

“We like the thinking”

Theatre for Development Training and Coaching



Mission Report

Village Development Programme
Savannakhet Province, Lao PDR
August 9 – September 8, 2004

Luc Opdebeek & Ronald Matthijssen
Rotterdam, 22 December 2004

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**Written under the authority of the
Village Development Programme in Savannakhet Province**

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Preface

To be able to work with the people of Laos has been a privilege in many ways. Not only was I struck by their hospitality and friendliness, but what really impressed me was their eagerness to learn. This applied to my Awareness Team colleagues and the people in the villages alike. In my 15 years of working with participatory drama I have seldom seen people so keen on receiving and digesting information, on thinking and problem solving and on reshaping the image they have of the world they are living in. The line that will always stay on my mind was that of the people of Ban Paloy. After the "official" part of the show, the actors came out to sing the goodbye song, but the people protested: "We like the thinking!", so please go on. The encore was of course granted and the A-team played another scene. We could have continued until dawn, hadn't it been for the Village Chief, (rightly) pointing out that the next morning all had to rise early for the Planning Workshop as well as for all the other work that has to be done in villages like Ban Paloy.

For my colleague Ronald Matthijssen, who has worked with me for more than 8 years now, the writing of this report was an equal privilege. To be able to analyse the data of a pioneer project in an area so similar to the origins of Theatre for Development is a joyous task. The result of this is quite a voluminous report, which the two of us now hand over to the Village Development Programme in Savannakhet. We sincerely hope that the content of this report will add to the development process in the region by offering a new method and some recommendations about its application.

This report also looks closely at the work that has been done. Looking closely at anything, there will always be room for improvement. Looking back on the mission as a whole, there are some elements that need improvement before further implementation is considered. We chose to mention these elements, for the benefit of all involved in the Village Development Programme, knowing that learning was the central issue of this project. Learning should therefore also be the central issue of this report.

I want to thank BTC and CPC for allowing me to work in Laos for a month, for the extensive information they provided and also for the passionate debates we had about the project. I especially want to thank my colleagues of the Awareness Team, Mr. Sitone, Mrs. Kaysone, Mrs. Manichanh, Ms. Kommany, Mr. Bindavong, Mr. Khampong, Ms. Lingma, Ms. Phou tone and Mr. Somboun for their dedication, their knowledge and their support. I thank my interpreter, Mr. Phetsoulaphone Choulatidar for the almost impossible task of translating my English into intelligible Lao. Finally I thank my assistant Polly Kirby for the way she steered me through the logistical and language barriers I was faced with.

It would be an even greater privilege for me to be able to return to Laos and play a part in the development of TFD in the Savannakhet area, perhaps beyond.

Rotterdam, October 2004

Luc Opdebeeck
Artistic Director Formaat

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Executive Summary

The Theatre for Development expert mission of the Education component of the Village Development Programme for the Savannakhet Province was carried out between August 9 and September 8, 2004. The mission comprised of three main stages: 1) Training of 9 members of the Awareness Team 2) Drama development and rehearsal 3) Implementation/tour.

The training resulted in the acquirement of basic skills necessary for the acting, joking and evaluating of Forum Theatre. The Drama development and rehearsal resulted in eight scenes, covering 13 key issues concerning education, which formed the pillars of a show that included music, song and dance. The show was performed and joked during the Implementation/tour stage in the target villages in the Nong, Sepon and Thapanthong district. Every show was followed by a Participatory Planning Workshop the next day. The preparation for and the monitoring of these workshops were dropped during the mission.

The mission produced the following conclusions and recommendations from the expert, reflecting his personal views:

1. Forum Theatre can be a powerful instrument for participatory processes in Laos, provided:

- 1.1. Training is adequate, especially regarding joker techniques
- 1.2. Forum Theatre and related techniques are also used in the Participatory Planning Workshops
- 1.3. Logistical and management support is available, preferably with one person who is relieved of other tasks
- 1.4. Brou and Lao-Lum teams operate separately in the field
- 1.5. The villagers are free to raise the issues they find important, even if they differ from the main issue (education) of the drama

2. The issue of education is interwoven with the following neighbouring issues which should be taken into account during PPW's:

- 2.1. Gender (beyond the question of sending girls to school or wives to NFE)
- 2.2. Poverty (especially concerning the responsibility of villagers to look after school buildings and teachers)
- 2.3. Primary Health Care (e.g. regarding the use of posters with written advice to the public)
- 2.4. Agriculture (in relation to the uncertainties of development as a whole)

3. The implementation of Tfd can be made more effective if:

- 3.1. The objectives are complementary to the other components of the Village Development Programme
- 3.2. Ongoing evaluation on the basis of an agreed list of criteria and evaluation techniques is carried out
- 3.3. All those involved in the process are introduced to the methodology and agree with its premises
- 3.4. A coordination point for the training and supervision of Tfd practitioners is created in Laos

Introduction

This Mission Report focuses on the education component of the Village Development Programme for the Savannakhet Province, as described by the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC), and more specifically on the Theatre for Development (TfD)-based awareness campaign. The author of this report was assigned with the training of the Awareness Team (A-Team) and (co-)developing of the TfD participatory drama piece that was introduced in 9 target villages of the Nong, Sepon and Thapanthong districts in the Savannakhet Province.

This report is based upon the following material:

- Written information prior to the assignment supplied by BTC, including the Terms of Reference (ToR, see Annex), the Anthropological and Sociological Study (AS) and the Rapid Rural Appraisals (RRA) of the target villages
- Day-to day diary of the expert mission between August 8 through September 9, 2004
- Written observations of the performances in
 1. Non Sawang (Savannakhet)
 2. Ban Paloy (Nong District)
 3. Ban Xouang Nyai (Nong District)
 4. Ban Xouang Khankhak (Nong District)
 5. Ban Nongniao (Sepone District)
- Reference literature about TfD and Theatre of the Oppressed techniques (see Bibliography list)
- Transcript of the ORID-based evaluation by the A-Team of the performances in the Nong district (see Chapter 5)
- Methodological analyses of the performances

The report is divided into 7 parts:

Chapter 1 is an assessment of the initial situation at the beginning of the assignment, for the purpose of pre-post comparison, development analysis and the evaluation of the high, middle and low points of the project. The assessment includes a review of the objectives of the project, which is necessary to draw conclusions about the feasibility of this and future activities under the current circumstances.

Chapter 2 focuses on methodology and explores the potential of TfD and related techniques in the education component of the Village Development Programme, in the Village Development Programme as a whole and in development work in general.

Chapter 3 is a step-by-step display of the training programme and the drama development/rehearsal stages that lead to the performances in the target villages. Special attention is given to the aspects of logistics, language and team attitude, because they have a great impact on the potential success or failure of village performances.

Chapter 4 gives an analysis of the 5 performances the author of this report witnessed, as well as his observations about the ensuing Participatory Planning Workshops (PPW's) in 4 of the target villages.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the evaluation of the project on 4 different levels: 1) the A-team, 2) the expert 3) BTC and 4) methodologically

Chapter 6 lists the conclusions and recommendations by the expert both on the practical level concerning the Village Development Programme, as well as on the future use of TfD in later stages of the Village Development Programme or beyond.

Finally, the Annexes display the Bibliography, the ToR, and the English translation of the Teacher Status scene.

1. Initial Situation

Starting points of the mission

If we want to measure the results of this TfD mission, it is important to assess the initial situation in the Savannakhet province upon arrival. A comparison with the relevant planning documents can also reveal differences between the ideal and the actual starting point. After the completion of the first stage of the mission, a second assessment will show positive or negative changes in relationship to the initial situation. In this first assessment I will focus on

1.1. Assessment of

- a. The Awareness Team
- b. The organisation of the project
- c. My personal vantage point

The latter is not completely irrelevant, as the influence an expert exerts on the processes he supervises is also related to the way in which he interprets the mission. Interpretation is all the more important when a pioneer mission is undertaken, where more or less fixed knowledge is not yet available. The TfD project in Savannakhet was such a mission, as there hadn't been any previous experience with these methods in Laos.

a. The Awareness Team

On August 9, 2004, I met the team for the first time during the presentation of the project. Contrary to arrangements made with BTC, the team had not gone through a continuous 3-day preparation stage. This stage was cut in two. The first, 2-day preparation, took place 4 weeks before the start of the mission. In this preparation stage the following subjects were tackled:

- team building
- briefing about the assignment of the team in the field
- instruction about the role of NFE in the target villages
- instruction about the basic principles of participatory learning
- instruction about the basic principles of drama in education and theatre for development
- exchange about personal motivation and attitude requirements

The subjects mentioned above now had to be repeated at the onset of the training, which meant that the programme became even more condensed than it already had. This of course put additional pressure on both the team as well as on the expert.

The second part of the preparation stage comprised the construction of a presentation of the artistic skills of the team.

The presentation of the project and the team that was made on August 9 led to the following assessment of the team skills:

- great variety of aesthetic means (storytelling, dance, acting, music, singing)
- high motivation and intensity (enjoyment)
- naturalistic play, with epic (Brechtian) elements
- basic acting and musical skills
- further training needed in the following areas:
 - o voice focussing
 - o dramaturgy and character development
 - o dialogue condensing
 - o stage setting

b. The Organisation

As I pointed out in the introduction, a lot of time was spent in synchronizing between BTC and me in terms of sufficient relevant information about Laos, the Savannakhet province, the Village Development Programme and the TfD mission. As I arrived in Savannakhet, the following staff was available for my mission:

Mr. Patrick Brandelard – International Project Coordinator (through August 13)
Mr. Gert Janssens – Senior Advisor Education (through August 24)
Mr. Eric Remacle – Field Operations Officer
Ms. Polly Kirby – Assistant TfD Expert
Mr. Phetsoulaphone Choulatidar – interpreter Lao-English

c. Personal vantage point

The information supplied to me by BTC was clear in many ways: the objective of the mission was to set a participatory process in motion that would lead to community-based decisions on the issue of education in the target villages. The Forum Theatre performance would be the key incentive to this process, the participatory planning workshop was to be the key event in everyone of the villages.

My mission was to equip the Awareness Team with the necessary skills to perform satisfactory, to create a dynamic participatory planning atmosphere and –in a later stage- to improve their skills independently and transfer them to other potential facilitators of planning processes. The role of the Awareness Team was therefore pivotal: the success of the project depended on maximizing the output of each individual member as well as of the team as a whole.

From this perspective I expected the selection, preparation and working conditions of the Awareness Team to be in accordance with the essential position the members played in the project. A subject that was raised in the preparation before the mission was physical contact between group members; the information supplied by BTC pointed out that physical contact may be a potential source of shame, which meant that the acquaintance programme would gradually have the A-team get used to physical contact. Exercises that involved physical contact were postponed to the 3rd day of the training, which produced a somewhat unnatural order of exercises, which normally include physical contact from day one.

1.2. Objectives

a. The Village Development Programme

The TfD project is an integral part of the Village Development Programme for the Savannakhet province. It therefore shares all the Village Development Programme objectives in terms of development in the field of primary health care, agriculture, water supply, access roads and education. The full list (ToR, p. 5) of expected results mentions:

- Increased domestic animal production
- Increased fish production in village fish ponds
- Increased diversified rain fed crop production
- Increased irrigated crop production
- More sustainable production of NTFP's
- Improved equitable access to education
- Improved quality of basic education
- Strengthened provincial and district education services
- Functional village water supply systems
- Functional district water supply systems
- Improved primary health care system
- Most target villages easily accessible all-year round
- Improve monitoring and planning capacity at provincial and district level

b. The Theatre for Development component (TfD)

The TfD project had also some specific objectives, related to the short- and mid-term implementation of the method during the Village Development Programme until its finalization in 2007. They can be listed (ToR, p.5) as follows:

- improving equitable access to and participation in basic education
- improving quality of education
- strengthening the provincial and district education services.
- creating opportunities for education for rural communities
- promoting new knowledge for development

In the analysis of the necessary steps towards the increased participation in education, two factors (ToR, p. 5) were highlighted:

- awareness about the value of education for both boys and girls
- a positive attitude towards education

The ToR also pointed out that awareness in itself was not sufficient enough to increase participation. “Village communities need to be encouraged to organise focus groups and/or a parents and school association to promote and monitor education development at village level.”(ToR, p. 5). This can be considered as the primary expected outcome for the Tfd mission. To optimize the chances for this outcome, the project had to assist the communities and the district education service in

- improving infrastructure and facilities
- increasing the number of qualified teachers and facilitators
- providing sufficient and suitable teaching and learning materials (ToR, p. 5)

c. The Expert Assignment

One important aspect of the project was training. The assignment of the expert was to train the Awareness Team in such a fashion that the members themselves would be able to

- develop a drama that would address critical issues in education
- transfer their skills to other education officers

BTC formulated 13 key issues (ToR, p. 6f.) of which needed to be addressed:

- Value of education for children and (young) adults
- Impact of education and benefits for daily life
- Equal opportunities for boys and girls, men and women (gender aspect)
- Sending children to primary school and secondary school
- Support to pupils and parents
- Teacher status and working conditions
- Literacy
- Life skills and vocational skills
- Community Learning Centre
- Expectations towards access to education and participation in education
- Village priorities and attitude towards education
- Village organisation for community mobilisation (parents & school association)
- Community participation for construction and maintenance (school and/or CLC)

A 14th issue of general nature that was obvious was that of poverty. The team struggled with the fact that not every issue applied to every village. If the structure of the drama were based on one issue/one scene, some scenes would have been played only once or twice, with the same amount of time required for preparation. The alternative, combining issues in every scene, would have led to too many complicated scenes, unsuitable for the kind of audience we were expecting. The solution was found in combining some issues in some scenes and preparing some “one-issue” scenes. This produced some discussion with the Field Co-ordinator. The ToR explicitly state that the choice of issues for the drama was to be decided in consultation with the awareness team, but the interpretation given by the Field Co-ordinator was that this applied to every performance, not to the question about the number of scenes to be prepared. Dropping one or more issues on practical ground was labelled as undesirable. Nevertheless, after the training and rehearsal process of only 15 days (10-25 August), 8 scenes¹ were finalized. This is to be valued as a supreme performance by the awareness team, as the development of so many scenes in such a short span of time is difficult enough for experienced Forum actors.

¹ Which touched all key issues on the list, see Chapter 3, Table 2

This implied, among others, that the entire training programme was to be translated into Lao before the project started. The translation process demonstrated that language would become an important tool as well as a potential obstacle. Many theatre-, and especially TfD- and TO-, related words do not have a matching equivalent in Lao. Translation into Brou is even more difficult. Training of TfD-actors and facilitators must for an important part rely on the power of images, which has already been highlighted as an important feature of the method in areas where language has restricted options for expression. In order to meet with the objective of “training the trainers”, the participants must learn to use the image as their most important tool. This premise collided with the emphasis on language during the rehearsal process and the participatory planning workshops. The ToR were used as a kind of infallible compass² to determine the course of the Forum scenes and to steer the Awareness Team into the completion of the registration forms belonging to the Participatory Planning Workshops. The fact that we were still dealing with an experiment without precedent in the Savannakhet context, was often overlooked. By doing this, the capacity of the villagers to interpret images rather than words, was also ignored.

The objectives of the Training were as follows (ToR: p. 7)

- At the end of the training, the participants can explain in their own words the key concepts and the process of forum theatre
- At the end of the training, the participants master the basic forum theatre techniques
- At the end of the training, the participants are able to develop, organise and perform a drama
- At the end of the training, the participants are able to evaluate a theatre performance
- At the end of the process, the participants are able to facilitate a training in Theatre for Development (in co-operation with an expert)

The items 1-3 and 5 were obvious, item 4 was ambiguous because of lacking evaluation time. Performances and the subsequent packing of equipment would finalize around 10.30 pm. The A-Team was therefore physically unable to perform evaluation tasks on tour. Evaluation could only be preformed on rest days.

d. ToR alternations

Significant alterations were made in the ToR before, as agreed upon in the contract and during the process. The changes concerned:

- Time table
- Responsibility
- Report writing

The following alterations were agreed upon:

Time table

The assignment would not take nine weeks (i.e. 63 days), but five, of which 4 days were entirely spent on travelling between Rotterdam and Savannakhet. The maximum number of effective working days was therefore 31. Preparation and training was originally set for 3 weeks (July 26-August 13). In the changed ToR, it came down to two (August 10-24). A reduction of the first stage of the project by one third should have resulted in a reduction of some of the requirements, especially those regarding output quantity³, i.e. the number of scenes required to produce. The focus should have been predominantly on quality.

