exercise 9b

A) The effect of the <u>drought</u> was <u>catastrophic</u>; after the rains <u>failed</u> for a second year, only the <u>luckiest</u> or the <u>richest</u> of the desert margin smallholders had any seeds left to plant when the short rains <u>finally</u> came.

The writer wants the reader to care about the plight of the desert margin dweller following two years of drought. This might be a piece from an NGO like Oxfam, wanting readers to make contributions for famine relief.

Writing to Inform: Poor rains for two years in succession meant that only a few farmers had any seeds to plant when the rains came.

B) Oil companies have now leased <u>virtually all remaining</u> tropical forest areas for exploration or production, and drilling has caused <u>widespread</u> and <u>serious</u> <u>damage</u> in the Amazon, West Africa, Papua New Guinea, etc.

The writer is sounding an alarm, wanting the reader to be very concerned about the damage to the tropical forest. This might come from an environmental advocacy group like Greenpeace.

Writing to Inform: Many of the remaining tropical forest areas have been leased for potential exploration or production by various oil companies. There has already been drilling for oil in various regions, including parts of the Amazon, West Africa, and Papua New Guinea.

C) <u>Resource-poor</u> land users are commonly both the <u>victims</u> and cause of <u>unsustainable</u> land management; more attention <u>must</u> be given to the roots of their problems if <u>irreversible</u> soil <u>degradation</u> is to be avoided.

The writer is urging action—attention to the problem of poor farmers. This may come from a proposal for a soil project.

Writing to Inform: The problems and practices of poor, small farmers need attention if soil fertility is to be improved.

D) The economic and political requirements for delivering the sustainable development that Rio <u>headlined</u> as its central <u>mantra</u> does not <u>dominate</u> the world agenda. International competitiveness and improving investment conditions by <u>cutting back</u> social security <u>benefits</u> are the <u>buzz-words</u> in the debate on globalization. They <u>drown out</u> almost every question about ecology.

This writer is angry that ecological issues are not being addressed by world governments, and wants to persuade the reader that this is a tragedy. Like example 2, this might come from a pamphlet of an environmental advocacy agency like IUCN or Friends of the Earth.

Writing to Inform: Issues related to globalization, such as improving conditions for investment and competitiveness, seem to be of greater global importance than the recommendations of Rio calling for economic and political changes to deliver sustainable development.

E)   Agency ABC works with local organizations in <u>underprivileged</u> countries to prevent <u>suffering</u> and <u>hunger</u>. By <u>active</u> promotion of animal <u>health</u> and <u>welfare</u> and <u>improved</u> husbandry, it aims to <u>enhance</u> the environment within which animals live, and that of people who depend upon livestock for their <u>survival</u>.

The writer is "selling" Agency ABC, using strong words like <u>suffering</u>, <u>survival</u> and <u>hunger</u> to show how important the work is. It might come from the brochure of a group that does livestock research or development projects.

Writing to Inform: Agency ABC works with local organizations in developing countries on livestock projects designed to improve the health of animals owned by subsistence farm families.

F).   Awareness is growing that water is a <u>scarce</u> and <u>precious</u> resource, which must be carefully managed if <u>frightening</u> future water <u>crises</u> are to be avoided. Everyone agrees that water is <u>vital</u> to <u>all life</u>, and is therefore central to all efforts to <u>eliminate</u> poverty.

The writer wants to put the water situation as strongly and dramatically as possible. Strong emotive words are designed to make the reader become aware and concerned about the possibility of an alarming future when the world "runs dry."

Writing to Inform: Increasingly, water is perceived to be a scarce resource. Improved water management is therefore seen as a necessary step towards poverty alleviation.

Evaluation of DAY 3

Strengths of the workshop: DAY 3

Content•
Use of evaluation criteria was appreciated as a lead to ensure success of research proposal; topic very good; good analysis of donor's criteria (3)
Two types of writing i.e. emotive from the heart and informative from the head are now highlighted; appreciated the importance of writing proposal with passion; excellent item (2)
Very useful content, relevant material; informative topics; interesting subjects; useful (6)
Very clear understanding of today sessions especially on writing to inform & persuading; program; projects; introduced to project design principles; the rationale of programs and projects were depicted very lucidly (9)
Picking the right topic of interest for donor consideration was good input for the day session (1)
Tips in writing were very good; excellent illustration to use proper language to convey a message (2)
Getting to know your reader before you write (1)
Use of relevant examples reinforced the concepts (1)
Booklet on "how to draft a grant application for a research proposal" (1)
Experiences & examples good (1)
Use of active/passive voices is more than clear now (1)

Structure
Handouts were informative; well developed to support learning (2)

Process: training techniques and direction
Very interactive exercises (1)
Shift seating helps to meet new people; each day a new partner is a great idea (2)

Trainer's/facilitators performance & materials
Time keeping is good; excellent; punctuality (4)
Exercises very useful; very clear, very practical (4)
Exciting presentations; very practical (2)
Good balance of lectures and group work; balanced session – group, plenary and short lectures (2)
Facilitators highly responsive; excellent facilitation, fantastic (3)
We were able to catch up with the program, the lecture we brought forward (thank you) (1)
Material adequate, informative (2)

Trainee's performance
Plenary sessions were very insightful; fanciful; discussions were lively (2)
Contributions from participants keep increasing; very active and good interaction, team work (6)

Logistical support
The photographer was a good one (1)
Very good logistical support (1)

• The number between brackets indicates how many times the statements were mentioned

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General comments
A relaxed atmosphere was presented, lot of laughing (2)
A lighter day (1)
Quite revealing to be in the position of donor (1)
Lunch was improved considerably; well organized; very fast; congratulations! (5)
Another interesting day; effective (2)
I am better able to write in a more convincing style – emotive & persuasive; the exercise comparing writing to inform vs. writing to convince has been one of the most exciting, entertaining and useful for the course so far (2)
Having the representative from CTA as a resource person has been a "value added" to the course content. His comments are always timely and appropriate. (1)

Weaknesses of the workshop DAY 2

Organization
Lunch (1)

Time allocation/workload
Last session a bit too slow (1)
The day was too long; closed after time according to program was over; time was not controlled (3)
Very short time to go through handouts (1)
Too much time spent on writing/small group part of last exercise, although following plenary discussion was very useful (1)

Materials/Content
Individual exercises could have worked better in pairs (1)
Had a bit of problems on the analysis to decide the viability of project (1)
Amount of information – rather heavy but manageable (1)
A native and an expert in English language could have been assigned to make the course a lively and on "use of emotive words" (1)
One of the exercises was not clear; some of the questions not clear; bit confusing – exercise 7 (2)
The exercise on active and passive sentences turned out to be quite boring (1)

Suggestions to improve the workshop

Participants to be informed about the day of taking group photo well in advance
Please don't forget to give us the list with address of each of the participant
Keep the momentum
A BBC video presentation on language for scientific writers could have appealed to some.
More time for exercises of group interaction
More cakes for breaks
More time for visiting the library and use of internet facilities
Improve clarify on some group discussion questions
Please try to start the afternoon session with an interesting exercise
So far so good, keep it up; good work; going very well so far (6)

Exercise 10a. Writing clear, measurable, and realistic objectives

1. Form three groups. Each group elects a rapporteur. (5 minutes)

Phase 1. Group work (45 minutes)

2. Read handouts 4.10.3, 4.10.4, and 4.10.5 briefly.

3. Each group will study two proposals from "Rainbow Lands" as follows:
    ● Group A looks at Grey Land and Blue Land.
    ● Group B looks at Brown Land and Green Land.
    ● Group C looks at Pink Land and White Land.

4. Each group will analyze the proposals and respond to the following:
    a. Which of the two projects, as written so far, has the best-written objectives? Why?
    b. Take the better of the two project descriptions and improve its objectives, making them as clear, measurable, and realistic as possible.

5. Use the worksheet (handout 4.10.7) to note down your ideas and the group discussion.

6. The rapporteurs compile the groups' responses on a flipchart to present to the audience.

Phase 2. Presentation and discussion (15 minutes)

7. The trainer distributes additional Rainbow Land concept notes so that every participant has a copy of each.

8. The rapporteurs present the results of the groups' discussions to the audience. Each rapporteur has three minutes to report.

9. After some discussion, the trainer distributes handout 4.10.14 with possible answers and provides feedback on the content of the presentations. This is followed by a discussion.

Possible Results for Exercise 10a

First task: Which of the two projects, as written so far, has the best-written objectives? Why?

Group A: Grey Land's objectives are better presented than Blue Land's. But Grey Land's objectives are far from ideal also. Blue Land is far too technical for most donor readers, and the objectives are too skimpy to make any evaluation (or any improvements). Grey Land's objectives are too long, too many, and urgently need editing and sorting into the proper sections.

Group B: Green Land's objectives are better presented than Brown Land's, but there is still room for improvement in Green Land. Brown Land's project is actually about far more objectives than stated. These objectives need to be articulated, not hidden in the justification. The Green Land objectives are much better, but not quantified. It is not clear how many varieties of upland rice, for example, need to be developed for the project to be deemed a success.

Group C: White Land's objectives are better presented than Pink Land's, although both sets of objectives are fairly good. Pink Land's first two objectives need to be rephrased for non-scientific donor readers. They are also highly ambitious objectives—difficult to believe that the project can make available the disease-free materials to farmers and prevent tuber imports within two years.

