

MEKONG DELTA REGION WATER TRAINING CENTRE

Report pilot courses and blueprint of a training centre

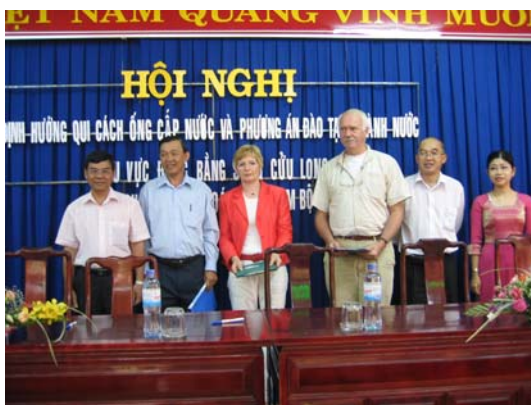
Summary

On request of the VWSA, SWO and A4A made a start to establish a Mekong Delta Region Water Training Centre following the SWO-concept. Together with the VWSA 2 pilot courses were organized. In total 48 professionals are trained in distribution and production and as a trainer. The VWSA was very pleased with the teaching methods and the SWO way of training. The new trained trainers will teach in the trainings and courses set up by the Training Centre.

A fully “Vietnamese” course with Vietnamese programme and topics, Vietnamese trainers and organization was part of the project. The training, the trainers and the organization was coached by SWO. The experience was used to develop a Blue Print to establish a training centre. Further coaching and help will be needed to create a sustainable organization in Vietnam.

Goal of the project

Goal of the project is to set up a training centre in the Mekong Delta together with VWSA, the Vietnamese Water and Sewage association. The project is carried out by SWO (Wateropleidingen) and supported and financed by Aqua4all.



The project performed the following steps:

1. Conclude a partnership with local parties; the main partner will be the Vietnam Water association (southern region)
2. Training needs assessment on water supply in the Mekong Region including actual know-how and experience
3. Water supply branch education plan
→ go-no go decision

4. Pilot course on Water distribution: course development, organisation, trainers
5. Pilot course on Water production: course development, organisation, trainers
6. Leak Survey course
- go-no go decision
7. Blue print (set up)

Context

The Mekong Delta Region has been identified by Vietnam's National Government as an economically disadvantaged area and an area where investment will be focused to alleviate poverty and to stimulate economic activity. The Mekong Delta Region is situated at the southern tip of Vietnam on the delta of the Mekong River, to the south of Ho Chi Minh City. This vast delta is formed by the deposition of the multiple tentacles and tributaries of the mighty Mekong River. The region is one of Vietnam's highest producers of rice crops, vegetables and fruits. The Mekong Delta has 12 million inhabitants and is divided into 12 provinces which have a number of Water companies.

Within its framework of rural development, the water sector is considered to be a area which has a high priority for program development. The water sector includes projects in urban water supply and sanitation, rural water supply and water resources management. Several projects in developing the area have been carried out (Asian Development Bank, Australia, World Bank etc).

The Vietnam Water Association wants to set up an institutional centre to train skillful manpower for water utilities in the Mekong Delta. Training and human resource development is seen as an important factor to improve the water supply and sanitation up to a sustainable situation. Some training exists but only for staff of water companies. As a matter of fact these trainings are incidental and local.

The Vietnam Water Association has asked Stichting Wateropleidingen (SWO) to support in establishing a **Mekong Delta Region Water Training Centre**. The Vietnam Water Association tries to bring together all water companies of Vietnam. Objective is sharing knowledge & experience and a promotion of interests of the sector. At present and in the future a shortage of well educated water specialists at all levels is expected.

Methods

SWO and A4A prepared 2 courses and delivered these to Vietnamese professionals in order to train the professionals as a trainer. The development of the courses and the materials were realised in cooperation.

The standards and the working method are typical for the Dutch Training Centre for Water management (SWO). SWO works for and by professionals and develops courses tailored for the target group.



Each course consists of:

- Learning goals and a specification of the target group
- Schedule with teaching methods
- Trainers
- Course book
- Evaluation (and assessment).

Development of the courses

In cooperation between A4A, VWSA and SWO 3 courses were developed:

- Water Distribution Operating and Maintenance
 - Week 1: problem oriented approach
 - Week 2: logical approach
- Train the Trainer: integrated in the distribution and production course
- Water Production Operating and Maintenance

The courses were developed in the Netherlands. Existing experience and course book have been adapted to the Vietnamese situation. Some parts are brought in by VWSA and Vietnamese consultant (mr Truong Ngo). The communication is made by mail and furthermore Jan van der Zwan spent some time in Vietnam to adapt the course book to the Vietnamese situation. And of course a translation is made from English to Vietnamese. All written materials are available in English and in Vietnamese.