² Confusion was caused primarily because of the fact that the mission was overambitious in some aspects, which couldn't be assessed properly by the expert before his arrival in Savannakhet. The effect of this was an ongoing lack of common understanding about the goals of the mission and the ToR.

³ See under c. above

The presence of the expert during the tour was also reduced. Instead of witnessing all 9 performances in the Nong, Sepon and Thapanthong Districts, the expert would witness only 4, three in the Nong District and one in Sepon. This meant he would not be able to evaluate this tour with the A-team right after its completion.

The compromise reached over the time table may have caused some doubts about the feasibility of the project within the Village Development Programme frame. The quantity/quality conflict should nevertheless have been resolved before the start of the process. The fact that the A-team was faced with the task to develop 13 scenes in two thirds of the time available originally caused unnecessary pressure.

Responsibility

Originally, the expert would play an important role in the preparation, execution and evaluation of the Participatory Planning Workshops. This was a logical part of the assignment, as the Forum Theatre and the PPW should be connected methodically to benefit from the performance maximally. As the training and rehearsal schedule was too tight, the decision was made to let the expert focus on the theatre part only. The limited background to the context and the lack of common understanding between the expert and the technical advisors on participatory planning added to that decision.

Report writing

As the PPW responsibility was dropped, it also meant that the mission report should no longer have to expand on the methodology of the PPW's and formulate recommendations. This report, however, contains statements about this issue, which is considered to be too important to omit completely.

The deadline for the writing of the report was extended from 2 to 6 weeks after the end of the mission. This agreement was based on the time schedule already made up for me and the co-writer of the report.

2. Tfd, TO: Methodology, Experiences and Conditions

Exploring the potential: what you can do with what you have

2.1. Tfd Applications

In the ToR, Forum Theatre (FT) is explicitly mentioned as the technique to be used in the Tfd stage of the Village Development Programme. FT is one of the most widely used techniques of Tfd, but it is far from the only one. On the other hand, there are many other ways Forum Theatre is implemented, apart from development issues. The ToR also refer to FT as an “awareness technique”, developed by Augusto Boal. FT is both a single technique from the Theatre of the Oppressed⁴ (TO) “toolkit” as well as a Tfd option. Other Tfd options range from using traditional cultural art forms to making scenes without facilitation through a joker, to staging instant playback theatre in combination with storytelling, to puppet theatre and great many other techniques. The rise of Tfd in many developing countries is associated with post-colonialism (Byam 1999, p.1 ff.). TO is considered as an important exponent of Tfd (Ibid. p. 9-11)

ITO, the International Theatre of the Oppressed Organisation, received word from projects in Asian countries like the Philippines (cf. Van Erven 2001, p. 14-52), Cambodia, Nepal, India (see Ganguly 2002), Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, as well as from countries like Burkina Faso, Sudan, South Africa, Costa Rica and even Vanuatu.

2.2. From Forum Theatre to Legislative Theatre

This implies that someone proficient in FT techniques is potentially capable of using various methods in a Tfd context. This opens up a range of possibilities for Tfd in Laos, on the basis of the current Village Development Programme experiences. The potential even goes beyond the awareness aspect. Participatory learning is already commonly associated with Tfd, participatory planning is a new aspect, introduced by Augusto Boal in 1992 with the implementation of *Legislative Theatre(LT)* in Brazil. After the English translation of Boal’s book about his LT experiences in 1999, its use is quickly spreading around the world. Although the initial concept is a rather large-scale operation, adaptations of the method in several countries have resulted in flexible formats. One of the formats can be easily transferred to that of the participatory planning workshop as used in the Village Development Programme region. In this format, the inventory stage would produce several (ideal) images by the groups of villagers involved. The images can be regarded as proposals. In the decisional stage, the villagers would focus on the consequences of the proposals. During this stage, one or more scenes from the Forum play could be repeated. Because most of the villagers already saw the Forum, they share a *collective real image* about the issues that are discussed. This is regarded as a big advantage compared with the difficult task of finding *collective words* for (complicated) issues. The advantage is all the bigger when the language of the people involved has a smaller vocabulary. For the Brou-speaking villages, the power of images over words seems obvious.

An experiment in the use of LT in the Nong, Sepone and Thapanthong district was unfortunately stricken from the mission assignment during the training stage of the Tfd project. Priority was given to use PP methods already used in other sectors of the project. Some team members were trained about these methods and already gained some experience during PP activities for agriculture. It is nevertheless strongly recommended to conduct such an experiment and offer further training to the Awareness Team in this direction.

⁴ In the TO declaration of principles (drafted by A. Boal in 2003), the definition of the term *oppressed* refers to “those individuals or groups who are socially, culturally, politically, economically, racially, sexually, or in any other way deprived of their right to *Dialogue* or in any way impaired to exercise this right. *Dialogue* is defined as to freely exchange with others, as a person and as a group, to participate in human society as equal, to respect differences and to be respected.” By this definition, lack of education constitutes a clear impairment in dialogue skills. *Note that this definition does not point at oppressors. Oppression can also come from within, from cultural constraints etc.*

2.3. Decision, Reflection and Action

Village development is an ongoing process, in which all development issues (agriculture, health, education, gender, economy) are intertwined. Separate attention to each of these issues does not always come to terms with this complexity. As we have seen during the tour in the Nong and Sepon district, villagers comprehend the problems displayed as theirs, without pointing at a single factor. One of the key issues in the Anthropological and Sociological Study is the insecurity caused by the transition from rotational swidden cultivation to more permanent agriculture (AS p. 7). This leads to an increased risk and can be perceived as a lack of options. In the Forum play, the audience is faced with many options: putting working power into the creation and maintenance of schools and teachers' facilities could improve their economic situation, but the question is if the relatively low investment into NFE is perhaps more economical. Stimulating the thinking process on this issue is a key development factor. But choices must be real, and both teacher skills as well as learning tools must meet the perceived investment by the villagers. Better education should also lead to better health; illness is a major drop-out factor among children. We have witnessed a high level of reflection during most of the theatre performances, as well as during the storytelling session in Ban Xouang Khankhak. Village development depends on the enhancement of reflection levels, as it is expected that the villagers make medium and long term decisions. Decisional and reflection skills are aspects related to FT and LT. They are also regarded as key *life skills* by UNICEF.

This is consistent with the notion that "Underdevelopment is a prime example of a limit situation surmountable through reflection and action" (Byam 1999, p. 14). Theatre for Development aims at facilitating the reflection and action process. The importance of the role of the indigenous culture in this process is now widely recognized. "Without such recognition, no true development can occur (ibid. p. 15). Development is considered more than mere economic growth. This implies, for example, that "education, as an aspect of culture, has become instrumental in efforts to achieve such goals" (ibid.).

2.4. Conditions: Success Factors

In the Netherlands as well as internationally there is a growing interest in the thorough construction and evaluation of participatory drama projects. Formaat is one of the first organisations working with Forum Theatre worldwide that was submitted to scientific effect research. University research projects in 2001 and 2003, as well as continuous monitoring of projects using participatory drama in prisons since 2002, gave an insight in some of the success factors for effective interventions. The following three apply to the Tfd project in Savannakhet Province.

a. Interrelationship and coherence of project elements

This is one of the factors that is mentioned with the highest frequency. Objectives, methods and techniques used, and evaluation criteria should match. For example: if the ToR mention 13 issues to be raised in the Forum play:

- the participants (i.e. the awareness team) should have community and evidence-based knowledge about all issues
- the villagers should be able to intervene into and discuss about all issues during the intervention stage of the performance
- the planning workshop should be able to focus on all of the 13 issues
- the evaluation of the project should look into the results on all of the issues

In this case, the project seems ambivalent. The list of issues was compiled during the RRA and SPW stages of the project in all the target villages. Not every issue is relevant to every village, but there is a mutual relationship between the issues. The drama must be community-based and take the relationships into account to be able to show real life choices. In Forum Theatre, the scenes must display the *collective real image* of the lives of the spect-actors. Condensing the drama into the situations recognized by all would have made every performance comparable. The villagers

would have had the chance to add local elements to the drama through their interventions. It is the job of the actors to supply the different local characters. By selecting scenes before the performance, a part of the potential information is lost. By selecting the issues for the PPW after the performance, even more information is lost, especially when issues are discussed that were not touched in the Forum.

b. Theoretical underpinning

Any programme should develop consensus about the interpretation of most important terms. In this case, Theatre, Education and Development seem to be the key words.

Theatre

Forum Theatre, being a Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) technique, is based upon the definition of theatre used in TO. The basic definition is “the *passionate combat of two human beings on a platform*” (Boal 1995, p. 16). The practical definition is that drama should be a conflict between two parties, set in a real situation. The passionate element of the drama is that both parties want to win the conflict. From here FT/TO go into another direction than classical theatre, in which the actors and the director decide who wins the conflict. In Forum Theatre, the spect-actor replaces a character, usually the protagonist, and starts a passionate combat. The outcome is unclear and depends on many factors, but the audience decides who has won.

If the outcome is unclear, it means that it cannot be directed, neither by the actors nor by the joker. If the outcome is already set beforehand, it ceases to be Forum Theatre. This theoretical notion was part of the expert assignment and was maintained throughout the course of the project.

Education

Education was both the key *issue* of the TfD project as well as the main *feature* of the project. The education started with the training of the A-team and culminated in a form of education for the villagers, namely a *problem-posing* form of education, in the shape of Forum Theatre. Paulo Freire writes about this form of education: “The problem-posing method does not dichotomize the activity of the teacher-student: she is not “cognitive” at one point and “narrative” at another. She is always “cognitive”, whether preparing a project or dialoguing with the students. He does not regard recognizable objects as his private property, but as the object of reflection by himself and the students. In this way, the problem-posing educator constantly re-forms his reflections in the reflections of the students” (Freire 2000, p. 84f.).

If we replace “teacher-student” by “A-team” and students by “villagers”, this is the situation encountered in the villages during the Forum Theatre *and* the PPW stages of the project. The work of Freire, as well as that of Boal, was initiated during the ALFIN literacy campaign in Peru in the 1960’s in remote areas in the Andes.

Development

The AS points out that development is not only perceived as an opportunity, but also as a risk (AS p. 7). In fact, in many countries the transition from traditional agriculture to cash crop production has not always produced better living conditions for farmers. Food insecurity and increasing poverty of those who cannot keep up with the pace of village development are factors to be included into the equation.

It is therefore essential for a project that aims at the participation of the people involved in the planning of their future to take their insecurity seriously. The attitude of the team towards development and education as a part of development must be unbiased. TfD and forum theatre in particular is not designed to *convince* people that development and education are entirely positive. Only if people make realistic choices based on the weighing of *all the arguments* real development will occur. Sometimes this may produce unexpected choices, but this should not be regarded as counter-productive.

c. Process- and Outcome-focussed evaluation

An evaluation grid for all performances and PPW's alike would have been the beginning of an evidence-based evaluation of the results. Unfortunately, such an evaluation grid was not part of the ToR. The introduction of the ORID as an evaluation tool by the expert did not focus primarily on output or outcome. Chapter 4 and 5 contain some outcome evaluation criteria we usually apply to Forum Theatre performances but they are to be regarded as proposals.

The process-focussed evaluation criteria used in chapter 3 relate to the objectives in the ToR and Village Development Programme documents, and may be assessed as such.

It is often encountered that evaluation criteria are developed "along the way", which makes it difficult for all participants in a process to assess the effectiveness of their work. We realize, however, that evaluation criteria for Forum Theatre productions of any kind have not been subjected to comparative research yet. Formaats has adopted a strategy of looking at the general objectives of a project in which we are involved and looks for indicators during and after performances. The evaluation grids of the performances in Chapter 4 are very similar to those used in the Netherlands, but may need amending for the Lao context. It is for the Village Development Programme coordinators to decide if the data compiled are relevant enough. For the authors of this report, they were sufficient enough to produce the conclusions and recommendations in chapter 6.

3. Training and Preparation for the Village Tour

3.1. The Programme of the Training

The training was conducted in Savannakhet with the A-team entirely present at every occasion. The following games, exercises and topics were explained and practiced.

Day 1: Tuesday, August 10, 2004

General topic:

- Getting Acquainted

Objectives:

- Introduction to the Games of the Arsenal of TO⁵
- Team building through
 1. Confidence
 2. Collaboration

Games:

- Outrageous lie
- Sorry, I forgot your name
- Hands
- The circle of names
- The circle of movements and sound
- Circle and cross
- Write your name in the air
- Carnival in Rio
- Mirror games
- Power game
- Counting 1-10



Day 2: Wednesday, August 11, 2004

Morning session

Games:

- Fruit Salad

Exercises:

Confidence sequence

- The drunken bottle
- The plank
- The plank in the circle

Afternoon session

Blindfold sequence

- Leading the blind with:
 1. hand
 2. finger
 3. sound



⁵ See Boal, Augusto (1979): Theatre of the Oppressed. London: Pluto and Boal, Augusto (1992): Games for Actors and Non-Actors. London: Routledge. See for some of the games also: Thompson, James (1999): Drama Workshops for Anger Management and Offending Behaviour. London: Jessica Kingsley Publications

Introduction to Forum Theatre:

- Video of awareness project in Kenya using Forum Theatre
- Exchange of ideas
- Relating to Village Development Programme

The TfD part of the working day was finished earlier because of a briefing by the Technical Advisors.

Day 3: Thursday, August 12, 2004

Morning session

General topic:

- Introduction to Image Theatre and making embryonic scenes

Objectives:

- Learning basic skills needed for the creation of scenes
- Introduction to the translation of the themes of the project into images

Games:

- Don't move
- Stop and go
- The Clap (conclusion)

Exercises:

- The sculptor and the clay
- Group images of terms/words
- Group images of education
- Internal monologue of image characters
- External dialogue among image characters
- Dynamism of images
- Images into slides
- Connecting slides to embryonic scenes



Afternoon session

General topic:

- Introduction to rehearsal techniques

Objectives:

- Learning basic skills needed for the creation of scenes

Exercise:

- Practicing the slide show technique
- Advanced practice of the slide show technique (in two different groups)
- Work from slide show into a scene

Example:

- What is the task of the joker/facilitator in Forum Theatre?