Second task: Each group takes the better of the two project descriptions, and tries to improve its objectives, making them as clear, measurable, and realistic as possible.

Results of Exercise 10a: Writing clear, measurable, and realistic objectives

Group A:

According to the group A; the best written objectives are in theBlue Land Project: Transmission of African cassava mosaic virus.

Why?
→ clear link to outputs
→ specific /straightforward
→ measurable
→ achievable

* Pathologist would know

Shortcoming: Donor might not know as the research subject is not directly linked to development goal.

Overall goal: enhance food security by improving control of ACMV (African Cassava Mosaic Virus) insect transmission on cassava, a staple crop of the Southern Coast

Suggested Objectives:

First, Confirm that <u>B. Hancaki</u> is a vector of ACMV
If confirmed, compare efficacy of transmission between B. Hancocki and B. Tabaci
Based on the above study, make recommendations for improvement of the strategy for control of the vector or for further study.

Group B:

Brown Land – not selected because objectives were not smart

Green Land selected: Development of Upland Rice Varieties for Greenland

General objective:

To increase production of rice by developing high yielding varieties and production systems appropriate to the social economic conditions of Green Land by the year 1998

Suggestion: Approach IRRI for assistance with virus problem

Group C:

White Land Selected: Establishment of essences under coconut
 Reasons- Objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time bound.

General Objective:
    To generate technical information on production of essences under local condition

Specific Objectives:
1. To identify best performing essence cultivars under local condition
2. To determine optimum levels of fertilizer and shad

Exercise 10b. Identifying beneficiaries and impacts & writing a good background section (group work)

This exercise is composed of Part A (20 minutes) and Part B and reporting (1 hour 20 minutes)

Part A. The objective is to identify beneficiaries and impacts

1. Form the same three groups as in exercise 10a. Each group elects a rapporteur.
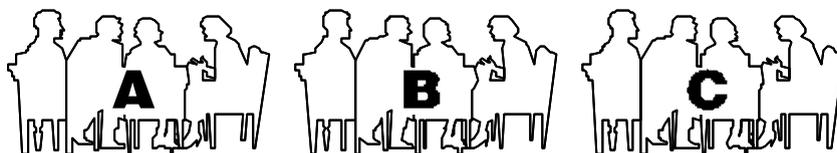
Phase 1. Group work (60 minutes)

2. Read handout 4.10.4 until step 5.

3. Choose one of the two proposals from Rainbow Lands assigned in exercise 10a.
    (20 minutes)
    a. Identify the beneficiaries.
    b. List anticipated impacts.
    c. How will its impact be measured?
    d. How would you strengthen these components in the proposals? List three suggestions.

4. Use the worksheet (handout 4.10.16) to take note of your ideas and group discussion.

5. The rapporteurs compile the groups' responses on flipcharts to present to the audience.

6. Proceed to Part B.

Part B. The objective is to repackage the background information under two headings: "the problem and why it is urgent" and "what has already been done"

7. First focus your attention on the Pink Land proposal summary (handout 4.10.12).

8. Note that the author of this project has chosen a poor format to sell his or her idea. All sorts of details are presented before the reader finds out why the project should be done.

9. Read below the same material, with some details added, written up in the format recommended in the "Third Draft Concept Note," that can be found in handout 4.10.4.

Remember that the background information is presented under two headings: "The problem and why it is urgent" and "What has already been done." (5 minutes)

The problem and why it is urgent

Potato is the staple crop of the poor of Pink Land. In one form or another, it is eaten at every meal and is the main source of calories for the x million poor children who grow up in the remote mountains or in the shanty towns of Pink Lands teeming cities.

Potatoes are a key element in the agricultural system of Pink Land's poor farmers; their production is estimated to explain as much as 75% of the country's total potato crop. Most poor farm families grow enough potato to have a marketable surplus after feeding themselves. The sale of potato may be the main source of cash needed for transportation, education, and health in many a poor farm family.

The main constraint to improved performance in potato production is, according to Pink Land's farmers, the lack of quality, disease–free seed tubers. Because current techniques for propagating disease-free tubers are ineffective, the country has resorted to importing the maximum amount permitted by law (15% of the annual demand). The remaining 85% comes from farmers' previous crops, which have been found to almost always be virus-infected.

Scientists at the State University and the Bureau of Plant Industry estimate that being forced to use virus-infected seed results in a 40%-60% loss in yield for Pink Land's potato farmers. This loss could be avoided, and poor potato farmers given a significant increase in income, if a system for the regular production of disease-free seed tubers could be introduced in Pink Land as proposed in this project.

What has already been done

A literature review reveals that techniques similar to those proposed in this project have yielded positive results in both China and Korea. In the Korean case, reported in 1990, the *in vitro* tuberization technique was found to be 50 times more efficient than other methods, and a large quantity of high-quality normal tubers were produced. The China report records that when the technique was used in Guangdong, it was possible to produce five million tubers during 1998 and 1999, generating quantities that permitted a large export of potatoes to Hong Kong.

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10. Note that additional material has been added. Discuss the content of this material and respond to the following: (15 minutes)
    a. Why do you think this information is needed?
    b. Overall, do you think the repackaging is more likely than the original to grab the attention of a busy donor program officer? Give reasons for your answer.
    c. How could the presentation be improved?

11. Each group should now repackage the background section of the Green Land Project (handout 4.10.11) using the above Pink Land repackaging example. (20 minutes)

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12. Use the worksheet (handout 4.10.16) to make notes of your ideas and the group discussion.

13. The rapporteurs compile the groups' responses on flipcharts to present to the audience.

Phase 2. Presentation and discussion (40 minutes)

14. The trainer invites the rapporteurs to present the results of Part A.

15. The rapporteurs have three minutes each to present the group results. (10 minutes)

16. At the end of the three presentations, the trainer invites the participants to analyze and discuss these results. (5 minutes)

17. The trainer summarizes the Part A results and invites the rapporteurs to present the results of Part B. (15 minutes)

18. After each presentation the trainer invites the audience to discuss and comment on the lessons learned. (5 minutes)

19. At the end, the trainer distributes handout 4.10.17 with possible answers, emphasizes the important points of this exercise, provides feedback on the content of the presentations and closes this session. (5 minutes)

Possible Answers for Part B of Exercise 10b
Background Section for the Green Land Project

The Problem and Why It Is Urgent

Green Land people love to eat rice. In the past, rice was a rich man's food, but today, as the country slowly develops, more and more ordinary people have the money to buy rice.

The problem is, Green Land cannot grow enough rice to meet that growing demand. As a result, Green Land has had to import rice, often from as far away as Thailand. Despite these imports, the price remains too high for many of the Green Land citizens who would like to add it to their diet.

The Government of Green Land would dearly like to both save the foreign exchange costs of rice imports and to been seen as responsible for providing people with the food they want. If domestic production cannot be increased, the volume of imports will only grow, and the dissatisfaction of consumers at the high prices will deepen. The Government urgently needs to save its foreign exchange for the import of medicines to combat the scourge of AIDS and to construct power plants to overcome the frequent power cuts that are severely affecting the economy and the morale of the citizens. It is therefore putting pressure on its agronomists to find ways of encouraging many more farmers to grow much more rice as quickly as possible.

One of the main reasons why farmers are not growing more rice is that they lack varieties that are suited to current conditions. Some 80% of Green Land's rice is rainfed, upland rice. The area is subject to frequent drought, and farmers lack the means to provide inputs such as fertilizer and herbicides. The remaining 20% of national production comes from lowland, irrigated farming systems, where decreasing soil fertility and weeds are constant constraints, and a new disease—rice yellow streak virus—is causing serious yield reductions. The unreliability of water supplies in the irrigated areas is another problem for farmers.

Finally, as everyone who eats rice in Green Land agrees, the locally available rice varieties just do not taste as good as most of the imports.

What Has Already Been Done?

Three organizations—IDESS, CIRAD, and WARD—often working together, have been developing new rice varieties for Green Land for many years. The work of these groups has been strengthened by interactions with CORAF's regional rice breeding network. For the most part, the emphasis has been on intensive rainfed rice cropping systems. Varieties have been developed at Green Land's Farming Systems Experiment Stations. These new varieties have limited improved drought tolerance, and are suitable for low soil fertility and few inputs.

However, there is a need for varieties with the following characteristics (a) improved drought resistance for rainfed varieties; (b) improved weed resistance; (c) resistance to rice yellow streak virus for irrigated varieties; and (d) improved taste and culinary qualities for both upland and lowland varieties.

Before these varieties are developed, there needs to be a market study to determine the preferences of consumers and of the processing industries with respect to grain quality. There is also a need to provide both rainfed and irrigated farmers with advice on farming practices that can increase yields.