Delivery

In November 2006 a training need assessment is carried out and resulted in a Water supply branch education plan. Furthermore an agreement is signed between SWO/A4A and VWSA.

The distribution course (2*1 week) was delivered in June and August 2007; this course was evaluated with the Vietnamese counterpart, the VWSA, in January 2008. The production course and the Leak survey course were delivered in May-June 2008. The Blueprint for the set-up of the training centre was finished in November 2008.



Results

Participants

Each of the pilot groups consisted of 24 participants from 20 different water companies. 20 participants attended the whole course and received a certificate. The pilot group consisted of a specific group, i.e. potential trainers. Main goal of the pilot course was to train water professionals in Distribution O&M **and** in being a trainer.

The course consists of 2 parts:

- The basics in water distribution Operating and maintenance
- Train the Trainer

The participants and the trainers were very satisfied with the contents of the courses. The participants and trainers enjoyed the course. The mixture of techniques and training skills made it a very lively course. The Dutch teaching methods were unfamiliar for the participants. Also to practice being a trainer was very instructive. During the week the participants changed from silent listeners to very active and participating students. They also made use of the newly learned methods in their own presentation/lesson. Overall the will to learn and the learning capacity was very high.

Programme

The courses consists of 2 parts:

- Contents (The basics in water distribution Operating and maintenance or Production)
- Train the Trainer

The Train the Trainer part is integrated in the pilot. As the participants were a selected group of team leaders and had a higher level than the future target group, the contents of the courses could be thickened. The schedule of the pilot course contained lectures, interactive, group work and practice.

The course books gives a complete overview of the field. The book is used as background information. The course book Train the Trainer is brief and practical. Participants prefer some extra content.

Both course books needed a small adaptation.

Trainers

The lessons of the experienced trainers (Jan van der Zwan, Tung, Truong) in distribution and production O&M were appreciated very much. Especially the Dutch way of working interested the participants, brought in by the trainers Ingrid Schroders and Agnes Maenhout). The practice and field work (house connection etc) were really applied to the workers group. To reach the learning goals the assignments have to be more specific and more trainers have to be in charge (1 par 8 participants).



Organisation in Vietnam

The logistic aspects were organised by the Vietnamese counterpart, according the SWO-methods. The organisation in Vung Tau (course 1; June and August 2007) and Cao Lanh/Long An 19 – 24 mei 2008 (course 2) were excellent. Especially due to the fact that all communication was done by e-mail!

Class room and practice room were equipped well. Enough space was available for group work. The practice room was close to the office and practice was well prepared with assignment, materials etc.

The participants were well informed about the programme, the starting time, the assignment. Organisation was flexible so adaptations could be made easily.

Sometimes the communication was difficult. The translator had to deal with jargon and unknown methods. The trainers have to rely completely on the translation, because they cannot check the translation.

The first course, organised by the Vietnamese Training centre -in establishment- _Leak Survey course, Cao Lanh 26 – 30 May 2008

According to the experience of the first pilot, the project planning and activities were changed slightly. In order to keep the training skills "fresh", we agreed with the VWSA the offering of a Leak Survey course. This course is fully "Vietnamese", which means:

- Organisation by the Vietnamese Training Centre -in establishment-
- All trainers being Vietnamese
- SWO coaches the TC manager and the course coordinator
- SWO coaches the trainers during the course

The Vietnamese trainers prepared an ambitious and logical programme. The programme had a focus on curative actions. Six Vietnamese trainers were involved in the preparation and in the delivery.

The following recommendations were made during the course week:

1. Give attention to preventive measures like choice of materials for a soil type and pipe laying and connecting techniques;
2. Prepare the programme and the course book well;
3. Make a good match between content and teaching method;
4. For a good interaction a maximum number of participants of 20 is recommended;
5. For practical group instructions the number of students must not exceed 6;
6. It is recommended to keep the schedule; practice and excursions must be selected carefully and scheduled well because they are time consuming.



Recommendations

- The level of the participants was good; They were all prepared and well motivated. Approximately twenty five participants were excellent trainers
- The commitment of VWSA was very good.
- The contribution of the Vietnamese trainer, mr Tung, was good
- The organisation was excellent
- Further coaching in the development and delivery of practical courses is recommended
- Further coaching in the business development of the training centre is recommended.

Appendices

- 1 Report on the Training needs assessment
- 2 Information on the pilot courses
 - a. Schedules
 - b. contents of the course books
 - c. assignments
 - d. Evaluation pilot courses
- 3 Memo's on the organisation aspect of the pilot courses
- 4 Course books are available with SWO
- 5 Blue print set up of a Training Centre

SWO/Agnes Maenhout/15-12-2008