Day 4: Friday, August 13, 2004

Morning session

Games:

- The puppet
- Hypnosis of Columbine
- Walk like an animal
- This is not an...
- Blind character
- Segmented dance (4 different segments)

Afternoon session

Games:

- The French Telephone
- The knot

Exercises:

- Practicing the slide show technique



Day 5: Saturday, August 14, 2004

Morning session

Practicing the slide show technique (2 groups making scene's)

Afternoon session

From slide show towards a scene

The team created three basic scenes, that would later develop into:

- The salesman
- Health scene
- School drop-out scene

Jokering example

Concise evaluation of the introduction week



Day 7: Monday, August 16, 2004

Morning session

General topic:

- Introduction to Forum Theatre

Objectives:

- Understanding the theory behind Forum Theatre and applying the theory in the creation of Forum scenes and characters

Games:

- The power game

Theory:

- The three basic characters: protagonist – antagonist – tritagonist
- Dramaturgy of the anti-model

Afternoon Session

Theory:

- The elements of Forum Theatre
 - passion
 - conflict
 - characters
 - platform



Day 8: Tuesday, August 17, 2004

General topic:

- Developing Forum scenes

Objectives:

- Creating embryonic scenes for the rehearsal stage next week

Exercise:

- Tell each other true stories from your own background about education and turn them into images/slide shows

Theory:

- Introduction characters -counterpreparation
- Introduction of the story/the theme
- Characters towards a conflict with a different desire
- Crisis

Day 9: Wednesday, August 18, 2004

Morning session

General topic:

- The role of Image Theatre in the creation of the drama

Exercise:

- Analysis techniques of images:
 - internal monologue
 - dynamism of the image
 - the words the characters say



Afternoon session

General topic:

- Developing Forum scenes

Objectives:

- Creating embryonic scenes

Day 10: Thursday August 19, 2004

General topic:

- Developing Forum scenes

Objectives:

- Creating embryonic scenes and learning further rehearsal techniques

Further scenes were developed:

- Teacher status
- School construction

Exercises:

- Playing for the deaf
- Stop and think
- Animal-mode
- Rachomon
- Hot seat
- Hannover variations
- Cycle of Poverty



Day 11: Friday, August 20, 2004

General topic:

- Developing the Forum as a whole

Objectives:

- Adding cultural elements to the Forum to increase analogy and participation

Morning session:

- Selection of traditional Lao-Lum songs
- Writing of a self-made song in Lao-Thung
- Selecting and rehearsing music and dance elements between the Forum scenes

Afternoon session:

General topic:

- Focusing on the joker/facilitator

Objectives:

- Learning basic joker skills

Theory:

- The joker as master of ceremonies => presence and presentation
- theatre maker => drama skills
- facilitator => knowledge of issues and community backgrounds
- " the card you can always play" => questioning techniques

Day 12: Saturday, August 21, 2004

Rest for the A-Team; I worked out the dialogues for the scenes

Day 13, Sunday, August 22, 2004

Developing final scenes to meet ToR list:

- Metal detector
- CLC-the volunteer

Rehearsal

Day 14-16: Monday/Wednesday, August 23-25, 2004

General topic:

- Rehearsal and directing

Objectives:

- Finishing the “anti-model” to a presentable play

Aspects:

- Character and conflict development
- Dramaturgy
- Stage-setting
- Dialogue
- Voice control
- Choreography
- Counter-play development for the intervention stage
- Connecting the scenes with music and dance elements
- Lights, props, musical instruments

Final preparation for try-out of August 25

3.2 Assessment of the development of the skills of the A-team

It must be emphasized at this point that the team performance was excellent, regarding the limited amount of time available for the creation of the Forum. Most experienced Forum Theatre groups use between 90 and 120 hours to create Forums. Inexperienced groups take up to 200 hours before going on stage. Not counting the introduction week, we used about 50 hours to create a Forum that could potentially show:

- 13 different scenes and
- music and dance intermezzo's before and after the play and between all the scenes

Total length of the show, excluding the interactive part, was between 90 and 120 minutes. The total length of the average Forum Theatre performance in most countries is 30-45 minutes, containing 3-4 key scenes. This implies that the A-team did twice the average work in half the available time. The development of skills as a group was high, middle and low on the following aspects:

HIGH

- Team spirit, motivation and group cohesion
- Scene development, translating real stories into drama
- Analysis of scenes

MIDDLE

- Song, dance and musical skills
- Acting: display of decisions, line retention, voice control, gesture
- Understanding of principles of Forum Theatre
- Counter-play during interventions
- Knowledge of the exercises

LOW

- Joker skills
- Transferring skills

(The personal evaluations are shown in Chapter 5)

The list displayed above shows a highly motivated group with good understanding of the nature of the scenes, who had reasonable performance skills and basic but sufficient knowledge of the Forum Theatre method but with insufficient tools to make the performances work. As the day of the try-out approached, there was still a lot of work to do, but there was not enough time. Still, compared to the initial assessment of the group (see Chapter 1.1.), the development had been enormous considering the time involved.

3.3. The scenes of the play

1) *Health and Literacy*

(Scene without dialogue)

Prelude: Three women sing a song: "We have this nice poster in our village, but we can't read what it says".

Mother and daughter walk towards the paddy field. They carry water. The mother is thirsty and drinks. They work, the mother drinks more water. Then it's time for lunch. The daughter is thirsty and is sent forth to fetch water. She returns; mother wants her to wash her hands before lunch but she refuses. Daughter drinks from the water.

Both take a nap. The daughter wakes up with a tummy ache. She vomits and has diarrhoea. Mother takes her daughter home in a hurry. On the way home the daughter gets sicker all the time. The mother turns towards the audience and asks the people what she should do.

2) *Salesman*

Bindavong tells about his neighbour, Mr. Khampong. He is a friend to them, but there are big differences. Mr. Khampong doesn't like learning. He forbids his wife to go to the course in the village. Bindavong goes there and explains what he has learned. Mr. Khampong leaves for the paddy, his wife works around the house.

A salesman comes on and tells the audience that he came to village to buy bamboo shoots. He sees Bindavong's shoots piled up and asks for the price. During the bartering process, he tries to cheat on Bindavong, but he has learned enough to not be cheated. The salesman pays for the bamboo and goes to the neighbouring house.

The salesman manages to cheat on Mr. Khampong's wife because she lacks the skills to see through the cheating. Mr. Khampong returns from work and calls on Mr. Bindavong. He tells him what he received for the bamboo deal. Arriving home, Mr. Khampong finds out that his wife received only half the money and curses the stupidity of his wife.

3) *Teacher Status*⁶

PEW brings new teacher into the village. We see a village meeting about sending the children to school, how the community can support the teacher (food, house) and what should happen to the school building, which is in a bad condition.

After a lot of discussion it is decided to build a house for the new teacher and to mend the roof of the school, but only after harvest. For the time being the teacher will sleep at the VC's house.

We see the children at school, with not enough benches and the roof leaking. Eventually the roof comes down. The teacher sends the children home, they cheer. A new village meeting is called. The teacher expresses her discontent about the situation. The VC points at the responsibility of the villagers, including for the safety of the children. The villagers turn their heads away from the teacher. The VC and the teacher ask the audience what they should do.

4) *School Drop-Out*

Mother sends her son to school. He walks with his female cousin. He pretends to have a stomach ache and sends the girl away. He runs off to the forest to shoot birds.

The teacher is annoyed at the fact that another child did not show up and decides to write a letter to the parents of all the children missing. The cousin carries the letter home.

⁶ For the full text, see Annex 4

The cousin gives the mother the letter, but she can't read. The son has to read it. He makes up a story about being the best pupil in the school.

The teacher and the mother meet by accident. The mother tells him how proud she is of her son, the teacher tells her what the real content of the letter was. Returning home she interrogates her son and beats him.

5) Gender Issue

A woman is working and tells the audience she got up at 4am. She shows the audience all the tasks she has to perform.

8am, her husband gets up. He has a headache for drinking too much Laolao the night before. He demands food. His wife brings him food. He complains that he gets no fish. The wife replies that he should have gone fishing in the morning. The husband is angry.

A couple familiar to them passes and the man invites them in. The couple tells him that they decided that the wife can attend the NFE classes. The man responds saying that he doesn't find this a good idea because women are slow learners and don't need literacy skills as much as men etc. His friend says he agrees and now tells his wife she can't go to the NFE classes anymore. She protests only slightly and the other woman says she agrees with her husband.

The wife of the friend now turns to the audience and asks what she should do.

6) Metal Detector

Two children come home from school and find another boy working with a metal detector. They start talking: why doesn't he come to school anymore? The boy replies saying that he is making loads of money this way. One of the other pupils is impressed, the other just shrugs his shoulders and goes home.

The pupil asks the former school companion to teach him how the detector works. He agrees but says it must be during school hours. So the boy drops out to learn to work with the metal detector.

The teacher finds out about this and goes to see the parents of both boys. The parents tell him to mind his own business.

7) Community Learning Centre (CLC)

A province representative talks to the VC and explains the plans for the creation of a CLC. A volunteer must be found to teach the other villagers how to read, write and count. A volunteer is found, but he says he only got to 3rd grade and can't be a teacher.

The representative reassures him: he will be trained and supplied with the proper materials. The CLC classes start. In the first lesson he teaches the people the Lao alphabet. In the 2nd lesson they repeat this. In the 3rd lesson he repeats this again and the people start complaining that they want to learn more. They quit.

The volunteer asks the audience what he should do and what went wrong.

8) School Construction

NOTE: This scene was especially designed for village in which a conflict about school construction had occurred. In the other target villages, the Teacher Status scene covers this issue sufficiently.

The VC tells two communities belonging to the same village that they should discuss the location of the new school. He asks the people what the best place would be.

One community says it has the best location, the other says it has the most pupils. The conflict of interest escalates and the VC asks the audience how best to deal with this situation.

3.4. Analysis of the scenes

a. Issues in Village Development Programme context

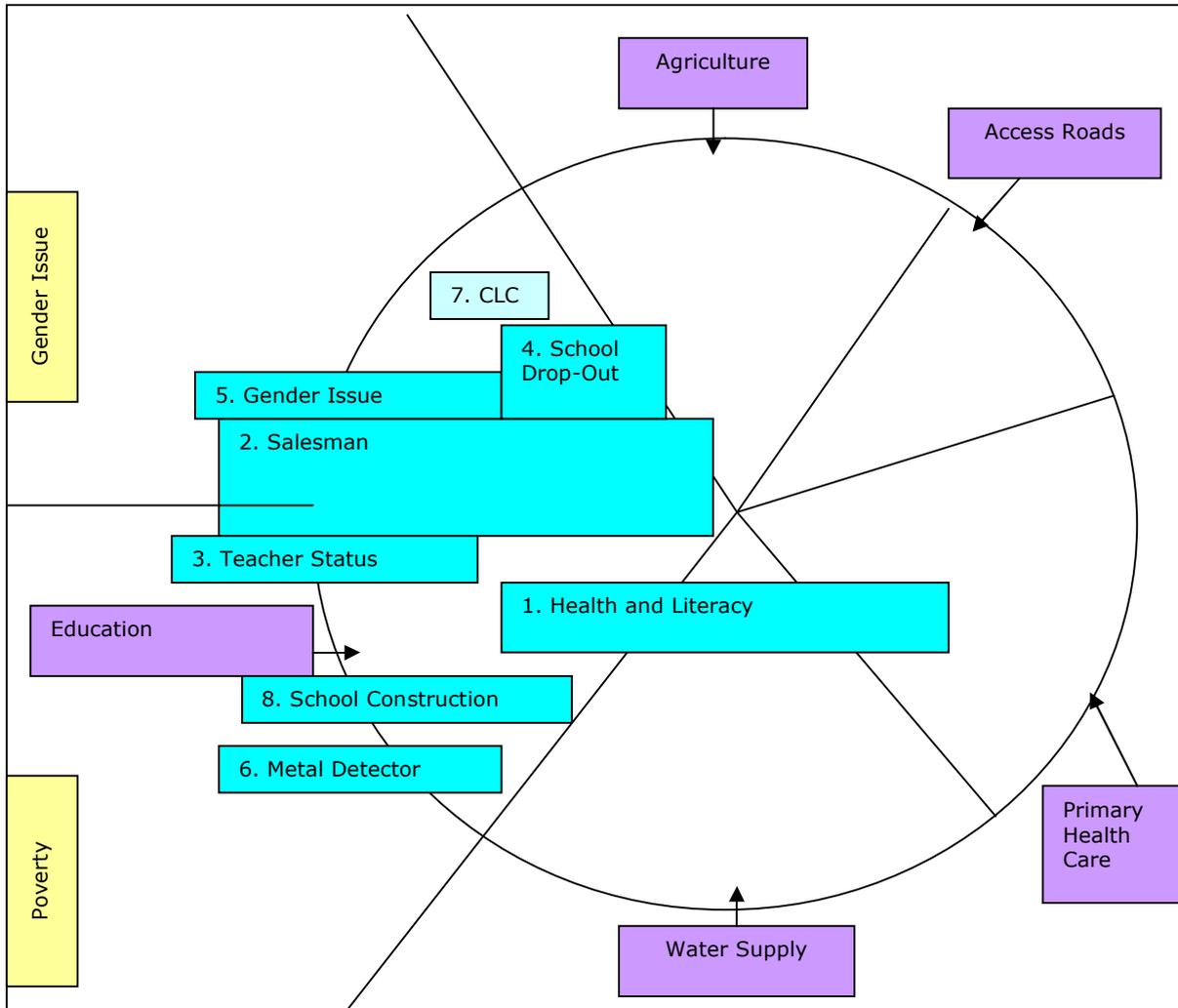


Table 1: Correlations between scene issues and Village Development Programme issues

This graph shows clearly that it was impossible to restrict the topics of the scenes to education only. It would perhaps even been wrong to do so, as the implementation stage will show. The people reacted best to the scenes with the highest complexity of issues, namely the Salesman and Health/Literacy scenes. The latter is the only scene covering health care and water supply. The Salesman scene covers the highest number of issues, namely 4. Two of them are not directly mentioned in the Village Development Programme objectives. The Gender and Poverty issues however cannot be ignored. They were raised time after time during the preparation for the scenes and were therefore integrated in five of the eight scenes.

The Salesman and School Drop-Out scene also cover the agriculture issue slightly. If the preparation time for the drama had been longer, actors and jokers could have prepared for the covering of this issue during interventions as well.

The Access Roads issue is not touched by the drama, although it was a point of discussion in the preparation. It was dropped for practical reasons. Besides showing the focus of the scenes, the graph also shows that education is a central issue but it borders on almost all the others. There is a high sense of complexity to this issue which was conveyed only partly by the scenes that were played. See the diversity of the potential questions to the audience below under c).

b. Issues in ToR context

	Health	Salesman	Teacher	Drop-out	Gender	Metal	CLC	School
1. Value of education for children and (young) adults								
2. Impact of education and benefits for daily life								
3. Equal opportunities for boys and girls, men and women (gender aspect)								
4. Sending children to primary and secondary school								
5. Support to pupils and parents								
6. Teacher status and working conditions								
7. Literacy								
8. Life skills and vocational skills								
9. Community Learning Centre								
10. Expectations towards access to education and participation in education								
11. Village priorities and attitude towards education								
12. Village organisation for community mobilisation (parents & school ass.)								
13. Community participation for construction and maintenance								

Table 2: Covering of ToR key issues by scenes of the drama

This table shows the results of condensing the 13 issues into 8 scenes. Every scene covers at least three issues, every issue is touched by at least two scenes. The first two issues are touched by 4 and 5 scenes respectively. The Salesman scene covers 6 issues, which makes it the most valuable. The Gender Issue is the next with 5 issues covered.

c. Dilemma’s and transition to PPW issues

The most certain way of evoking an intervention is by presenting a conflict as a (moral) dilemma. This technique was first adopted by Formaat in 2000 and has found widespread use since. The creation of Forum scenes on the basis of dilemma’s leads to real choices, based on community values. By focusing on those values, the choices are supported by culturally rooted arguments.

The real place for making choices and decisions was the Participatory Planning Workshop. The following dilemma’s sprung from the respective scenes and could have been transferred to the PPW:

Scene	Dilemma’s
Health and Literacy	-What comes first: good prevention posters or literacy for all villagers?
Salesman	-What is to be preferred: to become as smart as the Salesman or to take over the trade function ourselves? -Should women be as smart as men and does their position in the community change?
Teacher Status	-Investing in Education brings only long-term benefits; how are we going to cope with our current problems? -If the teacher cannot work properly, education will be on a low level. If it is on a low level, people will not like education. Where to start?
Drop-out	-Isn’t it better to have children work, they cannot run away from that, or should children have the right to go to school and play?

Gender	-If men are the heads of the family what should happen when a man doesn't fulfil his duties? Should the woman take over the duties or report the problem to the community? -If education is not meant for slow learners, what should fast learning women and slow learning men do?
Metal Detector	-What is more beneficial for a child's future: the money earned by the detecting job or the investment into education? -Should smart children go to school and unclever children go to work?
CLC	-If there are no educated people in the village, a CLC will always fail, or are there other alternatives?
School Construction	-Should the VC decide about the quarrel or should he leave it to the people to reach an agreement? -Would it be right to boycott the decision made if the other party wins? What about the children, they can't help their parents quarrelling?

Table 3: Dilemma's in Forum scenes

Distilling dilemma's from scenes is a powerful tool for the joker. This table shows only a sample of what the scenes are able to render. The Dilemma Discussion Method, if added to the joker/facilitator training, will produce the basic framework for any intervention stage or workshop. It will also produce strong reactions from audiences and an easy and logical transition into drama. Any of the dilemma's mentioned in table 3 could be played out at once.