Results of Exercise 10b. Identifying beneficiaries and impacts & writing a good background section

Group A. *Blue Land*

Part A. Identifying beneficiaries and impact

Beneficiaries:

Primary
- Small holders Cassava growers and their households
- Cassava consumers
- Rural cottage industries processing Cassava

Secondary
- Govt.- poverty alleviation program
- Plant protection agency
- Region / Countries growing Cassava

Anticipated Impacts:
- Food security
- Poverty Alleviation
- Sustainable income / livelihoods
- More efficient land use – environment
- Employment in cottage industries processing Cassava
- Potential to biological control once vector is identified

Measurement of impacts:
- Yield changes
- Changes in household income –surveys
- Changes in area under cultivation
- Changes in consumption patterns
- Less disease incidence

Strengthening components:
- Specify primary and secondary beneficiaries in proposal
- Include methodology for measuring impact in the proposal
- Link objectives to goals of impacts in the proposal

Part B: Repackaged version:

"Eighty percent of the population of Green Land lives under the poverty line and depends on rice. The upland rice system, which is rain fed (as opposed to irrigated), represents 80 % of the total area under rice. The gap between production and demand has been steadily increasing, i.e. approx. 5 % / year. Urgent problems are: lack of attention to adaptation of varieties to local needs + situations; poor quality of seeds currently in use: poor dissemination of new technology. Unless these problems are urgently addressed, food security for Green Land will be seriously jeopardized!"

a) Why info needed?

$\rightarrow$ Sets the stage
$\rightarrow$ Summarize situation in more acceptable form
$\rightarrow$ Clearly states the problem
$\rightarrow$ Clearly states beneficiaries
$\rightarrow$ Clearly states importance of crop
$\rightarrow$ Uses emotive language that appeals to the reader

b) Repackaging effective? Yes

$\rightarrow$ Shows importance of project (not reflected in original proposal)
$\rightarrow$ Emphasize small farmers (original proposal emphasized the industry as opposed to people
$\rightarrow$ By shifting emphasis, change tone $\rightarrow$ more convincing
$\rightarrow$ Also: shorter sentences, clearer language, passionate language, well structured paragraphs.
$\rightarrow$ focuses on problem (e.g. Emphasis on how much has been lost)

c) How to improve?

$\rightarrow$ first paragraph turn passive sentence into active sentence; this would give it more impact.
$\rightarrow$ Be more specific; E.g. " most poor farmers families grow enough potato…"
$\rightarrow$ Specific in monetary terms; E.g. estimate potential income gained as result of project
$\rightarrow$ Would strengthen argument ; E.g. in first paragraph specify how many millions of people are affected.

Group B. *Brown Land*

Part A. Identifying beneficiaries and impact

a) Beneficiaries:
- Red tide victims
- Health system
- Biotec. Companies

b) Anticipated impacts:
- Specific diagnosis for Red tide
- Treatment for R.T.
- Job creation

c) Impact measure
- # of people diagnos.
- # of people
- # of jobs (all process)

d) Strengthening the components
- Add a paragraph that specifies and describes beneficiaries
- Include an impact assessment
- Clarify and expand objectives

Part B: Repackaged version:

Original proposal lacks passion and background information

Repackaging paper is more likely to grab attention because:
- → More attractive
- → States problem better
- → More lucid background
- → More passionate

Repackaging conform with minimum format for a Concept Note

The problem and why it is urgent
"In Green Land, rice constitutes 80 % of the poor population staple food. The gap between production and demand is widening at an alarming rate. Although there were new varieties developed, there are not appropriate to the local conditions of resource-poor farmers. Something needs to be done urgently".

What has been done
"Several research institutes have obtained results on rain-fed rice cropping systems, with promising results."

Group C. *White Land*

Part A. Identifying beneficiaries and impact

Beneficiaries:
- Coconut producers
- Consumers of essential oil
- Unemployed persons
- Fertilizer importers or local producers / dealer

Impacts & measure:
- Increased local essence production (stat.yr.bk)
- Reduce import of essential oil (stat.yr.bk)
- Efficient land use (impact study)
- Increased income per ha. for local coconut producer (impact study)
- Increased employment (stat.yr.bk)
- Stimulates ocal nitrogen production (stat.yr.bk)

Strengthening:
- Baseline study
- Impact Study
- Market study of Essential oil and Nitrogen

Part B: Repackaged version:

Include statistics to stress importance of subject and potential impact of project (dependence on rice; low yield = poverty and no food security. Increase yield in between new varieties mal and improved farming system will reduce poverty and reduce food deficit). Use emotive words.

Exercise 10c. Writing catchy titles
(pair work)

Introduction: Remember that a good title can sell a novel, and a good name can sell a movie star. Both Arnold Schwarzenegger and Marilyn Monroe changed their names. Candidates for US President shorten their names to Bob and Bill to sell themselves as just one of us. Titles matter. So it pays to take time to think of a good title for your project—one that will arouse the interest of your readers and help to fix the proposal in their minds.

Remember that the colon trick might help you to write a title that is both catchy (first part, before the colon) and scientific (second part, after the colon). This is the ideal type of title to a donor (like Germany) who may have your proposal peer-reviewed by scientists in the donor country.

Phase 1. Work in pairs (30 minutes)

1. Pair up with your neighbor.

2. Look at the project titles of the Rainbow Land proposals with which you worked in session 10.

3. Observe that none of them are really memorable or arresting.

4. Take five minutes to decide which of the titles you think a non-scientific reader would understand and like the most. Then try to improve the titles of some of the CNs.

5. The trainer will provide you with overhead transparencies and pens to write down the improved titles.

Phase 2. Plenary discussion (10 minutes)

6. The trainer will invite a few volunteers to present some examples. Be prepared to participate.

7. The trainer provides feedback on the content of the presentations, invites the participants to discuss the feedback briefly and closes the session.

Possible Answers for Exercise 10c. Rainbow Land Titles

Grey Land:
Old title: The title is reasonably informative, but very clear, and certainly not catchy
Improved title: Pitting and ridging: can a new technology save Gray Land's disappearing soil?

Blue Land:
Old title: In general, a project title should avoid acronyms and parentheses. This title is too technical for a general reader. There is nothing to catch a donor's eye.
Improved title: Protecting a poor people's crop: a project to learn more about the whiteflies that transmit a serious African cassava virus.

Brown Land:

Old Title: This is about the worst of the lot! It is certainly too technical, and does not convey anything about the possible benefits of the project.
Improved title: A new tool for diagnosing shellfish poisons? Bullfrog blood may be the answer!

Green Land

Old title: This title is simple, straightforward, and clear, but not very sexy. It can be improved.
Improved title: "We want more rice!"—a project to meet the growing demand for rice consumption in Green Land.

Pink Land:
Old title: This is a simple title, but it does not convey much information, and certainly does not convey any urgency or importance.
Improved title: Plentiful potatoes for Pink Land: developing a production system for disease-free seed tubers.

White Land:
Old title: This is a simple and fairly clear title, but neither catchy nor exciting. It can be improved.
Improved title: Sweet smells and tangy tastes: reviving the essential oil industry in White Land's coconut plantations.

Conclusion: of the six titles, White Land and Green Land are the best of a poor bunch.

Results of Exercise 10c: Writing catchy titles

Green Land Project Titles

- *Wonder rice varieties for Green Land: Adapting rice varieties to farmers need.*
- *Upland rice: Development of varieties for Green Lands.*
- *Green Land is the future: Putting technologies for transforming eroded grazing land to increase productivity.*
- *More rice on the table: Improve rice production systems for poor farmers.*
- *Bridging the gap: Development of new rice varieties for Green Land.*
- *Rice for Green Land: Development of high quality, well adapted upland rice varieties.*

Brown Land

- *Solution to red tide bloom in Brown Land: Isolation and purification of saxitoxin – binding protein.*
- *Frogs to the rescue of red tide victims: Survey, isolation and purification of saxitoxin from marine organism.*
- *Reversing the red tide: Diagnostic kits for neurotoxins.*

Blue Land

- *Guilty or not guilty? Transmission of the African cassava mosaic virus by bemisia hancocki (white fly)*
- *Cassava whitefly project: Determination of the major whitefly pest spreading ACMV.*
- *Understanding the transmission of African mosaic virus by whiteflies.*
- *Infective whiteflies: A study about the transmission of African cassava mosaic virus (ACMU0 by bemisia hancocki.*
- *Who killed cassava: Is bemisia hancocki a vector for African cassava mosaic virus (ACMV).*
- *Disease free cassava: A vector for cassava mosaic virus.*

Grey Land

- *Saving our soil heritage: Evaluation of pitting technology for renovation, revegetation and increased productivity*
- *Pitting Technology and Eroded Grasslands.*

Pink Land

- *Disease free potatoes: Developing a viable system of producing free seed tubers.*

- Super potato: Development of a technology for producing disease-free seed tubers of potato.
- Healthy potatoes for healthy people: Development of technologies for certified potato seed tubers

White Land

- Coconut Havors: Evaluating the adaptability of selected essence cultivars under coconut canopies.
- Cultivation under coconut: Effect of canopy shade and nitrogen fertilization rate on yield and quality of essence.

Exercise 11. Concept Note Review
(role playing)

Introduction: The White Land concept note (handout 4.11.4) has been rewritten to fit the recommended concept note format. The concept note is going to be reviewed in this exercise. The exercise consists of a mock Concept Review of the type recommended for all NARS. The exercise should demonstrate how much a project design can benefit from an open review and discussion among colleagues. The White Land CN will be reviewed for issues of substance, budget, and presentation. The purpose is to strengthen the future development of the project.