3.5. Performance preparation

a. Logistics

For facilitators and performers all over the world it is absolutely compelling to work under the best circumstances possible. A facilitator, joker or any other person working with audiences must be able to keep his or her mind focused on the job and not be distracted by logistical issues. A performance and a planning workshop in remote villages must therefore be well-organized; the minimum requirements must be both realistic as well as thoroughly met. These requirements involve:

- a realistic time table
- adequate means of transport for the road conditions
- sufficient provisions for food, drink and lodging
- a complete set of necessary props, instruments and other material requirements for the performance
- a complete set of necessary material for the PPW
- sufficient preparation of the population of the target villages by the local authorities (in terms of what, when, where and why)
- an adequate location for the performance and for the PPW
- an alternative plan in case unexpected feats like thunderstorms, impassable roads or other difficulties

The fulfilment of these requirements must be the responsibility of a person capable and suited for this task. In the ToR, the expert was also assigned with a (co-)responsibility for the logistics of the tour. In practice, this could not be effectuated, as many of the points mentioned can only be dealt with by people who speak the local language, who have access to material provisions and have the authority to assign others with certain tasks.

To meet the logistical challenge in remote areas, a well-equipped organisation in terms of transport, material and staff, should be available. The question should be raised if the logistical conditions could be met without development agency support.

b. Language

The ToR⁷, the AS⁸, as well as the briefing before the start of the project, insisted that the A-team members be proficient in both Lao Lum as well as Lao Theung. A considerable number of target villages have Lao-Thung populations. Unfortunately, it turned out that only 4 of the 9 members of the team could speak enough Brou to communicate with Lao-Thung audiences, one had only basic knowledge. Non-verbal roles were assigned to the remaining four members, but it was clear that they would not be able to:

- rehearse the text of the scenes that were selected for Lao-Thung audiences
- perform counter-play in Lao-Thung villages
- participate fully in the PPW's in Lao-Thung villages

The interaction with the villagers could not be followed by them. This led to a number of serious dilemma's. In some cases they were resolved, albeit in a really improvised way: in Ban Nongniao the English words of the joker were translated into Lao-Lum first by the interpreter, then translated into Brou by two of the A-Team members.

c. Attitudes

Respecting the cultural background of a person or a group can interfere with the objectives of any project. The boundary between respect and neglect is not a clear line. Assessing the socioeconomic status of a person or a group is a similar pitfall. As the Forum scenes addressed issues that touched both sides of the boundaries, the members of the A-Team were obliged to reflect their personal attitudes as well as the group attitude towards certain issues. The gender issue was the most prominent, followed by the notion that literacy and education are basic human capacities. Although the Forum scenes are quite balanced and enable an open dialogue, the joking stage of the performance showed some signs of "crossing the boundary". This is a natural phenomenon and is in fact shared by many jokers across the globe, but it inevitably causes interference in the participation process. Audiences detect the line between participation and propaganda, or between a question and an opinion. On the other hand, despite some boundary crossing, many times the spectators gave unexpected and unprovoked reactions.

The gender issue is an integral part of the group process in a culture in which status and position of men and women play such an important role. The fact that many of the scenes carry a gender element is an expression of the visible expression of gender-orientated attitudes of the group members. Attitude will remain an important point of focus in the course of the project and should be an ongoing issue at team evaluations.

⁷ p.7: one of the criteria under 4.1.: Proficiency in Lao and Lao Theung (local language).

⁸ p. 8: "Brou languages should be used and promoted as much as possible".

4. Implementation

4.1. Time Table

Day 16: August 25, 2004

2 pm Departure to Non Sawang
 4 pm Arrival and stage building
 6 pm Dinner
 8 pm Performance
 10 pm End performance and stage dismantling
 11 pm Journey back to Savannakhet

Day 17: August 26, 2004

Morning session:
 Evaluation of the Try-out

Afternoon session:

1 pm Briefing by BTC about PPW methodology
 5 pm End of working hours

Day 18: August 27, 2004

Time off

Day 19: August 28, 2004

Journey to Nong Capital through Sepon

Day 20: August 29, 2004

10 am briefing by BTC about the time table for the coming 11 days

1 pm Departure to Ban Paloy
 4 pm Arrival at Ban Paloy
 5.30 pm Stage building
 6 pm Bath
 7 pm Gathering of residents through song and dance
 7.30 pm Performance
 9 pm End of performance and stage dismantling
 9.30 Supper



Day 21, August 30, 2004

8 am Breakfast
 9 am Gathering of villagers through song
 9.45 am Group composition
 10-12 am Two women's PPW's Issues: Teacher support and NFE
 10 am-12.30 pm Two men's PPW's Issues: School construction, parent and teacher association
 2 pm Plenary meeting
 4 pm Dismantling and bathing
 6.30 pm Dinner at VC's
 8 pm Song and dance celebration with 70 peasants from surrounding villages who had heard about the performance
 10 pm End of working day

Day 22, August 31, 2004

- 8 am Breakfast
- 9 am Concluding talks with village authorities and loading vehicles
- 11 am Departure to Ban Xouang Nyai
- 1 pm Arrival at Ban Xouang Nyai - Lunch
- 1.30 Meeting lead by BTC about methodology of PPW
- 2.45 Stage building
- 4.15 Bath
- 6 pm Dinner
- 7 pm Performance
- 9.45 End of performance
- 10.15 Debriefing

Day 23, September 1, 2004

- 8 am Breakfast
- 9 am Start PPW
- 11.30 am End of PPW and lunch
- 2 pm Start of decisional part
- 3.15 pm End of decisional part
- 4 pm Time off and a game of Rattan Ball
- 6 pm Bath
- 7 pm Dinner at VC's



Day 24, September 2, 2004

- 8 am Breakfast
- 9 am Conclusive talks with village authorities
- 11 am Departure to Ban Xouang Khankhak
- 1.30 pm Arrival at Ban Xouang Khankhak
- 2 pm Stage building
- 3 pm Rehearsal starts as well as thunderstorm that would last for 48 hours
- 7 pm Decision made to cancel the performance
- 8 pm Meeting to discuss alternative plan.
- 10 pm End of working day

Day 25, September 3, 2004

- 7 am Breakfast
- 8 am Brief meeting to discuss storytelling idea – coordination with jokers
- 8.30 am Villagers meet and divide into male and female groups; jokers tell 4 stories based on the scenes from the anti-model and facilitate the dialogue
- 12 am Dinner
- 1 pm Finalization of data sampling
- 3 pm Departure for Sepon
- 6.30 Arrival at Sepon
- 7 pm Dinner

Day 26, September 4, 2004

Evaluation day; originally the evaluation was set for the morning session. In the afternoon a rehearsal would take place. Plans were changed because of the importance of the ORID.

- 8 am Breakfast
- 10 am Part one of the ORID evaluation
- 12 am Lunch
- 1.30 pm Part two of the ORID evaluation
- 3 pm End of ORID – exchange with A-team

4 pm End of working day

Day 27, September 5, 2004

Time off

Day 28, September 6, 2004

8 am Breakfast
9 am Meeting with Sepon District Supervisor and counterpart
10 am Briefing of the A-team by the District Supervisor
10.30 am Departure for Ban Nongniao
2 pm Arrival at Ban Nongniao and stage building
2.45 Rehearsal
5 pm Bath and dinner
7 pm Start of performance
8.30 pm Cancelling of performance because of thunderstorm nearing
9 pm Debriefing
9.30 pm End of working day

Day 29, September 7, 2004

7 pm Breakfast
9 pm Start of PPW
10 pm Departure of expert for Savannakhet
3 pm Arrival at Savannakhet

4.2. Try-out in Non Sawang

The purpose of the try-out was to:

- perform a reality-check of the issues in the scenes of the play
- test the concept of the performance as a whole
- test the joker concept before a Lao-Lum audience
- see Forum Theatre happen for the first time in Laos

Summary

Practical data

Location	Non Sawang temple complex
Stage building time	1 hour
Technical circumstances	5 neon lights connected to electric power

Performance

Attendance	Between 150 (8 pm) and 200 (10 pm)
Men/Women	Mixed
Scenes played	1) The Salesman 2) School Drop-Out 3) Teacher Status 4) Gender Issue

Interventions

- School Drop-Out (1):
- *A girl decides to tell her mother about the truancy of the boy*
- Gender Issue (2):
- *A woman tells her husband to stop drinking Lao-Lao*
 - *A woman asks the audience if women are really less intelligent than men, uses the reactions of the women in the audience as argument in the discussion with the husband on stage*

Jokering/facilitation

Joker(s)	Ms. Komanny
Language	Lao-Lum
Joker concept	Entire drama – Q/A - Interventions

Output

Main issue(s)	Gender
Closure	Goodbye song by actors
Methodical conclusions	- Next performance the facilitation would have to take place after every single scene, because five scenes in a row contain too much information to remember after the performance - The facilitation would also have to be a more collective responsibility by the whole A-team

The try-out showed an unprecedented feat: the villagers responded to most of the question *in one voice*. Collective responses are either a sign of absolute conviction or of absolute bias. As many of the responses went against what can be considered the official norm (about gender, in this case), the first option is the most likely. It would be interesting to see if other Lao-Lum performances (later in the tour) showed the same pattern of responses.

4.3. Ban Paloy

Summary

Practical data

Location	Ban Paloy centre of village
Stage building time	½ hour
Technical circumstances	Five neon lights connected to truck battery is quite low for an attendance like this – the joker cannot see the back rows which makes it harder to communicate

Performance

Attendance	app. 200 (Ban Paloy has 206 inh.; some adults from surrounding villages had also come)
Men/Women	Separated
Scenes played	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Health 2) Salesman 3) Gender Issue 4) Teacher Status 5) Metal Detector (the latter unplanned, played as an encore for the cheering crowd)
Interventions	Gender Issue (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Head of council of Elders made a firm statement for the education of women</i> - <i>Two women trying to convince the husband they should be allowed to go to school</i> Teacher Status (3) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>One man and two women trying to support the teacher</i>

Jokering/facilitation

Joker(s)	Mr. Kampong, Mr. Bindavong, Ms. Komanny, Ms. Lingma
Language	Brou
Joker concept	Two jokers for the men and two for the women, facilitating after every scene played.

Output

Main issues	Education - Gender
Closure	Village Chief announcing PPW for the next day
Methodological conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Four (inexperienced) jokers in a crowd; the expected mutual support factor leads to a multiplication of insecurities. - Counter-play must be more theatrical and less verbal - Brou language should be used throughout the performance

Ban Paloy was the first target village we visited in the Nong district. The team was very excited and after the successful try-out there was great confidence. The fascinating discovery that was made was that men and women, who do not discuss matters with each other in Brou culture, could communicate *through the jokers*. The notion that one of the most prominent functions of the joker is the *communication channel* (see Matthijssen 2001) found confirmation in the Nong District.

4.4. Ban Xouang Nyai

Summary

Practical data

Location	Ban Xouang Nyai centre of village
Stage building time	1½ hours
Technical circumstances	- Lights are insufficient for crowds of this magnitude - Props and backstage area were insufficiently prepared

Performance

Attendance	app. 250
Men/Women	separated
Scenes played	1) Health 2) Salesman 3) School Drop-Out 4) Teacher Status 5) Gender
Interventions	School Drop-Out (2): - <i>A mother and a man address the crowd, explaining them models of how to motivate children</i> Teacher Status (2) - <i>One of the interventions was made by the VC, who also addressed the audience, explaining his school building policy</i> Gender Issue (3) - <i>Three villagers replacing the male character, explaining his wife that her position in the household is the most important</i>

Jokering/facilitation

Joker(s)	Ms. Komanny & Mr. Bindavong Mr. Khampong & Ms. Lingma Both in pairs, alternating
Language	Brou
Joker concept	Two jokers facilitating after every scene has now proven to be the most adequate concept

Output

Main issues	School Drop-Out – Gender
Closure	Goodbye Song
Methodological conclusions	- The A-team should make more of verbal interventions, transforming them into drama - On the other hand they should not try to “drag” people on stage – the audience starts pushing people and the main issue becomes “coming on stage” instead of the issue the scene is about - The expert will joker the next performance; the jokering part of the training has just been too short. Seeing another joker is a good way of learning new techniques.

This was the performance with the highest potential but a relatively low output, although 7 people came on stage. The A-Team was exhausted after the long journey from Ban Paloy, where additional performances were held to satisfy villagers who had walked many miles to see the show the next day.

4.5. Ban Xouang Khankhak

Summary

Actual performance replaced by Storytelling alternative

Practical data

Location	Two houses in the village
Stage building time	-
Technical circumstances	-

Performance

Attendance	app. 120
Men/Women	in separate houses
Stories told	Women: Teacher status – Salesman – Gender Men: Salesman – Teacher status – School Drop-Out - Gender
Interventions	Many verbal reactions – the connection between this technique and the PPW is very clear

Jokering/facilitation

Joker(s)	Women: Ms. Lingma and Ms. Komanny Men: Mr. Bindavong and Mr. Kampong
Language	Brou
Joker concept	

Output

Main issues	-
Closure	-
Methodological conclusions	Storytelling is good alternative and a necessary one for spells of torrent rain, because indoor drama is <i>taboo</i> in Brou culture. Storytelling requires a profound understanding of the story behind the scenes, if the dialogue with the villagers is to be equal to presenting the drama. Especially the gender issue stories were quite different from the drama, because the facilitators obviously were uncertain about their personal views on the subject.

4.6. Ban Nongniao/Sepone District

Summary

Practical data

Location	Central place in the village
Stage building time	45 minutes, followed by rehearsal
Technical circumstances	5 neon lights connected to car battery

Performance

Attendance	app. 140 (50 men, 50 women, 40 children)
Men/Women	separated
Scenes played	Health, Salesman, School Drop-out, Teacher Status, Gender (over 2 days)
Interventions	3 (see transcript below)

Joking/facilitation

Joker(s)	Mr. Opdebeeck (expert)
Language	English, Lao, Brou (two-step translation through Lao interpreter and Brou-speaking team member)
Joker concept	See below

Output

Main issues	Poverty, Gender, Health
Closure	Thunderstorm approaching, invitation for the next day
Methodological conclusions	The Forum Theatre method works in Laos just like everywhere. Participation was really building up when rain stopped play.

This performance could only deliver two jokered scenes before a nearing thunderstorm made the audience return home. Among the spectators were also villagers from Ban Huek, where the Forum would perform two days later. The School Drop-out scene was played but not jokered, the last two scenes were played the next morning.

The report of this performance will focus on the joker concept of the expert, as he jokered as a means of example for the rest of the A-team. This could not be done before, because there was no Brou interpreter. The joker concept was discussed extensively with the A-Team after the performance.

The following is a *free transcript* of the performance, to explain the joker strategy:

Scene 1: Health and Literacy

- Q: What did you see?
 A: (People shouting) The girl fell ill
 Q: Why?
 A: Because she drank contaminated water
 Q: What could she have done?
 A: Boil the water
 Q: Do you do that in this village?
 A: Yes, but some of us don't
 Q: Why?
 A: They have no time, we don't do it in our culture
 Q: Do many children of this village get sick because of drinking unboiled water?
 A: Yes, often
 Q: Is that a major problem?

A: Yes, in some families

Q: How can you solve the problem?

A: By boiling the water

Q: Do you think the mother character in the play should boil the water for her child in the future?

A: Yes

Scene 2: Salesman

Q: What did you see?

A: That family is cheated by the salesman

Q: Why?

A: Because they are poor and can't count

Q: What can they do about it?

A: They should go to school

Q: But the husband doesn't allow the woman to go. What can the wife do? (asking the women)

What can the neighbour do? (asking the men)

(people reacting)

Q: Who can show me what he means?

A: **Intervention by teacher:** takes the role of the neighbour and argues with his friend to convince him to send his wife to school

Q: What did you see? Did something change?

A: They are both right

Q: Why?

A: They are poor, there is a lot of work in the house, but the wife should also learn

Q: What about the husband?

A: Him too

Q: Is it hard to convince people who have other ideas?

A: Yes

Q: Harder for a man (pointing at the man who intervened) or for a woman to achieve that?

A: Harder for a woman (laughter in the crowd)

Q: Does any of the women have an idea?

A: Ask politely

Q: Who would like to come and try?

A: **Intervention by woman:** Tries to convince her husband that it would benefit both if she would become literate

Q: Is it as hard as this in reality?

A: Yes

Q: We will look into this intricate problem further during the workshop that will take place tomorrow

Note that the joker only asks questions and hands the responsibility for the solution over to the audience. The audience accepts the responsibility and attempts to find alternatives. During the process dilemma's are encountered. At a certain point the joker announces the Participatory Planning Workshop, thus motivating the people to be present the next day.

4.7. Analysis of the performances

Because the Sepon performance was not completed, we will only look at the Nong Forums.

a. Issues

Issues addressed	Health/Literacy	Salesman/Numeracy	Teacher Status	School Drop-out	Gender	Metal Detector	CLC	School Construction
Ban Paloy Forum								
Ban Paloy Priorities								
Ban Xouang Nyai								
Ban Xouang Nyai Priorities								
Ban Xouang Khankhak								
Ban Xouang Khankhak Priorities								

Table 4: Comparison between selected scenes and village priorities

The Rapid Rural Appraisals (RRA) of the target villages, executed in 2nd half of 2003, give a number of clues to what the most important issues of the population could be. A list of priorities was composed by BTC after a Strategy & Planning Workshop in February 2004. The priorities ticked in the 2nd row of the table above were mentioned for the three Nong villages. In the 1st row the corresponding scenes that were played were ticked. This table shows the *potential analogy* of the scenes among the population of the three villages.

According to the data in the RRA, **Ban Paloy** is the least developed village, that scores on all issues, except those involving an existing school, because there is no accessible school building yet. The Teacher Status scene was nevertheless appropriate, because it focuses on the community responsibility for the effectiveness of formal education. It was chosen by the A-team as the last scene of the play, because this issue is secondary to the issue of literacy as the main objective of formal education. The Health scene was the most explicit towards literacy, followed by the Salesman scene, but regarding numeracy. Both scenes tackle the education issue as if they were one.

The CLC and School Construction scenes were neither played in Ban Paloy nor in the two other Nong District villages. School construction is a prominent issue in the Village Development Programme. By the standards of analogy it was considered a lower item than the ones selected for the play. School construction is an issue that already involves motivation for literacy, and will come up after gender and teacher status issues are cleared. Raising the issue of school construction in an early stage incurs the risk of contamination of arguments, i.e. villagers who oppose education for girls will obstruct school construction for other reasons than those put to discussion.

Ban Xouang Nyai is the most developed village of the three, and the only one with a school building. The school drop-out problem was one of the key issues among the villagers. The performance focused much more on education as an actual process. It is the performance with the highest potential analogy (4 out of 5 issues, see table), which was translated in the highest participation on stage (7 people), divided over the highest number of scenes with stage participation (3). Therefore it was very unfortunate that this was the least of the performances in terms of concentration, energy and joker skills.

The performance in **Ban Xouang Khankhak** showed a completely different approach because of the thunderstorm and the indoor drama taboo in Brou culture. Only two selected issues matched the priority list. The storytelling alternative had the advantage of being closer to cultural means of delivering information. The obvious disadvantage was that it gave up the power of the *image* and

had to rely on the power of *imagination* of the villagers. The interpretation margin of words is a few potencies away from that of images. The expression “A picture speaks a thousand words” is not that far from reality. Anyone who has witnessed a facilitator cutting a discussion short by presenting one simple image will confirm this statement. The fact that Lao-Thung people rely on a limited vocabulary to express themselves leads to the conclusion that storytelling should be connected with at least an Image Theatre component of the PPW the next day.

b. Interventions

	Ban Paloy				Ban Xouang Nyai				Ban Xouang Khankhak			
Health												
Direction of interventions												
Salesman												
Direction of interventions												
Teacher Status	++	++	++		++	??						
Direction of interventions	Support of teacher (all)				Explaining village education policy ??							
School Drop-Out					??	??						
Direction of interventions					Explaining how to motivate children							
Gender Issue	+/-	+/-	+/-		??	??	??					
Direction of interventions	Supporting women in their desire to go to school (all)				Supporting men against wives who put pressure on them							

Table 5: Intervention analysis

The number of dark squares is equivalent to the number of people intervening on stage

The + and - assess the level of acclamation among the entire audience.

++ means that both men and women agreed

+/- means that one gender group agreed, one disagreed

-/- means that both men and women disagreed

?? means that it is unknown because there was no translation available

Due to language obstacles, there is no full report about the reactions of the population of Ban Xouang Khankhak. This is unfortunate, because it could have led to more evidence-based conclusions about how Lao-Thung people deal with the method of Forum Theatre in comparison to other awareness techniques.

What we can observe is a great difference between the interventions in the two other villages. In Ban Paloy, the audience reacted as predicted: they identified themselves with some of the characters in the play and started to look for solutions. The people of Ban Xouang Nyai had two different approaches: in the Teacher Status and School Drop-Out scenes they made *statements to their fellow villagers* instead of to the antagonists on stage. This means no change was achieved in the scene. The scene served as *living illustration* of their point, not as an *image of reality* that needed instant changing. One viable hypothesis seems to be that the actors were not able to present a real image to the villagers. This could have given the audience no other choice than reacting like this. Another hypothesis would be that in these two scenes the people intervened who had a *plan* to solve the problem. It is hard to play out the effects of a plan within the fixed framework of a scene. This is a common problem in Forum performances around the world, because many people would rather make a statement than really act. Experienced jokers are able to convert the plan into drama by asking specific questions about the plan and instructing actors to improvise scenes *beyond* the play as rehearsed. This also requires a better preparation of the actors than the A-team has had.

In the Gender Issue scene, which was the last scene played and showed a slight but perhaps well-observed increase of acting skills, the villagers of Ban Xouang Nyai reacted in the classical way. They explored the problem of the protagonist and worked on a solution. The most interesting fact was that they chose a different protagonist than we had selected. Instead of supporting the woman in the scene, they approached the conflict from the vantage point of the man. He seemed to be the oppressed character. This could have been related to the way the role of the woman was interpreted: her attitude and arguments were much stronger than the average woman in the Nong District. The fact that the VC, who had been on stage already, had not spoken out in favour of the participation of women in education, which had been done by the head of the Council of Elders in Ban Paloy, may also have played a role. The undercurrent of these reactions was that the reality check of the scene had shown significant flaws.

c. Verbal reactions

In table 5 there seem to have been no reactions at all to the Health and Salesman scenes. This is not true. In fact, both scenes received the most attention by both audiences in Ban Paloy and Ban Xouang Nyai, but no interventions were made. In the case of the Health scene, this was to be expected, as the scene served as a warming-up for both the crowd as well as for the joker. The dramaturgy of the scene would have made it difficult to intervene, because of the ambiguity of the mother character: she is the protagonist but she is also responsible for her daughter (see Ch. 3, Analysis of scenes). The Q/A format was easily accessible for the audience and no pressure to come on stage was created yet. Both audiences recognized the issue very clearly and their reactions were quite outspoken. In Ban Paloy the people made clear that women should really boil water, no matter what. In Ban Xouang Nyai there was light criticism towards the development of posters for villages with a high illiteracy rate, but also the desire to become literate and be informed properly.

The Salesman scene was the favourite scene of the audience. Not only because of the issue and the story of the Vietnamese salesman attached to it, but also because of the way the scene was played by the actors, it was the most attractive part of the performance. Usually this creates high identification and thus high participation. But although many people reacted, there were no interventions. This was due to the way the scene was joked, as the report of Ban Nongniao shows.

The gender issue could have been the main reason for this, as it is the husband who seems to be the economic victim of the illiteracy of his wife, but at the same time responsible for this. As we saw during the performance in Ban Xouang Nyai, the acceptance of the gender relationships as they are in the Savannakhet province is great, even among women. The scene was treated differently, though, because the Ban Paloy crowd saw literacy or at least NFE the only solution to the problem. In Ban Xouang Nyai the audience, having more knowledge of what education of any form could imply for the village, pointed out that education would take too much time compared to its rendering. This was consistent with the woman in Non Sawang who said that she was too old for education. Contrary to what many outsiders may believe, Nong District villagers calculate their time and energy and look carefully at the potential result of their efforts. What they lack is not calculating skills but a better insight in what the potential results could be. As most of them have no experience whatsoever with positive results of education, they will regard it as just another task. The Forum focused on the many consequences of *not* receiving education, but this did not automatically lead to a new attitude. In many ways, the issue of education was not explored or elaborated on sufficiently to already take the next step, which was participatory planning.

4.8. PPW observations

In my work with participatory drama I look at participation the way Spencer (1989, p.23) does:

- Participation is an ongoing, integrated, whole-system approach
- Participation is an evolving, organic and dynamic process
- Participation is a structured process involving learnable skills
- Participation requires a commitment to openness from everyone involved

This corresponds with the way participatory drama, especially Forum Theatre, looks at participation. It is also, in my view, the right way of addressing a Participatory Planning Process.

It would have been methodically justified to extend the concept of the Forum to the Participatory Planning Workshop. The quality of the planning decisions made could have been significantly enhanced by a continued confrontation of the villagers with the consequences of illiteracy, which the people could have countered with the consequences of taking the road towards literacy and formal education. This is the basis of dialogue: both parties are genuinely interested in the story of the other and come to the decision that each of them has only part of the solution. This is the concept of learning behind TfD that was phrased by Paulo Freire: “[...] since dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of the dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized, this dialogue cannot be reduced to the act of one person’s “depositing” ideas in another, nor can it become a simple exchange of ideas to be “consumed” by the discussants” (Freire 2000, p. 88f.).

In the same paragraph Freire says: “Because dialogue is an encounter among women and men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some name on behalf of others” (ibid. p. 89). The power of language over the image, the latter being the most accurate way to “name the world”, can lead to exactly that situation. This situation occurred during the Nong District PPW’s in several ways:

- by using language to translate the images back in to planning particles, the definition of terms was exclusively in the hand of the A-team; the impact can be illustrated by a simple example:
 - o if people say “we are often cheated by Vietnamese salesmen” this can be interpreted in many ways:
 - the people want to learn to read and count to prevent from being cheated
 - the people want to advance economically to be able to negotiate with any salesmen on an equal basis
 - the people want to have more economic security and become more self-supporting so that they are less dependent on salesmen
 - the people admire Vietnamese salesmen for their dexterity and feel inferior to them

Taking interpretation #1 as the basis for participatory planning may seem a logical thing to do if the improvement of education is the objective, but if a broader perspective is chosen, the other possible interpretations come into play. The fact that the Village Development Programme focuses also on agriculture throws another light on this statement. The protagonist in the Salesman scene could play an important part in the PPW, as they could ask the villagers about their objectives and the effort they would be capable and willing to put into the achievement of those objectives. This would have been a living dialogue.

- by using a vocabulary that did not reach all participating villagers, including the use of written words on sheets.
- by using Lao-Lum language which only very few villagers in the Nong District could understand, which made those villagers automatically spokespersons for their neighbours and relatives. This was done on initiative of the Field Co-ordinator without corresponding instructions.

These observations were made without exactly understanding what was said, as there was no interpreter available during the PPW's. A report of the PPW's in the villages in the Nong District was not available before the completion of this report. The observations must rely completely on eye witnessing the workshops, which included the study of a video of one segment of one of the workshops.

Although the responsibility for the PPW's was explicitly transferred from the expert to the Field Operations Officer of BTC, the methodology was not without significance for the TfD process. A coherent ensemble of techniques is essential for the potential success of the intervention, as we have seen in Chapter 2.

5. Evaluation

This evaluation chapter breaks down in four parts:

- team evaluation of the Nong District performances
- personal evaluations of the team members
- preliminary evaluation of the mission with BTC
- methodological evaluation

5.1. Nong District ORID

The first encounter with the ORID dates back to 2001, when I witnessed its application in a TfD project in South Africa (see Opdebeeck 2002). The ORID, or Focused Conversation, is an evaluation and planning method based on a systems theory approach to human “perception, response, judgement and decision” (Stanfield 1997, p. 22). The ORID is composed of four levels: The O stands for Objective, the R for Responsive, the I for Interpretative and the D for Decisional (for a brief outline see Stanfield 1997, p. 25-29). Formaat started to use the ORID in participatory drama processes because of its obvious similarity to Forum Theatre: First, the spectators perceive the scenes of the play with their senses (objective level); secondly, they show a spontaneous reaction to the drama (responsive level); thirdly, they must relate this reaction to their personal lives: is what happens on stage relevant to me and why? (interpretative level); and finally: they must decide how to cope with the situation if they find it relevant, and subsequently put the decision into action (decisional level). That is when a person intervenes on stage. After the intervention, the joker begins the process anew with the entire audience and it is collectively assessed if action should be taken in real life as well as on stage. Provided the necessary joker skills, a Forum session can be an ongoing ORID.

The ORID can be used in any situation in which group knowledge is to be shared and assessed. Team evaluations are a good opportunity, but the technique could also be used in Participatory Planning.

At the ORID evaluation of the Nong-district performances the following people participated:

- All members of the A-Team
- Sepone District Supervisor
- Nong District Supervisor
- Sepone District Counterpart
- Nong District Counterpart
- Ms. Kirby
- Mr. Opdebeeck (expert)

Mr. Remacle of BTC did not participate but was present as an observer.

Before entering to the ORID it seemed good to clarify the objectives of the participants. The way I worked was that the participants got 5 minutes to describe in their own words on a personal sheet of paper as much objectives as possible.

The following objectives were mentioned:

1. To help the villagers develop in order to improve standard of living (5)
2. To find out the exact needs of the villagers (3)
3. To gather information about education (8)
4. To show the social problems through performing Forum theatre (5)
5. To help villagers know how to solve the problems by themselves (4)
6. To know our task before we go working in the village (2)
7. To let the VC know the details of activities in each day/village (2)
8. To implement the activities from the VEP
9. To open the villagers minds in terms of village development (2)
10. To allow villagers to participate in Forum Theatre

11. To allow villagers to participate at every stage of the activities
12. To improve opportunities/possibilities for girls to study/go to school
13. Difficult to go to villages because of poor roads
14. To raise awareness of educational issues (2)
15. To try out the method Forum Theatre

The ORID was done on 4 different topics. Villages / Awareness team/ Workshop/ Forum theatre

THE OBJECTIVE LEVEL IN A NUTSHELL

Focus on the question	Data, the "facts" about the topic, external reality
What it does for the group	Ensure that everyone deals with the same body of data and all the aspects
Questions are in relation to	The senses: What is seen and heard and touched.
Key questions	What objects do you see? What words and phrases stand out? What happened?
Traps and pitfalls	Asking closed questions, or questions not specific enough; no clear focus; Ignoring objective questions because they are too trivial

Source: Stanfield (1997), p. 26

What did we feel, see, heard, smelt, etc. what did we remember most. 4 Minutes for answering this question on a personal sheet of paper.