Phase 1. Defining roles (5 minutes)

1.   Form three groups of participants.
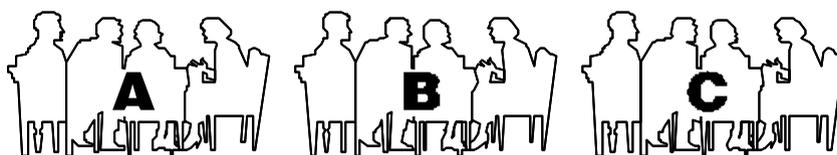
Group A will pretend they are the "parents" or authors of the concept note, or partners involved in its design. They will be responsible for making a presentation the Review meeting, and for ensuring they understand all the comments made by other groups.

Group B will pretend they are other NARS scientists, from various departments and disciplines. Their job is to critically review the concept note and make suggestions on how it can be improved.

Group C will pretend that they are senior NARS management. They will elect a mock DG who will act as the chair of the Review. Other members of this group may take the roles of Finance Office representative, Donor Relations Officer, Director for Research, Visiting Program Leader, DDG, etc.

Phase 2. Considering issues (15 minutes)

The three groups get together to plan what they will say during the concept review. They know that the Review will have four components, each to last about 15 minutes.   Under those components, some of the following questions may be asked:

Issues of Substance: Is the research of scientific interest to the NARS? Is the topic important? Have the beneficiaries been consulted? Are they interested in the project? Is the science of good quality? Is the scientific method valid? Can the methodology be improved?

Issues of Scope: Is the project the right size? Does it have the right number of sites? Are the sites the best ones? Is the project properly staffed? Would it be improved with more or different people? Will the equipment be adequate? Is the proposed project management going to be

adequate? Would a workshop enhance the value of the project? How can the scope of the project be improved?

Issues of Budget: Has a budget been prepared? Does the bottom line look greedy? Adequate to achieve the objectives? Have the designers left out anything ? What should the authors be sure to do when preparing the full proposal budget?

Issues of Presentation/Attractiveness to Donors: Does the project have a catchy title? Are the objectives clear and measurable?   Is the problem urgent? Have the authors said what has already been done? Are there problems of duplication—might someone already have done this research? What will be the impact of the project? How soon will the impact be felt? Do the authors say how they propose to measure impact? How can the presentation be improved?

Phase 3. Conducting the review (1 hour 30 minutes)

In preparation, the room is arranged in a U-form to accommodate Group C sitting as Management at the top of the U, with the other two groups on either side.

Role Playing:

1. Group A are invited by the Chair to make a short (10 minutes maximum) presentation of their project—the White Lands improved CN.

2. The Chair allows comments from Group B on any aspect of the CN for a maximum of 10 minutes.

3. The Chair then announces that the Review will now consider different aspects of the CN, hopefully with a view to being able to approve its submission to a donor, most likely with many suggestions for improvement.

4. The Chair then opens discussion on the *substance* of the concept. Discussion is allowed to last only 15 minutes. The trainer keeps the time. All participants are allowed to take part in the discussion.

5. The Chair then moves the discussion to the *scope* of the concept. Discussion is allowed to last only 15 minutes. The trainer keeps the time. All participants are allowed to take part in the discussion.

6. The Chair then moves the discussion to the concept *budget*. The discussion is opened by the Group C person pretending to be the Finance Office representative. Group A are allowed to respond to his questions, then the floor is open to anyone. Discussion is only allowed to last 15 minutes. The trainer keeps the time.

7. The Chair then moves the discussion to the *presentation* of the concept. The Group C person pretending to be the Donor Intelligence Office may lead this discussion. Group A are allowed to respond, then the floor is opened to the whole group. Discussion is limited to 15 minutes. The trainer keeps the time.

8. At this point, Group C may wish to confer briefly to consider their recommendation, but given the previous discussion, that decision may already be quite obvious. The chair sums up the discussion and announces the management's decision. A few minutes are allowed for comments on the decision from the floor, if necessary. This phase is allowed to last for 10 minutes.

Phase 4. Lessons learned (20 minutes)

9. Each group is asked to participate in turn in a discussion of the lessons learned from the exercise. Was the open review a success? Would they want such a review process in their NARS? What were the strengths and weakness of the approach and the exercise? (15 minutes)

10. The facilitators and subject-matter specialists close the session with special remarks and feedback on the usefulness of the exercise. (5 minutes)

Exercise 11. White Land

<u>Project Title</u>: **Sweet smells and tangy tastes: reviving the essential oil industry in White Land's coconut areas**

<u>Expected Budget and Duration</u>: **$600,000 over three years; of which approximately $400,000 is requested as a grant from donor x**

<u>Partners</u>: **Department of Horticulture scientists with assistance from University of White Land**

<u>Location and Sites:</u> **Three White Land coconut areas**

<u>Related Donor Projects:</u> (to be completed when potential donor is identified)

The Problem and Why It Is Urgent

About 150 years ago White Land had a thriving and profitable essential oils sector, centered on the export of ilang-ilang oil to Europe. World War I led to the closure of most firms in the business, and subsequently production moved to French territories, leading to the death of the whole industry.

However, White Landers never lost their taste for essences and oils, and today the country imports over 3500 metric tons, with a value of more than $25 million.

The Government of White Land's budget is stretched to the limit, so savings of this size can make a real difference, freeing up funds for high-priority investments in women's health and education.

These essence crops having once grown, there is no doubt that they can once again flourish in White Land. In particular, Department of Horticulture scientists believe that the country's large coconut areas would be an ideal location, offering both shade and nitrogen nutrition for the young plants.

What Has Already Been Done

For the past five years, scientists from the University of White Land have been helping staff of the Department of Horticulture to identify crops that might be grown in the country to lower the nation's import bill. Last year essential oils surfaced as one of the top six possibilities, as described in a paper widely circulated to government and university personnel.

The paper made exciting reading for two staff of the Plantation Crops Division, who saw the essential oils idea as a way to reignite interest in the stagnant coconut plantation sector. The two principal proponents of this project, Dr CCG and Ms RAR of the Plantation Crops Division, felt that coconut would offer the ideal environment for a pilot project to test the feasibility of bringing the essential oils industry back to life in White Land.

Project Goal, Objectives, and Activities

The **goal** of the project is to create new agriculture-based industries in White Land while cutting the cost of importing agricultural products into the country

The **general objective** of the project is to determine whether essential oils can be cost-effectively grown in White Land's coconut plantation areas.

The **specific objectives** of the project are: (1) to determine the levels of nitrogen and shade under coconut canopies that will provide optimum growth and development conditions for selected essences, and (2) to identify which of six selected essences are most suitable for cultivation under coconut.

The following **activities** will be undertaken:

l The project team (consisting of the two principal scientists and a research associate from the University) will select three coconut areas with the following features:
   Site A, with newly planted coconut, representing 0% shade
   Site B, with coconut providing 25% shade
   Site C, with coconut providing almost overlapping canopy >75% shade

l In each area, during Months 2–3 of the project, staff of the selected coconut plantations will plant six essences (sweet basil, lemon grass, citronella, vetiver, peppermint, and spearmint).

l In each area plantation staff will apply three nitrogen fertilizer levels (0, 30, 60 g/plant).

l The principal scientists will supervise the gathering and analysis of data on key morphological and physiological features over the three years of the project, using a two-factor factorial experiment (shade x fertilizer level) format.

Inputs and Project Management Issues

The project will require personnel expenses and maintenance and operating expenses. Staff time required will include three person-months/year by the two principal scientists and four person months/year by a university research associate. Graduate students will help with data gathering and analysis. Laborers will be hired from among the plantation staff.

The project will purchase seedlings and fertilizer and use a Department of Horticulture motorcycle as the project vehicle.

The Department of Horticulture will be responsible for all aspects of the project, from grant compliance to production of reports. The University of White Land will be working under a subcontract.

Beneficiaries, Outputs, and Impacts

The main **output** of this project will be a report published by the principal scientists at the end of Year 3, reporting on the experiment, identifying which essences are particularly suitable for cultivation under coconut, and making recommendations on the production technology for those essences that proved most successful.

The **impact** of the project will depend on the results of the experiment. If, as expected, several of the selected essences are found to thrive under coconut, the project has the potential to revive the

entire essential oils industry in White Land. In this case, the impact will be at both the micro and macro levels. On the one hand, consumers in White Land will be able to purchase the essences they need on a local market at cheaper, local prices. On the other hand, the White Land economy will benefit through savings on the import bill, the creation of new jobs in the revived industry, and the expected boost to the stagnant coconut plantation sector.

These impacts are likely to be felt gradually, starting approximately one year after publication of the project's final report, as commercial planting and growing of essences takes hold. The full impact of the project will likely not be felt until a decade after the project is over.

If the experiment has a positive outcome, it will have many **beneficiaries.** These will include essential oil consumers, those who work and invest in the coconut plantations, and ultimately all citizens of White Land, who will benefit from the improvements to the country's economy.

Budget Issues

The requested funds will be used to remunerate University of White Land staff and coconut plantation laborers, and for the purchase of project inputs such as seedlings and fertilizer. The Department of Horticulture will pay for the time of the principal scientists, but will charge an administrative fee of just over $12,000 per year for managing the project and its grant funds.