The Village

- Participation in the Forum theatre (8)
- Participation in the workshop/getting data (7)
- Villages smelly/dirty (4)
- Villagers help a lot with data (2)
- Underdevelopment
- Poverty (3)
- Villagers enjoy seeing drama
- Villagers drinking unboiled water, sleep without mosquito nets, lack rice
- Woman pound the rice with small children
- Children have innocent eyes
- Fetch water from far away (2)
- Villagers understand Forum theatre well
- High illiteracy rate
- Men and woman don't have equality (2)
- Woman work hard (2)

The Awareness team

- Solidarity (6)
- Sharing ideas (2)
- Enjoy themselves (at the beginning)
- Exhausted (4)
- Little rest time
- Responsibility's good
- Work overtime (4)
- Confused about workshop (4)
- Don't follow time (eat together)
- Good performance
- Follow the plan

The Workshop

- Successful in getting information from villagers
- Woman participated less than men (4)
- Villagers participate well (7)
- Confused about data collection
- Went well
- Confusion about the plan (seriously) (2)

The forum theatre

- Good performance (8)
- Forgot some steps of the drama (5)
- Actors did the best they could
- Actors were confused
- Big audience + participation in the drama (2)
- Didn't practise enough together in team
- Facilitation difficult for joker
- Weakly controlled (lack of leadership)
- Solidarity in performance
- Not smooth transition between scenes
- Villagers shy to participate
- Fun + laughter
- Villagers identify with drama

THE REFLECTIVE LEVEL IN A NUTSHELL

Focus of the questions	Internal relationship on the data
What it does with the group	Reveals its initial responses
Questions are in relation to	Feelings, moods, emotional tones, memories or associations
Key questions	What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel? Where were you surprised? Where delighted? Where did you struggle?
Traps and pitfalls	Limiting the discussion to an either/or survey of likes and dislikes
If this level is omitted	The world of institution, memory, emotion and imagination is ignored

Source: Stanfield (1997), p. 27

What were the High points, low points and where did we struggle most? 5 minutes to write down on a personal sheet

The Villagers

LOW

- Takes a long time to get villagers together (5)
- Woman not brave to share ideas with male villagers (3)
- Villagers can't give information as much as the team wants

HIGH

- Villagers want to become literate
- Villagers identify with drama

- Villagers give information well
- Villagers participate (4)
- Easy to make friends with villagers
- Good collaboration between VC and team
- Villagers make decision themselves
- Good welcome from the villagers

STRUGGLE

- Woman villagers don't understand Lao (4)
- Woman not brave to share ideas
- Woman holding baby's during meetings
- Woman have to pound rice

Awareness team

LOW

- Confusion (2)
- Some data missing during the workshop
- Confusion in work (2)
- Don't eat at the same time
- No rules in the team
- Work overtime

HIGH

- Attention paid to the work (3)
- Team prepared everything very well
- Team understand each other well (2)
- Solidarity (3)
- Enjoy working with villagers
- We worked hard

STRUGGLE

- Have no detailed plan to follow (day by day)
- Poor roads (2)
- Always change characters in the drama
- Only one inexperienced cook
- Misunderstanding of tasks
- We eat the same food everyday
- Keeping energy levels up

The workshop

LOW

- Team don't come on time (2)
- Villagers come late
- Weather
- Woman don't share ideas

HIGH

- Team help each other well
- Good information from villagers
- Team understand well about their tasks to collect data
- Villagers attended the meetings
- Team collect all data they need\Followed the workshop plan

STRUGGLE

- What to do when it rains?
- Villagers are busy (2)
- Too many supervisors/leaders
- Woman not brave enough to talk (2)

The forum theatre

LOW:

- Team still confused about the scenes (2)
- Difficult between scenes to change clothes
- Team has no time to rehearse (3)
- Drama has no leader
- Joker doesn't have enough skills
- Actors confused about their roles

HIGH:

- Good gesture/ characters (5)
- Played all the 6 scenes we planned for Nong (2)
- Villagers enjoy drama
- Watching villagers faces during the drama
- Motivated the public in coming on stage

STRUGGLE:

- Team don't practice before they play
- One person playing many characters
- It rains all day (2)
- Villagers ask for more performance –performance 2nd night-Paloy
- No leadership for the drama

THE INTERPRETIVE LEVEL IN A NUTSHELL	
Focus of questions	The life meanings of topics
What it does for the group	Draws out the significance for the group
Questions are in relation to	What is happening here? What is this all about? What does all this means for us? How will this affect your work? What are we learning from this? What is insight?
Traps and pitfall	Abusing the data by inserting pre-cooked meaning; intellectualizing, abstracting, judging responses as right or wrong
If this level is omitted	Groups gets no chance to make sense out of the two first levels. No higher-order thinking goes into decision making
<i>Source: Stanfield (1997), p. 28</i>	

What did we learn from this experience? 7 minutes to write down on a personal paper

Villages

- How to make friends/relationships with villagers (2)
- The main problems of villagers through performing theatre
- How to collect data from villagers
- What the villagers need (2)
- About the lives and lifestyle of villagers (3)
- The ideas/ways of thinking of villagers
- About the villagers culture (3)
- Problems of the villagers
- How to work with Village Authorities

Awareness Team

- How to solve problems immediately
- How to make an EVP
- How to work with the team –step by step – responsibility’s (4)
- How to collect data (2)
- Understand our task about NFE (2)
- How to help each other

Workshop

- About villages situation (needs, life style)
- How to involve the villages in the workshop
- What the villagers need (2)
- How to organise workshop (2)
- How to call the villagers together trough singing/music (2)

Forum Theatre

- How to motivate villager’s trough theatre
- About the feelings of the villagers/what their needs are
- How to assemble villagers
- How to involve the woman
- Technique of showing social problems trough drama and helping the community to solve them step by step
- How to play drama and use the gestures (3)
- All the contents of each scene
- That we must show reality when we perform forum theatre
- How to make drama
- That when villagers watch a drama that shows their real lives they understand easily
- That drama can encourage villagers to participate

THE DECISIONAL LEVEL IN A NUTSHELL

Focus of the questions:	Resolution, implications, new directions
What it does with the group	Makes the conversation relevant for the future
Question are in relation to	Consensus, implementation, action
Key questions	What is our response? What decision is called for? What are the next steps?
Traps and pitfall	Forcing a decision when the group is not ready or avoiding pushing group for decision
If this level is omitted	The responses from the first three levels are not applied or tested in real life

Source: Stanfield (1997), p. 28

Let’s look as a group to the problems we face. Who has propositions for change? This stage took about 30 minutes

Decisions made

1. Play music/sing songs at the start of meetings/workshop
2. Translate all activities/stages of the workshop onto Bru
3. Make rules (time schedule) for the team to follow (eating resting, working) Phutone
4. Find 2 more experienced cook to join the team
5. Tell stories in 2 groups (men and woman) instead of doing the drama if it rains
6. Manivone + Sisuki (supervisors) responsible for leading/organising workshops
7. Team responsible for organising themselves- on time for meals, meetings, rehearsals (Phou tone)
8. Bindavong responsible for organising drama/Forum theatre activities

After the inventory, the list was voted off and all decisions where taken unanimously

Ideas for the second badge

- Select villagers themselves to be involved in the training for future activities/drama in the village.

5.2. Personal evaluations

The evaluation of the A-team members refers to the following aspects:

- acting
- jokering
- facilitation
- transferring

No	Name	Workplace	Position	District
1	Mr. Sitone	DES	Supervisor	TPT
2	Mrs. Kaysone	DES	General Education	TPT
3	Mrs. Manichanh	DES	General Education	Sepone
4	Ms. Kommany	DES	NFE	Sepone
5	Mr. Bindavong	DES	Supervisor	Sepone
6	Mr. Khampong	DES	Admin	Nong
7	Ms. Lingma	DES	General Education	Nong
8	Ms. Phou tone	PES	NFE	SVK
9	Mr. Somboun	PES	General Education	SVK

Acting:

No	Name	
1	Mr. Sitone	<p>Played VC in the Teacher-Status scene</p> <p>Restrained actor that needs further training to develop Forum Theatre skills</p> <p>His knowledge of the issues that were addressed in the play made him a valuable team member</p>
2	Mrs. Kaysone	<p>Medium-skilled actress with song and dance talents</p> <p>Capable of further developing theatre skills with sufficient training</p> <p>Counter-play is good, but was not witnessed because she doesn't speak Brou</p>
3	Mrs. Manichanh	<p>Charismatic actress that makes clear statements on stage; antagonist characters suited her the best.</p> <p>Counter-play is unclear, as she doesn't speak Brou</p>
4	Ms. Kommany	<p>Acting is reasonable but she has to work on voice focussing.</p> <p>Her primary task was directing the Brou scenes</p>
5	Mr. Bindavong	<p>Excellent actor that added a "special touch" to a performance. Played main characters in "Salesman", "Gender" and "Teacher Status".</p> <p>Counter-play developed was very good towards villagers, less good towards authorities.</p> <p>Good understanding of dramaturgy of Tfd</p>
6	Mr. Khampong	<p>Played major parts in almost all scenes. Good in presenting characters, needs more training to display development of character. Reasonable singer and musician.</p> <p>Counter-play reasonable.</p>
7	Ms. Lingma	<p>Played four major parts in the play. Her acting skills developed very quickly and will have continued to develop during the tour.</p> <p>Counter-play needs more developing; overcoming her modesty is a point of attention</p>

8	Ms. Phou tone	Natural acting skills and charisma; acted as the “face” of the troupe in the opening stage of the show, inviting the people to participate
9	Mr. Somboun	Natural talent in acting, singing and dancing As he played no antagonist characters, his counter-play could only be witnessed occasionally. Good improvisation skills, but his improvisations were not always consistent with the characters.

Jokering

No	Name	
1	Mr. Sitone	Did not joker
2	Mrs. Kaysone	Did not joker – does not speak Brou
3	Mrs. Manichanh	Did not joker – does not speak Brou; because of her charisma a Lao-Lum jokership could be considered; additional training would be necessary
4	Ms. Kommany	Sole joker in Non Sawang and co-joker in Nong district. Good understanding of methodology. Joker skills in terms of Q/A (open or closed questions), switching (getting the vote of the audience on an intervention) and actor coaching (before and during interventions) need still to be developed further
5	Mr. Bindavong	Currently insufficient knowledge of Brou to joker Lao-Thung performances. Joker skills are sufficient; he is recommended as joker for Lao-Lum audiences.
6	Mr. Khampong	Very enthusiastic in his approach, but too much focussed on participation instead of dialogue. Will qualify as joker with sufficient additional training
7	Ms. Lingma	Joker skills are basic but sufficient for further development. Needs to overcome modesty to deal with large audiences
8	Ms. Phou tone	Did not joker – does not speak Brou
9	Mr. Somboun	Did not joker – does not speak Brou

Facilitation

No	Name	
1	Mr. Sitone	Worked with Mr. Somboun during PPW's and had a modest role in the process
2	Mrs. Kaysone	Because of language she took notes during the PPW's
3	Mrs. Manichanh	Because of language she took notes during the PPW's
4	Ms. Kommany	Overcame her modesty gradually and can develop into a good workshop facilitator, if attention is paid to certain skills (see jokering section)
5	Mr. Bindavong	Capable of switching between the focus on one person saying/acting to the group and back Q/A technique needs improvement, too often only Y/N questions
6	Mr. Khampong	Good facilitator that works along methodological lines to enhance participation.
7	Ms. Lingma	Played an important role in the Nong villages because of her Brou background. Tried to work along methodological lines.
8	Ms. Phou tone	Her charisma enables her to draw the attention of larger groups; her facilitation skills need further development
9	Mr. Somboun	Worked with Mr. Sitone and did most of the PPW workshop. As both speak only Lao, the facilitation looked quite difficult in the Nong villages.

Transferring

No	Name	
1	Mr. Sitone	Transferring drama techniques is not his major skill, nor is he comfortable with them
2	Mrs. Kaysone	Not enough data
3	Mrs. Manichanh	As a dancing teacher she is able to run a programme of exercises with a group. There is not enough insight in her methodological knowledge to assess her transferring capacities entirely.
4	Ms. Kommany	She is capable of developing and directing Forum scenes and plays; she will need support of at least one group member.
5	Mr. Bindavong	Capable of being acting coach for other members Methodical knowledge is reasonable
6	Mr. Khampong	Transfer may be a bridge too far for the moment
7	Ms. Lingma	At the moment this cannot be expected of her, considering her shyness.
8	Ms. Phou tone	Before working on transfer, development of facilitation skills would be necessary.
9	Mr. Somboun	Understands the concepts of Tfd and would be capable of transferring them. There are strong doubts if he supports the ideas behind Tfd, which would decrease the credibility of the transferring process

The recommendations based on these evaluations are listed in Chapter 6.

5.3. Evaluation meeting with BTC

On September 8, 2004, an evaluation meeting was held between the expert and Mr. Remacle, Field Operations Officer of BTC. The following issues were put forward by the expert:

Preparation

- The Awareness Team was not entirely prepared for the project as the training started. As a result of this, additional skills and knowledge, as well as team building, became part of the training, taking away time for the real Tfd elements.
- The logistical aspects of the project were officially part of the responsibility of the expert. After the reduction of the mission from 9 to 5 weeks, this might have been altered. In practice, many aspects of the try-out and the tour were organised at the last possible moment. In Non Sawang we got clearance for the performance only hours before it started.

Staff

- The Field Officer Mr. Remacle was responsible for a great many tasks and was not always available when needed. Mr. Phetsoulaphone took over some of these tasks, which made him less available as interpreter.
- Because of the understaffing situation during some part of the mission, important questions about the nature of the mission could not be put to the project coordinator or the senior advisor education.
- A Brou interpreter was lacking in many ways. The expert could have monitored the performances and PPW's held in Brou better, with better opportunities for feedback and further improvement of the performances. The people in the Lao-Thung villages would have had more opportunities of communicating their ideas.

Objectives, past and future

- Looking back, the programme has explored many aspects of TfD in Laos, but not necessarily all the aspects described in the objectives of the mission, due to the circumstances mentioned above. Nevertheless, the potential for this method is obvious.
- In the future, the objectives should be rephrased and broken down to different stages. The first priority would be to create separate Lao-Lum and Lao-Thung Awareness Teams. The importance of language is higher than a regional division between Nong, Sepon and Thapanthong.

5.4. Methodology effectiveness

It is too early to say if the overall objective of the TfD implementation in the Education component of the Village Development Programme was successful. We are not familiar yet with the reports of the A-Team about the performances in the remaining target villages in the Sepone and Thapanthong Districts, nor do we have any information about the PPW outcomes.

What we can say is that the programme:

- was able to attract almost the entire population of the target villages
- produced a recognizable, understandable set of Forum scenes and an opening towards dialogue among the villagers
- raised awareness among the villagers towards the issues presented
- stimulated cognitive appraisal of the issues, which is a prerequisite for making decisions
- lead to an Awareness Team capable of developing and performing Forum Theatre on a basic level

What the project, at least until the end of the expert mission, did not achieve was:

- a synchronization between the Forum performance and the PPW's
- an evidence-based appraisal of the reception of the project among Brou villagers (because of lacking interpreters and evaluation grids)
- an overall understanding of the concept of participatory learning, which is essential to further development of the method in Laos

The impact of these results on the future of the programme will be discussed in the next chapter.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1. FT/LT in the Lao context

Although Tfd is widely used across the world in a wide range of projects and programmes, it was never used before in Laos. Furthermore, participatory planning of any coordinated kind, involving the participation of the communities as a whole, was entirely new to the Nong, Sepon and Thapanthong district of the Savannakhet province. This implied that the preparation for the Tfd part of the programme necessarily took place within an empirically based but yet largely hypothetical framework. The outcome of the project must consequently also be regarded as a way of testing the limits of techniques of Tfd in the Lao context and be considered as the basis of adaptation of the methodology to local standards. A thorough analysis of the prerequisites and working conditions of the project must be carried out as well, in order to produce a catalogue of ideal circumstances under which Tfd is performed in the Savannakhet province.