Evaluation of DAY 4

Strengths of the workshop: DAY 4

Content•
Practical tips on how to draft a concept note; very useful; I expected to know how to prepare concept notes and this was met today; very aspiring; (6)
Topics covered very important; useful and relevant; practical; a lot of information (6)
I learnt a lot about project titles, beneficiaries (1)
Terminology well explained (1)
SMART is a good tool for evaluate the objective (1)
"New" title structure creates an impact (1)
Very good case studies which allow for effective interaction (1)

Structure
Excellent visual aids (1)
Improvisation with regard to time; time keeping excellent (2)
Lots of useful handouts information (1)

Process: training techniques and direction
Role playing on concept role presentation; last exercise very enriching; has done in a lively manner but very useful one; one of the best; stimulating and enjoyable; was incredible!!! Fantastic (7)
Morning review of previous day's session by trainees is very educative (1)

Trainer's/facilitators performance & materials
Exercises relaxing and educational; relevant – I gained a very good experience; very lively; practical; group exercises are very interactive and good; (5)
Exercise on proposal review was done very well by the trainers and participants; very useful, eye-opener; a great exercise (3)
Good presentations (1)
Wonderful facilitation (1)
Materials to revise later were given (1)

Workshop environment
Physical exercises are indeed refreshing; good idea (2)
Full of laugh and more exciting

Trainee's performance
Role play session – good fun and very well performed (1)
Team and facilitators are excellent (1)
Participants contribution and interaction excellent; good participation (3)

Logistical support
Very helpful support staff; logistical support should be highly commended! Thanks for your support! (1)
Organization of the workshop is fantastic – thank you (1)
Lunch was better; nice; taste food (3)

• The number between brackets indicates how many times the statements were mentioned.

General comments
Very great day; well-spent; another good day (4)
The experience of the day pave one's way to future challenges of scientific reviews (1)
Most important was the element of considering me
asurable expected impact and catchy title in concept note presentation (1)
I learnt that proposals need to be considered and evaluated not only for this technical merits but
also for socio-economic and other aspects (1)

Weaknesses of the workshop DAY 2

Organization
Lunch (1)

Time allocation/workload
Management of time was poor; very long working day; exercise 10b too long (3)
Time for discussing case studies not adequate; time factor, too small; not enough time to read
material before starting group discussion; rushing through the group discussion (4)

Materials/Content
Very tough exercises (1)
Source handouts are not clear (1)

Process: training techniques and direction
Too large working groups (7-8 persons) (1)
The PAPA ideas for action questionnaire need requires explanation on hot to fill it (1)

Suggestions to improve the workshop

More first hand examples
Facilitators, please remind strong group members to exercise patience and listen to weak /quiet
ones
I wish all the exercises are like what we have today
Encourage energizers to break the monotony of participants being tired
More group work is effective
3 big working groups in the same room, all members talking at the same time – too noisy, difficult
to think, difficult to listen, working group to different rooms????
Reduce time for exercise 10b and increase time for role-playing, more time required to read case
studies to facilitate effective and interaction by group discussions (2)
The PAPA approach is more exciting
Instructions for group exercises are a bit confusing
Organizers should consider extending the cause period or any other arrangement that will assist in
time gain
Don't' forget to give us the photo taken by the cheerful photographer
ISNAR is very pro-active in responding to the suggestions an I admire the cordial manner of the
faculty
Good work, keep it up; all is going on well; impressive work!!! (5)

Exercise 12. Writing up activities and milestones
(modified "trip around the tables")

This exercise is composed of two parts: in part A you will work on proposal step 2—activities and in part B you will work on proposal step 7— milestones.

1. Form four groups of participants.
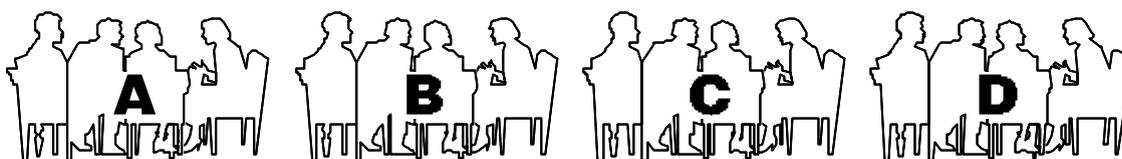
2. Each group elects a rapporteur.

Phase 1. Group work (55 minutes)

3. All participants briefly read briefly the summary of presentation (handout 5.12.3) to review the information on step 2, activities and step 7, evaluation and milestones.

Part A (25 minutes)

4. The group will work on part A in a modified trip around the table to:
   a) identify what is wrong with the sentences below, taken from the activities sections of real project proposals.
   b) improve the sentences, if necessary by making up project elements. Remember, if sentences are getting too long, break them into two or more shorter ones.

5. Each group has 15 minutes to complete the tasks in the following way:

Sentences for group A and C

- The second stage of the research process will involve looking at the water-pricing policies of the region, evaluating them from an economic and social perspective.
- As soon as the associations are formed, two selected farmers from each will be trained to act as bookkeepers and treasurers of the micro-credit scheme.
- A literature search will be followed by an analysis of existing projects that specifically targets the role of youth in on-farm activities; the publication of results will be widely disseminated to government officials, NGOs, and donors.

Sentences for groups B and D

- Later in the project, the research team will extend the project to a second site in the north of the country, where banana disease has also been reported.
- Market research studies will continue during year 2, covering such potential export crops as flowers, green beans, spices, and sweet corn.
- In Site A, farmers and their families will be asked to inter-crop maize and pineapple in at least one field each year; if this is unsuccessful, we will introduce other fruits to the Site A maize farmers in year 3.

6. The rapporteurs compile the groups' inputs on worksheets (handout 5.12.6).

7. The rapporteurs of groups A and C switch tables with B and D respectively. The rapporteurs of groups C and D do the same. Each has have five minutes to present the group's inputs and collect contributions to improve its version. (5 minutes)

8. The rapporteurs return to their own groups. They have five minutes to share the contributions collected during the "trip" and decide on one improved version for the assigned sentences. (5 minutes)

9. The rapporteurs write the results on the flipchart.

Part B (30 minutes)

10. The groups will prepare milestones for the White Land project proposal used in session 11 (handout 4.11.4). Remember that you will have to make some big assumptions in designing your milestones, because the project outline is very skimpy.

11. Read the examples of milestones presented in handout 5.12.6 to guide you in this task.

12. The rapporteurs write the results for part B on the flipchart.

Phase 2. Presentation and discussion (30 minutes)

13. The rapporteurs present the results of the groups' discussions to the audience. Each rapporteur has five minutes to report.

14. The trainer distributes handout 5.12.8 with possible answers for part B of this exercise and provides feedback on the content of the presentations, followed by a discussion.

Milestones Exercise (part B of exercise 12)

Remember that all projects longer than about 18 months need to have milestones built into their design. Milestones are mid-project achievements for which you will be aiming as you implement your project.

Here are some examples.

In a three-year training project, you might aim to have at least 100 participants trained every six months. Your milestones might therefore be:

Date	Minimum Milestone
End of Year 1	200 trained
End of Year 2	400 trained
End of Year 3	600 trained

If only 130 people have been trained by the end of the year 1, you will need to explain to your donor why you have not achieved the proposal target. There may be very good reasons for this, and you may well not be to blame. But missing a milestone needs always to be explained in the interests of long-term good donor relations.

In a two-year, multi-country project designed to identify, analyze and share the results of successful strategies used by livestock farmers in East Africa, you might use the following milestones to help you monitor progress and ensure you can finish in time.

Date	Minimum Milestone
End of Month 6	one team of researchers subcontracted in each of seven countries, all beginning to work, some already producing draft reports
End of Month 12	four final reports and three draft reports received, with a minimum of 20 case studies each
End of Month 18	– two workshops held to discuss results and share case studies _ all reports received, approved and to the publisher _ arrangements for end-of-project conference finished, invitations issued
End of project	– seven reports published in French and English, available at the final conference _ conference held for 300 participants from seven countries, (predominantly livestock farmers with some 30 specially invited donors, and NGO and government observers)

With these examples to guide you, prepare milestones for the White Land project proposal in your pack. Because the project outline is very skimpy, you will have to make some big assumptions in designing your milestones.

Possible Answers for Part B of Exercise 12

End of year one

Project-monitoring meeting
- to report on first-year results
- involve UWL , Department of Agriculture (MoA), donor

End of year two

Workshop – UWL/MoA/Donor
- to report on second-year results
  (relative results of six essences, relative effect of fertilizers, relative effect of shade cover)
- possible redirection of project to drop unsuccessful essences, fert. applications on shade levels.

End of year three/final outputs

Reporting and planning workshop – wide attendance
- share final results
- decide on possible future government program
- decide if additional research is needed

Results of Exercise 12: Writing up activities and milestones

Four groups were formed to:

      c) Identify what is wrong with the sentences below, taken from the activities sections of real project proposals.

      d) Improve the sentences, if necessary by making up project elements. Remember, if sentences are getting too long, break them into two or more shorter ones.

Sentences for group A and C

l   The second stage of the research process will involve looking at the water-pricing policies of the region, evaluating them from an economic and social perspective.

l   As soon as the associations are formed, two selected farmers from each will be trained to act as bookkeepers and treasurers of the micro-credit scheme.

l   A literature search will be followed by an analysis of existing projects that specifically targets the role of youth in on-farm activities; the publication of results will be widely disseminated to government officials, NGOs, and donors.

Sentences for groups B and D

l   Later in the project, the research team will extend the project to a second site in the north of the country, where banana disease has also been reported.

l   Market research studies will continue during year 2, covering such potential export crops as flowers, green beans, spices, and sweet corn.

l   In Site A, farmers and their families will be asked to inter-crop maize and pineapple in at least one field each year; if this is unsuccessful, we will introduce other fruits to the Site A maize farmers in year 3.

Next, the groups were asked to elaborate milestones for each of the project examples of Rainbow Lands. The tables in the next page summarize the results of this exercise.

Exercise 12. Writing up activities and milestones

PART A

	Group A		Group c
Sentences	Problem	Suggestions	Improved sentences
The second stage of the research process will involve looking at the water-pricing policies of the region, evaluating them from an economic and social perspective.	Sentence not an activity Sentence not precise and specific Written in passive way	The second research process is the economic and social evaluation of existing water pricing policies. Economic analysis will be carried out by the project team using the cost-benefit technique. The team will also carry out a social assessment using the institutional transaction cost technique.	The socioeconomist of the NARS will evaluate the water-pricing policies of the region during the second year of the project
As soon as the associations are formed, two selected farmers from each will be trained to act as bookkeepers and treasurers of the micro-credit scheme.	Contains 3 activities (form of association, selection of farmers, training of bookkeeper and treasurers) Language and style not very good.	Two farmers from each association will be trained as bookkeeper and treasurer of the micro credit scheme respectably. The trainees will be selected by the executive commission of the associations.	At the beginning of year one, the project's extension officer will form eight micro-credit associations. Each association will elect two farmers. Beginning the second month of the project, the NARS training officer will conduct a three-week training course in book-keeping and financial reporting for the selected farmers
A literature search will be followed by an analysis of existing projects that specifically targets the role of youth in on-farm activities; the publication of results will be widely disseminated to government officials, NGOs, and donors.	Too long, 4 activities in one single sentence: - interactive search, - analysis of data, - publication, and - dissemination	1) Project researchers will carry out a literature search on the role of youth in on-farm activities. This will be done in the first quarter of Year 1. 2) Following the literature search, the project team will analyze existing projects that target the role of youth in on-farm activities. 3) The project team will publish and widely distribute the report among the stakeholders, including government officials, NGOs and donors.	At the beginning of the project the project researcher will carry out a literature search and analysis of existing projects on the role of youth in on-farm activities. Moreno and Associate Private Limited will publish the results. During the last month of the project, the project scientist will conduct a seminar for government officials, NGO representatives, farmer leaders and donors to disseminate the results of the analysis.

PART A (Cont…)

Sentences	Group B	Group D
	Improved sentences	Improved sentences
Later in the project, the research team will extend the project to a second site in the north of the country, where banana disease has also been reported.	In the 18th month of project the Banana Research Institute will extend the project to the 2nd site in The Hague, where the banana disease has also been reported	In year 2 the horticulture research team will extend the project to Halifax site in northern Jamaica whole the Banana Board discovered cigar end rot.
Market research studies will continue during year 2, covering such potential export crops as flowers, green beans, spices, and sweet corn.	The Hague Marketing Co will continue market research in year 2 to cover potential export crops namely flowers, green beans, spices, sweet corn	Economic evaluation team of the West-Indies University will conduct a market survey in the 4th quarter of the year 2 on flowers, green beans, spices & sweet corn
In Site A, farmers and their families will be asked to inter-crop maize and pineapple in at least one field each year; if this is unsuccessful, we will introduce other fruits to the Site A maize farmers in year 3.	In year 1, 25 farmers and their families in Rotterdam will intercrop maize and pine applies in their fields for 2 years. An evaluation will take place at the end of 2 years by Maize International Help to confirm the results. Alternative fruits will be considered for intercropping depending on the research outcome.	In Golden Grove the agronomist will ask farmers to intercrop maize and pine apples in one field each year for 2 years. The agronomist will introduce passion fruit to unsuccessful farmers in Golden Glove in the first quarter of year 3.

PART B: MILESTONES

Group A

Milestones	Dates
MOU/MOA	Start of year 1
Team formed by..	Month 1 of year 1
Agreement with owners, sites selected	Month 2 of year 1
Inputs obtained by… (specific inputs)	Month 3, 15, 27
Sites planted by…	Month 3, 15, 27
data sets completely by… collected and analyzed by…	Month 9, 21, 33
Field days/demonstrations	Month 8, 20, 32
Annual reports	End of year 1, 2, 3
Dissemination on events	End of year 1, 2, 3
Mid-term review	End of second season
End-of project report	End of year 3
Recommendations	End of year 3
Indicators of adoption	Continuous
Review of project	By end of year 3
2nd phase concept note	By end of year 3
Extension leaflets + brochures	By end of year 3
End of project dissemination workshop	By end of year 3

Group B

Activity	5 ha x 3 Sites	Milestones (months from start)
Land preparation	15 x 50 kg fertilizer	1
Procurement of inputs	6 varieties of essences	1
Planting and weeding	5 ha x 3 sites	2-3
Fertilization	5 ha – 0, 5 ha – 25%, 5 ha – 75%	6,12,18, 24, 30
Data strengthening and analysis		Every 6 months
Workshop with stakeholders	Progress report	6,12,18, 24, 30
Harvesting and processing		8 + ongoing
Dissemination	Terminal report	32

Group C

Date	Activity	Milestones
After 3 months project initiation	Planting the essences	600 plants in the field
End of year 1	Experiment with nitrogen levels/shading	Data on N/shading available
End of years 2 and 3	Same experiments	Data available
End of year 3	Experiments: identification of suitable species or varieties	Promising species/varieties identified

Group D

Milestone	Activity
Sites selected	End of month 3
Establishment of the experimental plots, project preparation	End of month 6
Progress report, mid-term review workshop	End of month 12
Review with farmers (stakeholders)	End of month 12
Progress report on the morphological and physiological features	End of month 24
Reports published and information available at the conferences	End of project

Exercise 13. Identifying the relationships between project objectives and activities using the logical framework hierarchy
(group exercise)

Phase 1. Plenary exercise (15 minutes)

1. Fill in the worksheet (handout 5.13.5), keeping in mind the cause-and-effect relationship.

2. The trainer invites some participants to tell how they have filled in the logframe. A general discussion follows.

3. The trainer summarizes the lessons learned and distributes handout 5.13.6 with the answers to the exercise.

Phase 2. Work in pairs (30 minutes)

4. Pair up with a neighbor.

5. Read the sentences on handout 5.13.7 regarding the improvement of olive-harvesting techniques. These sentences are in a mixed (random) order.

6. Fill in the logical framework (handout 5.13.8) by placing the sentences in a logical order.

Phase 3. Presentation and discussion (50 minutes)

7. The results are discussed in a plenary session.

8. The trainer distributes handout 5.13.9 with the results and asks a few participants to provide feedback on this exercise to close this session.

Form for exercise 13—phase 1: Linked hypotheses

Indicate the cause- and -effect logical relationship among each of the following sets of statements by labeling them 1, 2, 3, and so on, beginning with the first cause.

A.
___ Increase in export of agricultural products
___ Increase in agricultural production
___ Efficient and effective research institute
___ Production of relevant agricultural technology

B.
___ Reduction of costs relative to the consumption of water
___ Training of producers in the use of water resources
___ Increase in producers' income
___ Increase in productivity by unit of water

C.
___ Increase in milk and meat production
___ Production and distribution of vaccines for cattle
___ Development of milk and meat-producing agroindustry
___ Increase in income and improvement in living standards of producers
___ Improvement of sanitary norms for animals

D.
___ Training of agricultural research personnel
___ Production of relevant agricultural research results
___ Implementation of operational research programs in the short term
___ Planning of a training seminar on strategic planning
___ Preparation of research plan for the mid and long term

E.
___ Implementation of plans for strengthening human resources
___ Improvement in quality and relevance of research results
___ Increase in credibility and impact of research
___ Implementation of operational research programs
___ Development of technologies responding to producers' needs

Answers to exercise 13—phase 1

A. 1. Efficient and effective research institute
A. 2. Production of relevant agricultural technology
A. 3. Increase in agricultural production and income
A. 4. Increase in export of agricultural products

B. 1. Training of producers in the use of water resources
B. 2. Increase in productivity by unit of water
B. 3. Reduction of costs relative to the consumption of water
B. 4. Increase in producers' income

C. 1. Production and distribution of vaccines for cattle
C. 2. Improvement of sanitary norms for animals
C. 3. Increase in milk and meat production
C. 4. Development of milk and meat-producing agroindustry
C. 5. Increase in income and improvement in living standards of producers

D. 1. Planning of a training seminar on strategic planning
D. 2. Training of agricultural research personnel
D. 3. Preparation of research plan for the mid and long term
D. 4. Implementation of operational research programs in the short term
D. 5. Production of relevant agricultural research results

E. 1. Implementation of plans for strengthening human resources
E. 2. Implementation of operational research programs
E. 3. Development of technologies responding to producers' needs
E. 4. Improvement in of quality and relevance of research results
E. 5. Increase on credibility and impact of research

Answers to exercise 13—phase 2

Matrix of the logical framework for the project: "Improvement of olive-harvesting techniques"

	Summary description	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Assumptions
Goal	The quality of table olives and olive oil meets international standards.	The percentage of lots not accepted for export is lower than 5%.	Monthly reports by Moroccan customs.	
Purpose	Farmers use improved harvesting techniques for olives.	• Increase of oil content of olives (18%). • Decrease of acid content of olives (-3%). • Increase of quality of table olives (5%).	Surveys in: - oil mills - processing factories	• Quality oil and table olives achieve a good price on the market.
Outputs	• The optimum dates for harvesting oil olives are determined for Saiss, Tadla, and Haouz. • Harvesting procedures that take into account the conditions of the plantation and which are adapted to the socioeconomic context are developed.	• The results regarding the optimum harvesting dates by region are published. • The improved harvesting procedures are published.	• National publications.	• The results of the project are disseminated • Credits are given to small and medium producers to acquired necessary equipment for mechanical harvesting.
Activities	• Trials to determine the optimum harvesting date for oil olives in Saiss, Tadla, and Haouz. • Trials to adapt mechanical harvesting methods in Saiss, Tadla, Haouz. • Rentability studies for different harvesting techniques. • Trials to compare manual harvesting techniques in Tadla and Haouz.	Resources necessary for duration of project: - researchers: 30 person-months - technicians: 15 person-months - surface area: 29 ha - lab-days: 102 days - operational: 129 thousand Dirhams - material: 166 thousand Dirhams	• Monitoring reports • Reports from accounts	• The necessary resources are made available in time to the project .