These **ideal circumstances** would be (based on a situation in which a *new* A-Team were to be trained):

I. Objectives

- I.a) Planning the project in separate phases with their own goals, so that they can be met more easily in the given time
- I.b) Synchronizing the objectives of the Village Development Programme and the Tfd/Education component regarding
 - the 5 issues of the Village Development Programme and the 13 issues of the Education component
 - the definition of the terms Education (or learning), Theatre and Development
 - the balance between quality and quantity
- I.c) Adding the following objective to the Tfd/Education component:
The drama development stage includes working sessions in one or more target villages; this increases analogy and identification by the villagers and enhances character development by the actors

II. Conditions

- II.a) Provide for adequate basic training and support of education officers in terms of group cohesion, reflection, evaluation and reporting skills
- II.b) Provide for evaluation criteria, grids and techniques before the implementation stage commences
- II.c) Provide for adequate logistical support
- II.d) Provide for adequate senior management support

III. Training and rehearsal (in the following order)

- III.a) 2 weeks of basic training in Tfd and TO techniques
- III.b) 3 weeks of rehearsal, including
 - advanced Tfd and TO techniques
 - basic rehearsal techniques
 - basic joker training
 - basic facilitation/Legislative Theatre training
- III.c) try-out
- III.d) advanced joker training
- III.e) advanced facilitation/Legislative Theatre training
- III.f) supplementary rehearsals during tour

IV. Implementation

- IV.a) Performance and PPW thematically and methodologically connected
- IV.b) Use of Legislative Theatre techniques in PPW
- IV.c) (optional) Integration of ORID elements in PPW

V. Evaluation

- V.a) Develop user friendly evaluation forms for performance summaries (see chapter 4 for examples)
- V.b) One actor and one joker at least fill out the form at every performance
- V.c) Develop the same procedure for PPW

Depicting the ideal situation doesn't mean any action should be postponed until the ideal situation is reached. On the contrary, the results of only the first four performances demonstrate the potential of the use of Tfd in Laos. Regarding the difficulties that had to be overcome to create the drama and stage the performances, the output has been stunning. About 700 people were at the official performances and about 100 more came to the additional performances. These are figures incomparable with the range of Forum Theatre in developed countries.

That is why the critical remarks in this report should be considered as a stimulus for the future. During the course of the Village Development Programme, the Forum Theatre component will be able to reach a full-bloom status, which could culminate into a Tfd centre from which several projects could be supplied with drama development, performances, PPW facilitation and reporting. The following recommendations are made for the immediate future:

6.2. Team development

The Awareness Team should be divided into two Teams, one Brou-speaking and one Lao-speaking. The following team members are recommended to be part of those teams:

Brou Team	Lao Lum Team
Mr. Khampong – joker and actor	Mr. Bindavong – joker, actor and director
Ms. Lingma – joker and actress	Mrs. Manichanh – actress and dance teacher
Ms. Komanny – joker and director	Ms. Phou tone – actress and joker
Mr. Bindavong - actor	Mrs. Kaysone – actress

It is recommended to relieve Mr. Sitone and Mr. Somboun of their drama-related duties, as they can play a more sustainable role in other areas of the Village Development Programme.

6.3. Recommendations for immediate action

- Work on the following topics for PES/DES training before the second badge
 - What is learning?
 - What is NFE?
 - How can NFE change the villagers situation?
 - Organisational skills
 - Report writing skills
 - What is this project?
 - What is your task?
- Implementation of Participatory drama in accordance with the other components of the project (water, health, agriculture, roads)
- Ongoing reflection/evaluation and supervising during regular meetings, preferably after every event
- Use more images and less words in the PPW
- Divide the PPW into small units to enhance concentration and motivation
- Develop a truly interactive PPW format, using exercises from the Arsenal; always use the same format for monitoring reasons
- Divide the responsibilities for logistics, acting and facilitating over different individuals, to prevent overloading of certain team members
- The A-team should receive advanced training in facilitation skills
- Teach all BTC staff to use ORID evaluation grids and introduce it on all levels (planning, evaluation, supervising, monitoring, time planning). The advantage of this technique is that it is based upon collective knowledge. If you use ORID broadly within the organisation, staff will internalise the method and thereby gain insight in the meaning of participation, which is really relating to collective knowledge of the people in the target villages
- Introduce staff to the Dilemma Discussion Method; this will enhance
 - the drama development, as dilemma-based dramaturgy has proven to be very appealing for spectators
 - joker/facilitating skills, because it is easy to use dilemma's and the respective questions as an anchor during both performances as well as PPW's.
 - personal development of the A-team, as it offers the opportunity of self-monitoring attitude change in development issues, as well as detecting attitude change in spectators/villagers leading to adequate subsequent reporting
- Extend rehearsal opportunities; if this collides with briefing time, either the relationship between the two or the time schedule for village tours should be reconsidered

Annex 1

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Annex 2:

Terms of Reference

CPC

Committee for Planning and Cooperation

BTC

Belgian Technical Cooperation

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR

TRAINING AND COACHING FOR THEATRE FOR DEVELOPMENT

BY

1 EXPERT

DUTY STATION: SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE

DURATION: 30 DAYS

TIMING: 8 AUGUST - 9 SEPTEMBER 2004

Prepared by Eric Remacle and Gert Janssens

Savannakhet, 29 June 2004

INTRODUCTION

1. Background

The Lao-Belgian Project LAO/01/004 “Village development Programme in Savannakhet Province” is a five-year project financed by the Kingdom of Belgium and implemented by the Belgian Technical Co-operation (BTC). The lead agency is the Committee for Planning and Co-operation, through its Provincial Department in Savannakhet. The objective of the project is to support the Government of Lao PDR in the implementation of its national policies aiming at poverty alleviation through an increased agricultural production and the uplifting of the well-being of the population of 30 target villages in Nong, Sepon, and Thapangthong district. The project is a multi-sectoral programme in agriculture, education, health, water supply, access roads to villages, and institutional support.

2. Assignment

To increase awareness about education and to boost involvement of rural communities in education, the project is introducing ‘Theatre for (Education) Development’ in the 3 target districts. The project is looking for **1 expert** for training and coaching for Theatre for (Education) Development and Participatory Planning. The 30-day assignment includes training of the awareness team in Theatre for (Education) Development, development of the ‘play’ in co-operation with the awareness team, and performance of the ‘play’ in 3 target villages.

To further discuss education issues with the village communities and to develop a Village Plan for Education, a one day workshop is linked to the ‘play’. The expert is expected to support the team in the participatory planning activities and supervise the writing of the Village Report for Education.

More details on the duties and requirements for the expert are outlined in the Terms of Reference.

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- II BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**
- III ISSUES FOR THE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**
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- VI PRACTICAL ORGANISATION**
- VII MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**
- VIII REPORTING**

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I PROJECT DESCRIPTION

General information: The Village Development Programme in Savannakhet Province (LAO/01/004) is a direct bilateral project between the Committee for Planning and Cooperation (CPC) and the Belgian Technical Co-operation (BTC). Its implementation started in January 2003 and is planned to last until December 2007. The Belgian contribution to the project is 6,197,338 EUR. The Lao contribution is 308,000 EUR.

General framework: The project supports the government of Lao PDR in the implementation of its national policies aiming at poverty alleviation and the uplifting of the well-being of its population. These are ongoing nationwide development objectives that have been supported by major international donors.

Project objective: This project aims at alleviating poverty through an increased agricultural production and the uplifting of the well-being of the population of 30 target villages in Nong, Sepon and Thapangthong district (Savannakhet province).

Project area: Nong and Sepon district are located in the east of Savannakhet province. These are remote districts that cope with severe socio-economic difficulties. They have a high population of ethnic communities (*Lao Theung*), who have different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Thapangthong district is located in the south of the province with a population which is dominantly *Lao Loum*, an ethnic group occupying the lowlands of the country.

Project strategy: The project is integrated into the official existing structures of Savannakhet province and will be implemented through these structures.

Three senior technical advisors are stationed in Savannakhet. Three field operations officers are posted at the level of the target districts and will guide the implementation of the project activities at the level of the district capital and in the villages. It is anticipated that the counterpart agencies at provincial and district level are actively involved in the implementation of the programme.

At village level the project aims at identifying – in a participatory manner – problems, needs and possible solutions and mobilise the villagers for the implementation of small projects at village level. The project will provide support for the implementation of the various programmes.

Project components: The project has five technical components:

- Agriculture
- Education
- Primary health care
- Water supply
- Access roads

In addition to these technical components, special attention will be given to institutional strengthening.

These components should not be seen as distinct subprojects but rather as different themes that are addressed within an integrated programme.

Expected results:

The project aims at:

- Increased domestic animal production
- Increased fish production in village fish ponds
- Increased diversified rain fed crop production
- Increased irrigated crop production
- More sustainable production of NTFP's
- Improved equitable access to education
- Improved quality of basic education
- Strengthened provincial and district education services
- Functional village water supply systems
- Functional district water supply systems
- Improved primary health care system
- Most target villages easily accessible all-year round
- Improve monitoring and planning capacity at provincial and district level

Main partners:

The project is the joint responsibility of:

- Donor: Directorate General for Cooperation and Development, Belgium
- Executing agency: Belgian Technical Cooperation
- Lead agency: Committee for Planning and Cooperation, Lao PDR
- Cooperating agencies at provincial and district level: Planning and Cooperation, Agriculture, Education, Health, Water supply, Road Construction

II BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The education component of the Village Development Programme focuses on improving equitable access to and participation in basic education, improving quality of education and strengthening the provincial and district education services. The programme aims at creating opportunities for education for rural communities and at promoting new knowledge for development.

Awareness about the value of education for both boys and girls and a positive attitude towards education are considered the key to increased participation of children and adults in basic education. Awareness in itself is however not sufficient to increase participation. Village communities need to be encouraged to organise focus groups and/or a parents and school association to promote and monitor education development at village level.

At the same time the project needs to assist the communities and the district education service in improving infrastructure and facilities, increasing the number of qualified teachers and facilitators, and in providing sufficient and suitable teaching and learning materials. Without these 3 components increased participation in formal and non formal education is questionable. To facilitate the process attention will be paid to capacity building of provincial and district education officers as well.

To set up an effective awareness campaign and to boost involvement of the rural communities in education the project is introducing 'Theatre for (Education) Development' in the 3 target districts. The project will train volunteers and education officers of the three target districts in Theatre for (Education) Development. After the

introductory training the awareness team will develop a drama in co-operation with the expert. The play must address critical issues in education.

The drama will be put on the scene in 9 target villages. The awareness team will address educational and social development issues with the village communities. To further discuss critical issues with the village communities and to develop a village plan for education, a one day workshop will be linked to the forum theatre. The expert is expected to support the team in the participatory planning activities and supervise the writing of the Village Report for Education.

As the project holds the principle of ‘starting small, expanding gradually’ the awareness campaign and participatory planning will be conducted in 9 villages first (3 villages in each district). The expert will facilitate the implementation in the first 3 villages only. After evaluation of the forum theatre and planning activities in the 9 target villages, the activities will be adjusted and be gradually carried out in the remaining target villages.

The different stages can be outlined as follows:

	Activities	Suggested timing
Stage 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General training course for volunteers & education officers (1 team) in Theatre for Development techniques and Participatory Planning • Creation and development of the drama • Forum theatre and planning workshop in 9 villages (3 districts) • Reporting, evaluation & recommendations for further activities 	August - September
Stage 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension course for volunteers and education officers (3 teams) in Theatre for Development techniques and Participatory Planning • Revision of the drama and further development • Forum theatre and planning workshop in 21 villages (3 districts) • Support and coaching (if required) • Reporting, evaluation and recommendations 	December-January

III ISSUES FOR THE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The following issues – among others- should be discussed with the village communities during the forum theatre and the planning workshop:

- Value of education for children and (young) adults
- Impact of education and benefits for daily life
- Equal opportunities for boys and girls, men and women (gender aspect)
- Sending children to primary school and secondary school
- Support to pupils and parents
- Teacher status and working conditions
- Literacy
- Life skills and vocational skills

- Community Learning Centre
- Expectations towards access to education and participation in education
- Village priorities and attitude towards education
- Village organisation for community mobilisation (parents & school association)
- Community participation for construction and maintenance (school and/or CLC)

The issues to be included in the drama will be decided on in consultation with the awareness team. The issues to be addressed might differ from village to village

IV DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

4.1 The awareness team

The awareness team will be composed of 2 volunteers or education officers (one man and one woman) per district (= 6 in total) and 2 provincial education officers. The volunteers or education officers will be selected by the project before the start of the training course according to the criteria below:

- Experience in general education and/or non formal education
- Experience in artistic expression (acting, drama, music, etc.)
- Experience in working in rural and remote areas
- Good communication skills
- Ability to work in team
- Proficiency in Lao and Lao Theung (local language).

The expert is considered a member of the team. In case the expert does not have sufficient experience in community dialogue or participatory planning, a second expert will be added to the team for this purpose.

4.2 Scope and objectives of the training and development activities

4.2.1 Theatre for Development techniques: objectives

- At the end of the training, the participants can explain in their own words the key concepts and the process of forum theatre
- At the end of the training, the participants master the basic forum theatre techniques
- At the end of the training, the participants are able to develop, organise and perform a drama
- At the end of the training, the participants are able to evaluate a theatre performance
- At the end of the process, the participants are able to facilitate a training in Theatre for Development (in co-operation with an expert)

4.2.2 Participatory planning: objectives

- At the end of the training, the participants can explain in their own words the basic concepts of community dialogue and participative planning and are willing to bring them into practice.
- At the end of the training, the team members are able to prepare, facilitate and evaluate a community dialogue and participatory planning activities. They are able to use basic participatory planning tools for education.

- At the end of the training, team members are able to produce in team a well-structured, well-founded, and readable report (village plan for education).

4.2.3 Scope of the training and development activities

The initial training

The initial training can be broken down into two main components: the drama component and the planning component.

The *drama component* includes theory and practice of key competencies in Theatre for Development:

- Key elements of (artistic) expression
- Organisation of the artistic elements
- Forum theatre principles
- Qualities of a good performance
- Elements of a realistic drama
- Guidelines for choosing and developing interesting characters
- Guidelines for choosing and developing a strong story line
- Guidelines for creating an effective drama

The *planning component* should address key principles of community dialogue and participatory planning. The trainer is expected to enable the team members to actively learn and practice the skills required in communication and participatory planning

For both components basic course materials and hand-outs should be provided in Lao language in printed form.

The expert is expected to advise the project team on the training content and training methods. (S)he will present a training curriculum to the project team for this purpose. The final programme of the training course will be decided by the project team in consultation with the expert.

The creation and development

An analysis and assimilation of the RRA village reports should come prior to the creation and development of the drama. The RRA (Rapid Rural Appraisal) was organised to get a better understanding of the current situation in the 30 target villages. The RRA village reports will be made available to the team. The team members and the expert will discuss the current situation in the target district and the 9 selected villages in particular.

The creation and development of the drama include

- Decision making process on the story line, characters and topics
- Brain storming and improvisation
- Sequencing the different pieces of the drama
- Determine and organise for costumes and attributes
- Determine and organise for logistic support

The final preparation

The final preparation includes:

- Rehearsal of the drama
- Public try out
- Analysis and evaluation of the try out
- Final check of costumes, attributes, and support
- Final practical preparation

4.3 The Forum Theatre and the Village Plan for Education

After the training and the development of the drama, the expert will co-ordinate and supervise the awareness campaign and planning activities in 3 villages. The expert will join the team to give maximum support during the process. The task of the team is to perform the drama, to facilitate a community dialogue and to support the community in developing their own village plan for education. The task of the expert is to coach the team on the spot. This should result in a professional development through reflective practice.

4.3.1 Forum theatre

The suggested awareness technique is ‘Forum Theatre’ or Theatre for Development as initially developed by Augusto Boal. The play should consist in 2 major parts. The first part – called the anti-model – presents familiar but negative situations to the audience. The audience will recognise the situation and will react. The second part – called the forum – invites some spectators to take the place of the actors and modify the scenario according to their ideas. This part is facilitated by an animator called – the ‘Joker’.

In order to assure comprehension and participation of the audience, the play will be performed in Lao Theung (Bru) language in Nong and Sepon district. Lao language will be used in Thapangthong.

The targeted villages have no access to spacious facilities, electricity or water. The forum will take place in the open air and needs to be conducted with a minimum of technical means and logistic support.

Expected outcomes of the forum theatre and further awareness activities are:

- The villagers discuss education issues in the village community
- The villagers are (more) aware of the value of education
- The villagers envisage possibilities to improve participation in and quality of education in their village
- The villagers are motivate to draw up a village plan for education
- The villagers are willing to take responsibility in the implementation of the plan
- The villagers are willing to provide support to the teacher(s)
- The villagers have a positive attitude towards education

4.3.2 Participatory planning

The one day participatory planning workshop will take place in every targeted village. It will take place the day after the forum theatre. The community will be invited to further discuss issues raised during the forum theatre and to look for solutions for the problems the community wants to tackle. All village priorities and development activities for general education and non-formal education need to be included. However, only those priorities and plans which are within the scope of the project should be developed in detail.