Exercise 14. Analyzing and improving proposal budgets
(modified "trip around the tables")

Please refer back to the tips for writing good proposal budgets, and remind yourself of the elements that you need to include. With this information in mind, you are going to judge and improve the Rainbow Land budgets in the following exercise.

1. Form three groups, each group electing a rapporteur.

Phase 1. Group work (1 hour 10 minutes)

2. Group members read handout 5.14.1 and then refer to item 9 (minimum budget requirements) to analyze and improve the Rainbow Land proposal budgets in the following way: (40 minutes)
    Group A will look at Green Land
    Group B will look at Brown Land
    Group C will look at White Land

3. Each group discusses the proposal budget. The sample summary budget presented in handout 5.14.1 could also be an excellent source of information for this exercise. Then proceed to:
    l   List strengths and weaknesses of the proposal budget.
    l   List all additional improvements that will be needed to make it into a good proposal budget. Number your list.

4. The rapporteurs use handout 5.14.3 to record the numbered list.

5. The trainer will invite the rapporteurs to spend about 10 minutes exchanging the results (the numbered list) with another group in the following way and return to their own groups. (10 minutes)
    Group A to group B
    Group B to group C
    Group C to group A

6. The groups will check to see that each group has included all the missing elements.

7. The rapporteurs write the group results on the flipchart. (15 minutes)

Phase 2. Presentation and discussion (55 minutes)

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8. The trainer invites the rapporteurs to present the results and facilitates a brief discussion, including the strengths and weaknesses of this exercise.

9. At the end of the discussion, the trainer identifies the group that has caught the most missing elements in the proposal budget.

10. The trainer summarizes the results and highlights the aspects of preparing a good proposal budget.

11. The trainer provides feedback on this exercise and closes the session.

Exercise 14. Expected Answers

First decide which of the two budgets is better.

Group A says: it is Gray Land, because Blue Land has no budget at all.

Group B says: it is Pink Land, because the Brown Land budget is horrible, lacking many essential features.

Group C probably says Green Land, but might say White Land, it is a toss up.

Results of Exercise 14. Analyzing and improving proposal budgets

Based on the minimum budget requirements listed above, participants were divided into four different groups to look at the budget samples in the Rainbow Lands exercise. The following tables present a summary of the observations presented by each group.

Group B looks at Brown Land

Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvements
No strengths	No mention of contributions No footnotes No currency indicator No layout – not attractive (indentation) Personnel cost too high (what benefits?) Staff details lack information on time/number Operation cost need to be detailed Detail of travel what are "sundries" Year 2 and 3 lump sum NO overhead /administration cost	Laboratory cost (partner) Equipment Office supplies Communications Have clear sub totals for each cost group Complete budget of each year Establish a valid overhead (audit)

Group A looks at Green Land

Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvements
Rounding up figures to the nearest thousand Budget is included for partners Good attempt to prepare the budget Currency is indicated (CAFA)	Overheads were not included Budget is uniform throughout No footnotes (explanation) Title not appropriate Inflation and contingency missing M&E are not budgeted Communication costs not included NO sub-totals for the different categories The use of CFA and EURO? Lack of matching budget (fund)	Work on weaknesses Include administrative costs Include explanatory notes as footnotes Account for inflation and contingency Include M&E budget Make provision for communication costs Give sub-totals for different lien items Indicate the national contribution (matching fund) Indicate the monetary aspect of technicians but not person months Improve the title ("summary budget") Take account of variation in activities throughout

Group C looks at White Land

Strengths	Weaknesses	Improvements
Showed costs over the project life (3 years) Project line items given Subtotals provided	No title No footnotes No currency label Not rounded up No grand totals No inflation factor Personnel costs > 60% Administrative costs not clearly explained Contributions in kind not listed (institute) No day window	Budget project title Provide bay window items e.g. Provide footnotes to clarify budget Round up the budget figures and currency Separate donor and institute contributions Clarify administration and overhead costs Redefine the personnel costs – specify Provide grand totals (row and column) Personnel costs ≤ 20% of budget

Exercise 15. Preparing an executive summary

Phase 1. Individual work (30 minutes)

10. Read handout 6.15.3 on Preparing the Executive Summary.

11. Use the sample summary outline in the handout, fill in the blanks with information about the project titled: "Sweet Smells and Tangy Tastes: Reviving the essential oil industry in White Land's coconut areas." (Handout 6.15.5)

12. Remember that the executive summary outlines what the proposal is all about. Be very brief. Use the worksheet (handout 6.15.6) to accomplish this exercise.

13. The trainer will invite some volunteers to present their views on this "hands-on" exercise. your questions and comments, and be prepared to participate.

Phase 2. Plenary session (10 minutes)

14. The trainer invites a few volunteers to present their executive summary or part of it.

15. The trainer takes up important points to discuss and/or explain further ways of developing this exercise.

16. At the end, the trainer distributes handout 6.15.7 with a possible executive summary for this exercise and provides feedback on this session.

Possible Executive Summary

Sample White Land Proposal Summary

This proposal requests Donor X to provide $400,000 over three years to the White Land Department of Horticulture, working in collaboration with the University of White Land (UWL) to implement the project, **Sweet Smells and Tangy Tastes: Reviving the essential oil industry in White Land's coconut areas.** The project seeks to determine whether the essential oils industry, dormant for some 150 years, can be revived in White Land's coconut areas.

The need for this project is pressing. White Land economists estimate that by producing essential oils at home, the nation could save as much as $25 million per year in scarce foreign exchange—money that could be used for government development priorities such as health and education. By inter-cropping oil plants with coconut, the project will also provide a much-needed boost to an ailing segment of the economy.

Both the Department of Horticulture and the UWL have been preparing the ground for this project for some years. Information about the flourishing essential oil industry of the past has been unearthed and reviewed to identify possible growing techniques suited to the current situation. Six essences have been identified for possible introduction: sweet basil, lemon grass, citronella, vetiver, peppermint, and spearmint.

The project team, made up of two principal scientists and a research associate from UWL, will undertake field trials to determine the levels of nitrogen and shade needed to provide optimum growth and development for the six essences, and to identify which are the most suitable for cultivation under coconut.

Benefits will accrue to the economy as a whole, to the coconut sector, which will have a new source of income, and to the cooks of White Land, who will be able to buy their essences more cheaply on the local market. These benefits should become apparent within five years, as the plants become established and imports can be cut. Longer-term benefits, coming from the expenditure of saved foreign exchange on such things as health and education, will likely not be felt until many years later.

This project builds on White Land's old knowledge of growing essential oils, and on the interest of the partners in helping to create new agriculture-based industries for the nation. The two partners—the Department of Horticulture and UWL—are ideally suited to conduct this research in a timely and cost-effective manner; some $200,000 in the form of in-kind contributions will be made by the two partners in support of the project. The bulk of the requested donor funds will be used for the purchase of such inputs as seedlings and fertilizer.

Exercise 16. Writing a covering letter and assessing your institute's capacity in submission and follow-up
(working in pairs and groups)

Part A. Analyzing a Covering Letter

Phase 1. Working in pairs (15 minutes)

8. Pair up with a neighbor.

9. Read the tips about writing a covering letter (handout 6.16.1).

10. Read the example of a good covering letter (handout 6.16.3). As you read this letter, try to identify the elements that make it such a good covering letter.

11. Next, write a number to show where each of the elements shown below is found in the covering letter; use the worksheet in handout 6.16.4.

    The elements are:
    (1) Evidence that the writer had the reader in mind
    (2) Reference to the donor's interests and/or related projects
    (3) Reference to previous projects on which the proposed new project builds
    (4) Reference to previous interactions with the donor
    (5) Emphasis on the urgency of the problem
    (6) Mention of the number of people who might potentially benefit
    (7) Mention of partners and participants, and their eagerness to start the project soon
    (8) A closing "hook" on which you hang your tracking of the proposal after submission

12. Discuss and decide on two suggestions that might improve the cover letter.

13. The trainer will provide the rapporteurs with the overhead of handout 6.1.6.4 to record the results for this part A, for later presentation in the plenary session.

Part B. Assessing your institute's capacity in submission and follow-up

Phase 2. Group work (40 minutes)

7. Your pair should join a neighboring pair. There are now four people in each group. Each group elects a rapporteur.
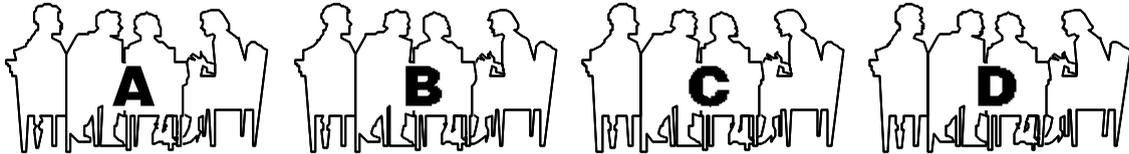
8. Each person in the group reads part 2 of handout 6.16.1. Based on the five issues in the handout (the need for patience, time horizons, negotiations, starting work at the right time, having a donor relations office), the groups should discuss and then list two strengths and two weaknesses in their institutes. The groups should also list two actions for improving the weak situations. Use the worksheet (handout 6.16.6) to respond.

9. The rapporteurs write the responses of each group on a flipchart to present in plenary session.

Phase 3. Plenary session (40 minutes)

10. The trainer invites a few pairs to present the results for of Part A, promotes some discussion, and delivers a handout with possible answers for this part. The trainer invites the rapporteurs to present the groups' results for Part B on the flipchart to the audience.

11. The trainer invites the audience to briefly discuss the results.

12. The participants are expected to ask questions to improve their learning, and to provide feedback on the exercise.

13. The trainer summarizes major points of this exercise and provides feedback on the session.

Example of a Good Covering Letter

Here is an example of a good covering letter, sent by one of the CGIAR Directors General to a Head of Unit in the European Commission. As you read this letter, try to identify the elements that make it such a good covering letter.

Dear Martin:

It was a pleasure to meet with you during my visit to the EC offices in July, and I look forward to meeting you again in Washington this October.

We are pleased to enclose two concept notes that have been modeled closely on the guidelines that we received from your office. We hope you will find them of interest. Attached to both concept notes are letters of support from our partners expressing their eagerness to begin work on the projects soon. In line with your funding limits, both proposals envisage support of less than 2 million ECU over five years.

The first note is a three-country proposal on arresting soil degradation. The project is designed to have a positive impact on the agricultural productivity of India, Myanmar, and Vietnam. The impact of the project will be felt by up to 130 million poor farmers, most of them women. The research will have direct benefits on the conservation and sound management of farmers' soil resources throughout the semi-arid areas of Asia. It will build on a number of projects involving farmer participation in watersheds already in place in India.

The second note is a proposal to reduce yield losses in groundnut production in sub-Saharan Africa caused by the rosette disease. Annual losses are estimated at over $155 million. We believe that the potential yield gains from the crop improvement strategies proposed in the project could be over $120 million. The project is directed at two of the major groundnut-producing countries in the region: Malawi and Nigeria. A positive outcome of the project will increase the agricultural income and nutrition of small-holder farmers, most of whom are women.

Martin, these two proposals are completely in line with EC priorities and follow your previous interests in crop and natural resources research to benefit the poor of Asia and Africa. We will look forward to hearing your reactions to these concept notes when we see you in Washington next month.

Thank you for your continued support for our work. Best wishes,

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Exercise 16. Worksheet for Part A

Dear Martin:

It was a pleasure to meet with you during my visit to the EC offices in July, and I look forward to meeting you again in Washington this October.

We are pleased to enclose two concept notes that have been modeled closely on the guidelines that we received from your office. We hope you will find them of interest. Attached to both concept notes are letters of support from our partners expressing their eagerness to begin work on the projects soon. In line with your funding limits, both proposals envisage support of less than 2 million ECU over five years.

The first note is a three-country proposal on arresting soil degradation. The project is designed to have a positive impact on the agricultural productivity of India, Myanmar, and Vietnam. The impact of the project will be felt by up to 130 million poor farmers, most of them women. The research will have direct benefits on the conservation and sound management of farmers' soil resources throughout the semi-arid areas of Asia. It will build on a number of projects involving farmer participation in watersheds already in place in India.

The second note is a proposal to reduce yield losses in groundnut production in sub-Saharan Africa caused by the rosette disease. Annual losses are estimated at over $155 million. We believe that the potential yield gains from

the crop improvement strategies proposed in the project could be over $120 million.   The project is directed at two of the major groundnut-producing countries in the region: Malawi and Nigeria.   A positive outcome of the project will increase the agricultural income and nutrition of small-holder farmers, most of whom are women.

Martin, these two proposals are completely in line with EC priorities and follow your previous interests in crop and natural resources research to benefit the poor of Asia and Africa.   We will look forward to hearing your reactions to these concept notes when we see you in Washington next month.

Thank you for your continued support for our work.   Best wishes,

Exercise 16. Worksheet for Part B

The Institute's		
Strengths	**Weaknesses**	**Actions to improve the situation**
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.

Possible Answers for part A of Exercise 16

Dear Martin:
①

It was a pleasure to meet with you during my visit to the EC offices in July, and I look
⑧
forward to meeting you again in Washington this October.

We are pleased to enclose two concept notes that have been modeled closely on the
1.1
guidelines that we received from your office. We hope you will find them of interest.

Attached to both concept notes are letters of support from our partners expressing their
⑦
eagerness to begin work on the projects soon. In line with your funding limits, both
1.1
proposals envisage support of less than 2 million ECU over five years.

The first note is a three-country proposal on arresting soil degradation. The project is

designed to have a positive impact on the agricultural productivity of India, Myanmar,

and Vietnam. The impact of the project will be felt by up to 130 million poor farmers,
⑥
most of them women. The research will have direct benefits on the conservation and

sound management of farmers' soil resources throughout the semi-arid areas of Asia. It

will build on a number of projects involving farmer participation in watersheds already
③
in place in India.

The second note is a proposal to reduce yield losses in groundnut production in sub-

Saharan Africa caused by the rosette disease. Annual losses are estimated at over $155
⑤
million. We believe that the potential yield gains from the crop improvement strategies

proposed in the project could be over $120 million. The project is directed at two of

the major groundnut-producing countries in the region: Malawi and Nigeria. A positive

outcome of the project will increase the agricultural income and nutrition of small-
⑥
holder farmers, most of whom are women.

1.1

Martin, these two proposals are completely in line with EC priorities and follow your

1.1

previous interests in crop and natural resources research to benefit the poor of Asia and

⑧

Africa. We will look forward to hearing your reactions to these concept notes when we

see you in Washington next month.

④

Thank you for your continued support for our work. Best wishes,

Exercise 17. Discussing issues related to maintaining good donor relations
(role-playing)

1. Form three groups. The groups are expected to play the role of trainers.
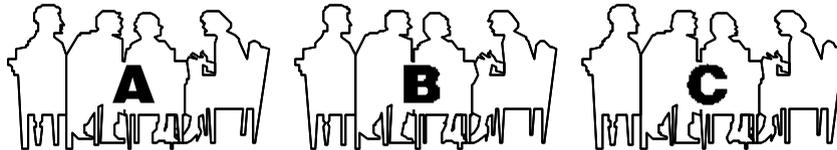
Phase 1. Group work (1 hour 10 minutes)

2. Each group reads the introduction and a section from handout 6.17.1 in the following way (15 minutes):
   Group A: Negotiating with donors
   Group B: The importance of monitoring and evaluation
   Group C: How to write a good report

3. Each group selects one or more members who will play the *role of a trainer* and who will give a presentation on the sections read. Prepare two or three questions to propose to the audience for discussion after your presentation. Prepare an overhead with these questions.

4. You will receive some overheads for your presentation. Feel free to improve and/or include additional ones if your group decides to do so . Ask the trainer for blank overheads, if needed. Use handout 6.17.3 to take notes on the lessons learned during this session.

5. Be concise in your presentation. Make sure to consider the following elements during preparation:
   - **Presentation design** (introduction, body, conclusions), **presentation delivery** (keep on time, make eye contact, face the audience, make sure your voice is audible)
   - **Design of visuals** (visuals should be easy to read by the audience and contain a clear message and a clear image)
   - **Use of visuals** (presenter talks to the audience while proceeding smoothly from one visual to the next)

Phase 2. Reporting and discussion (60 minutes)

6. Each group has 10 minutes to give its presentation. After each presentation, five minutes are available to the presenter to discuss the main issues of his/her presentation with the audience. (45 minutes)

7. At the end, the trainers will invite you to provide feedback on the content of the presentations and the process of this exercise. (15 minutes)

PAPA—SECOND STAGE

Ideas for Action Items

Workshop Title: **How to Write a Convincing Proposal: Strengthening Project Development, Donor Relations, and Resource Mobilization in Agricultural Research**

Date/Venue   July 2002 – ISNAR

Name

Organization:

Action Items	Start to implement action plan (check if known)		
I plan to:	Within 2 months	After 2 months	As opportunity
1. Scan the internet for funding agencies and their requirements and make these available to researchers	v		
2. Suggest to the CAC sub-committee to seek avenues to use unclaimed estates for research and complete a paper on collaboration			v
3. Complete the establishment of a diverse Research committee and negotiate a mechanism for donor management	v		
4. Implement learnt ideas in preparation of concept notes and full proposal on priority project ideas and submit to submit to the donors			v
5. Brief the director	v		

Workshop Pictures

Workshop Pictures

Workshop Pictures