The village plan should clearly indicate the community's ideas on required actions, duties and responsibilities, village capacities (in terms of knowledge, skills and labour), costs involved for the community, and timing and priorities. If possible, the plan should also mention the activities in the field of education of other projects working in the targeted village.

The community dialogue and participatory planning should lay the foundation for further co-operation with the project team and district officers. It should also lay the foundation for community organisation in the form of a Parents and School Associations or a Focus Group (where appropriate).

Increased awareness about the value of education and stronger community organisation are expected to lead to and increased ownership of education development in the village communities.

4.3.3 Report writing

After the planning activities in the village, the team is expected to write down the plans and ideas of the village community in a village plan for education. The minimum format of the report is shown in section VIII of this document. The expert is expected to facilitate the process of report writing in 3 villages.

Final reports will be drawn up by the awareness team in close co-operation with the Education Field Co-ordinators. The Education Field Co-ordinators will make sure the final reports match the set standards.

4.4 Duties and responsibilities of the expert

Summarising, the duties and responsibilities of the expert(s) can be stated as follows:

- Get a thorough understanding of the project and the education strategy (please see [annex 1](#))
- Get a thorough understanding of the context and the current situation in the targeted villages
- Advise the project team on training content and training methods
- Develop and conduct a training course on Theatre for Development techniques and Participatory Planning.
- Coach the team and monitor the involvement of each team member in the different phases of the process
- Organise – with the support of the project team – the logistic support
- Monitor and assist the team in organising and performing the forum drama in the 3 target villages
- Monitor and assist the team in organising and implementing the planning activities in the 3 target villages
- Evaluate the drama performance and the planning with the team after completing the activities in a village
- Make recommendations and assist the team in modifying the activities
- Monitor and assist the team in report writing in the 3 target villages
- Make a process and product evaluation of the training activities, the forum theatre, the planning and the report writing
- Make recommendations for future training and awareness activities
- Submit the mission report to the project team

All duties are performed in close co-operation with the project team.

At the end of the process the awareness team should be able to continue forum theatre, community dialogue and participatory planning, and reporting without external support.

V TIMING

The preparation and implementation of the awareness campaign and participatory planning should take place from 8 August till 9 September 2004 for a period of 30 days, not including final reporting after the assignment.

Preparatory meetings with the project team and a debriefing session after the assignment are considered as a part of the assignment.

The suggested timing for the preparation and implementation is:

- Training course on Theatre for Development techniques and Participatory Planning (including development of the drama): 8-26 August
- Awareness campaign and Planning in 3 target villages: 28 August - 4 September 2004
- Debriefing and feedback: 6-8 September 2004

The awareness campaign and planning activities with the village communities will be organised as follows:

Day 1	Travel to village 1 + forum theatre in village 1
Day 2	Participatory planning workshop in village 1
Day 3	Process data + travel to village 2 + forum theatre in village 2
Day 4	Participatory planning workshop in village 2
Day 5	Process data + travel to village 3 + forum theatre in village 3
Day 6	Participatory planning workshop in village 3
Day 7	Process data/report writing + travel to district capital + district Evaluation
Day 9	Rest

A tentative schedule is added for your information (please see [annex 2](#)). The final schedule will be drawn up in consultation with the expert.

VI PRACTICAL ORGANISATION

The project will organise for a working room. The room can be used for theory sessions and practice. Standard equipment for training will be put at the disposal of the expert. A white board, flipcharts, an OHP and a multimedia projector (if so desired including laptop computer) will be available during the training course.

For the planning activities in the villages, the project will provide paper, markers or any other relevant items.

Each team will be provided with a basic set of gear for working and staying overnight in the villages (back packs, mosquito nets, blankets, floor mats, torches, cutlery, cooking utensils, etc.). Transportation will be organised by the project as well.

2 computers and a printer will be put at the disposal of each team for report writing.

The expert is expected to add a detailed list of materials needed for the forum theatre to the technical proposal.

VII EXPERT: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- Profound knowledge of theatre for (educational) development methodology

- Profound knowledge of basic issues in education and awareness
- Proven knowledge of play writing, directing, and acting in order to develop theatre plays.
- Artistic, pedagogical, and leadership qualities in order to facilitate the creation process
- Ability to work with ‘non-professional’ actors
- Ability to manage the participation and involvement of the team members
- Ability to train and coach ‘non-professional actors’ for (immediate) forum theatre performance
- Ability to in conduct a workshop on Theatre for Development
- Ability to manage a forum theatre in rural and remote villages
- Experience in participative planning for education in rural communities
- Command over written and spoken English
- Working knowledge of Lao language
- Computer proficiency
- Ability to work in hard conditions and remote areas

VIII REPORTING

After the planning activities in the village, the team is expected to write down the plans and ideas of the village community in a village plan for education. The expert is expected to facilitate the process of report writing in 3 villages.

Final reports will be drawn up by the awareness team in close co-operation with the Education Field Co-ordinators. The Education Field Co-ordinators will make sure the final reports match the set standards.

The expert will also write a mission report in English on every aspect of the awareness and planning process. This includes an evaluation of the training, the play development, the forum theatre with the village communities, the participatory planning activities and the report writing. Both strengths and weaknesses should be shown. Recommendations for future awareness and planning activities, and support to the team(s) need to be included as well.

8.1 Village Plan for Education

The education development plan covers the period 2004-2007 and includes guidelines and suggestions for further development after the year 2007.

All village priorities and development activities for general education and non-formal education need to be included in the education development plan. However, only those priorities and plans which are within the scope of the project should be developed in detail.

Suggested format:

- *Cover* with title, name of the village, date, name of authors
- *Table of contents* and list of annexes
- *Executive summary*: 1 page
- *Executive summary in English*: 1 page
- *Contents*:

1. Introduction
 2. Overview and brief analysis of the topics addressed during the forum
 3. Overview of current activities or interventions (by other projects) to solve the problem
 4. Expectations towards the project: what the project can do
 5. Suggested activities
 6. Operational details:
 - How to develop the activities?
 - Who (community, focus groups, district office, project ...) will do what?
 - Duties and responsibilities
 - Local capacity and/or training needs
 - Allocation of labour force (village capacity for extra work)
 - Cost analysis: who will pay for what?
 - Time line and priorities
 - Assumptions, implications and constraints
- *Annexes*: Relevant documents (statistics, tables, diagrams, etc.)

The plan should at least provide information on the following issues:

- Information on community organisation for education (Parents and School Association and/or Focus Groups)
- Community involvement in construction of a school and/or community learning centre
- Literacy and life skills
- Support to teachers and non formal education facilitator

8.2 Mission report

Topics to be included in the evaluation of the planning activities are:

- Team composition
- Logistics
- Schedule
- Methodology and tools used
- Results
- Adequacy of the means provided with the objectives set
- Conclusions and recommendations for future awareness and participative planning activities (including support)

A copy of the TOR should be added to the mission report.

The expert will submit the evaluation report to the PMU within 2 weeks after the assignment.

The consultant will make modifications suggested by the PMU within 1 week after reception of the comments.

The final report will be submitted to the PMU in both printed and electronic form.

The consultant will be paid after approval of the final report by the PMU.

ANNEX 1

EDUCATION STRATEGY

Our approach in a nutshell

Awareness about the value of education for both boys and girls and a positive attitude towards education are the key to increased participation of children and adults in basic education. Awareness in itself is however not sufficient to increase participation. Village communities need to be encouraged to **organise** focus groups and a parents and teachers association to promote and monitor education development at village level.

At the same time the project needs to assist the communities and the district education service in improving **infrastructure and facilities**, increasing the number of **qualified teachers and facilitators**, and the provision of sufficient and suitable **teaching and learning materials**. Without these 3 components increased participation in formal and non formal education is questionable. Attention will be paid to **capacity building** of provincial and district education officers as well to facilitate the process.

Activities will be developed in 6 areas of intervention:

1. Awareness about education

An initial awareness campaign will be set up using theatre for development. Focus groups and a parents and teachers association will be set up to foster community involvement in education development activities. Follow-up activities and further awareness activities will reinforce the initial campaign.

2. Teacher training, status and general conditions

Scholarships for teacher training will be provided to local and ethnic secondary school students. For regular and unqualified teachers in-service training will be provided to improve subject knowledge and teaching methods. Support networks will be established. The project will explore possibilities to improve teacher status and working conditions

3. Teaching and learning materials

The project will assist in the procurement of teaching and learning materials and will promote local material development. Development of the local curriculum will be supported.

4. School environment

Existing school buildings need renovation or simple school buildings will be constructed with the help of the community. School furniture will be locally produced or provided. The school yard will be made more attractive to children.

5. Non formal education

The project will assist in reinforcement of functional literacy and support of post literacy programmes. Facilitators will be trained to animate and facilitate activities.

6. Capacity building for education officers

Possibilities for job-related training and project implementation for education officers at district and provincial level will be created.

The activities will contribute to improved equitable access to and participation in basic education, improved quality of basic education, and strengthened provincial and district education services.

In this way the project will support the Government of Laos in the implementation of its national policies of poverty alleviation and increase the well-being of the village communities involved.

ANNEX 2
TENTATIVE PLANNING

	02-aug	Mo	am		
			pm		
	03-aug	Tu	am		
			pm		
	04-aug	We	am		
			pm		
	05-aug	Th	am		
			pm		
	06-aug	Fr	am		
			pm		
07-aug	Sa	am			
		pm			
	08-aug	Su	am	Arrival VTE	
			pm	Travel SVK	
WEEK 1	09-aug	Mo	am	preparation SVK	
			pm	preparation SVK	
	10-aug	Tu	am	Training - Phase 1	
			pm	Training - Phase 1	
	11-aug	We	am	Training - Phase 1	
			pm	Training - Phase 1	
	12-aug	Th	am	Training - Phase 1	
			pm	Training - Phase 1	
	13-aug	Fr	am	Training - Phase 1	
			pm	Training - Phase 1	
14-aug	Sa	am	Training - Phase 1		
		pm	Training - Phase 1		
15-aug	Su	am	Rest SVK		
		pm	Rest SVK		
WEEK 2	16-aug	Mo	am	Training Phase 2-3	
			pm	Training Phase 2-3	
	17-aug	Tu	am	Training Phase 2-3	
			pm	Training Phase 2-3	
	18-aug	We	am	Training Phase 2-3	
			pm	Training Phase 2-3	
	19-aug	Th	am	Training Phase 2-3	
			pm	Training Phase 2-3	
	20-aug	Fr	am	Training Phase 2-3	
			pm	Training Phase 2-3	
21-aug	Sa	am	Rest SVK		
		pm	Rest SVK		
22-aug	Su	am	Training Phase 4		
		pm	Training Phase 4		

WEEK 3	23-aug	Mo	am	Training Phase 4		
			pm	Training Phase 4		
	24-aug	Tu	am	Training Phase 4		
			pm	Training Phase 4		
	25-aug	We	am	Training Phase 4		
			pm	Training Phase 4		
	26-aug	Th	am	Training Phase 4		
			pm	Training Phase 4		
	27-aug	Fr	am	Rest		
			pm	Rest		
	28-aug	Sa	am		TR to Nong	
			pm		TR to Nong	
WEEK 4	29-aug	Su	am		Preparation in Nong	
			pm		TR V1 + Drama V 1	
	30-aug	Mo	am		PP V1	
			pm		PP V1	
	31-aug	Tu	am		Draft VPE V1	
			pm		TR V2 + Drama V2	
	01-sep	We	am		PP V2	
			pm		PP V2	
	02-sep	Th	am		Draft VPE V2	
			pm		TR V3 + Drama V3	
	03-sep	Fr	am		PP V3	
			pm		PP V3	
	04-sep	Sa	am		Draft VPE V3 + TR NG	
			pm		District evaluation	
	05-sep	Su	am		Rest	
			pm		Rest	
	WEEK 5	06-sep	Mo	am	Travel to SVK	
				pm	Travel to SVK	
07-sep		Tu	am	Preparation debriefing		
			pm	Preparation debriefing		
08-sep		We	am	Debriefing		
			pm	Debriefing		
09-sep		Th	am	Travel VTE		
			pm	Departure VTE		
10-sep		Fr	am			
			pm			
11-sep		Sa	am			
			pm			
12-sep	Su	am				
		pm				

Annex 3

Teacher Status Scene – English translation

Props: Official letter, a broken school bench

First segment

Provincial Education Officer (PEO): I have good news for this village. Look what I got! (He shows a big letter) This is the official appointment of Miss Lingma as the new teacher of this village. Isn't it great? Children can go to school now. Learn to read, write, count. Learn about so many things that are important in life, in order to get a better understanding and knowledge.

Teacher: This village seems very poor to me, I can do very much to help this community! I'm looking forward to see the school, the children, to meet the parents

PEO: First I'll introduce you to the village chief. He will help you for he is a very good and wise man. He will help you to learn you to know the community.

VC comes on

Village chief: So what is the reason of your visit to the village mister PEO. Welcome. What is the news you bring us.

PEO: Good news, my friend. We appointed miss Lingma as the new teacher of this village. (He pushes Ms. Lingma forward)

Village chief: Saba dii miss Lingma, welcome to Paloy. I'm sure you are an excellent teacher. The community will have benefits from your work. This evening I will call the community together to let them know your arrival. We will discuss this matter and see what we can do to support you in your work.

PEO: So that is set than. I'm sure you will take good care of Miss Lingma.

PEO off

Second segment:

Village chief: (Calls all the people together by beating a drum) The villagers arrive. (all actors on stage) So I called you all together to introduce to you Miss Lingma our new teacher. (Points here out) She is here to give lessons to your children. So send them to school. Questions?

Parent: Where is she going to live?

Village chief: You have to build a house for her. I don't have any space left anymore in my house. Who wants to help?

Parent: Constructing a new house is much work! We need at least 6 men to do it.

Village chief: Who wants to help?

The people start discussing

Village chief (*starts to become angry*): If we can't find volunteers I will have to point out some of you. It is important that the new teacher has a house. So who will it be?

Some of the man raise their hands.

Teacher: Thank you, I'm looking forward to working here and I will do everything to learn your children to get there degree. Could you tell me when you will build the house?

Parent: After the harvest season we will build you a small house. But right now we are to busy in the fields.

Third Segment:

Village chief (*addressing the audience*): So Miss Lingma started her work in the village. She was a good teacher and the children liked her. But here working conditions were bad. The school we have is in bad condition and specially during the raining season it was difficult for her. A few months later this happened:

Fourth Segment:

Teacher with children in the classroom. We see a broken bench, a joke is made about the bench, suddenly it starts raining. The children start complaining that there books are getting wet and suddenly part of the roof comes down. All the children hide behind the back of the teacher.

Lingma: Don't worry, don't be afraid. Go home. I will talk to the village chief about this matter.

Children off

Lingma (*to the audience*): I can't work like this. Now the roof of the school is broken. The children are afraid to come to school. In spite of what they promised me when I came here I still don't have a house. The harvesting is long time done. But nobody helped building the house. I understand the villagers have much work. But I cannot do my work in these conditions anymore. I have to go to the Village chief and talk with him about this matter.

Village chief on

Lingma: The roof of the school is broken,

VC: (*Shows with gesture he understands*)

Lingma: the furniture inside is in bad conditions

VC: (*another gesture*)

Lingma: Nobody wants to help me building a small house

VC: I see

(*VC Calls meeting*)

Fifth Segment:

VC: Today the roof the school came down, this could damage your children sincerely! You promised (he points to parent) to help Miss Lingma to build a house. She still has no house. Why....

The people start discussing

Parent: We have to much work to do.

VC: But you promised

Parent: Who is going to provide for the building material?

The people start discussing

VC: You have to bring the materials together equally divided among yourselves

The people start discussing

Miss Lingma: The roof of the school is broken, I cannot continue my work like this. I need a house. It's for the benefit of your children I'm working. Not for my self!

The people start discussing and look the other way

VC (*To the audience*) So who has arguments or solutions for my problem?

End