

A Village Planning Meeting
Yen Phuong Village, 12 - 14 January 1998
Y Yen District, Nam Dinh Province

**The Vietnam National IPM Programme
June 1999**



“We have been very happy since the programme came to our district. Before, there were many other programmes but IPM is very interesting, practical and relevant to farmers. Our district is willing and ready to accept IPM because it is for farmers. Farmers learn by doing. Our district is very supportive. We hope that the programme will continue to give support to expand IPM to remaining villages where there are no IPM activities yet.”. . .Mr. Nguyen Huu Dong, Party Chairman of Y Yen district

SUMMARY

Farmers' groups in Vietnam are active in taking IPM beyond rice, and beyond the Farmer Field Schools (FFS) to develop community-based IPM programmes. Quality FFS provide the foundation for this endeavour. Groups of farmers, the core of IPM programmes, emerge from field schools ready to engage in discovery processes to find solutions to crop protection and production challenges as well as a broader set of problems which confront their communities. Driven by the desire to learn more and given the opportunity to get together in forums, such as a planning meeting, IPM farmers acquire a more holistic understanding of agriculture. A chain of changes follow, all leading to sustaining and strengthening farmers' groups and the development of local IPM movements.

This case study was prepared to:

- document the changes which took place after the first village planning meeting
- document the process used in the first planning meeting*
- document farmers' ideas about the relation between planning meetings and community IPM

Members of the National IPM Group in Vietnam worked with trainers and farmers in preparing this case study. The document describes the first village planning meeting in Yen Phuong village, Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province. Follow-up visits were made in midseason and at the end of the season to collect more material for the case. Interviews were held with officials and staff of the Plant Protection Sub Department, village and district leaders, and farmers who participated in the planning meeting. Interviews were also held with family members, neighbors and other farmers in the village, to verify information. The draft case study was presented to farmers implementing community IPM activities for their review, which led to the revision of the document.

This report has been published by the Plant Protection Department (PPD), Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), as an activity of the Vietnam National IPM Programme. The text was edited by Alma Linda C. Morales Abubakar, IPM Training Expert working for the FAO Programme for Community IPM in Asia. The PPD and FAO gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Norway.

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(*The Areal Planning Process adapted from the Indonesia National Programme was used during the first planning meeting in Yen Phuong village.)

“The Village People’s Committee supports IPM because it improves farmers lives. Farmers learn to use fertilizer properly and reduce pesticides, which reduces production costs. Farmers’ lives improve and they can contribute to social activities.”. . Mr. La Van De, Vice Chairman of Village People’s Committee in charge of Administration

BACKGROUND

The Vietnam National Programme started in 1992 with 35 trainers running a small number of FFS per season. Since that time, programme expansion has been very rapid, such that in 1997:

- there was a total of 1500 IPM trainers spread over 61 provinces
- there were over 2000 IPM farmer trainers
- over 1000 FFS were being conducted on rice every season
- 60% of the communes had at least one FFS
- IPM clubs had been established in over 800 communes
- IPM activities on other crops have started (vegetables, soybeans, peanuts, cotton, tea)
- the training curriculum for IPM in rice has been improved and broadened (disease management and variety evaluation; golden snail)

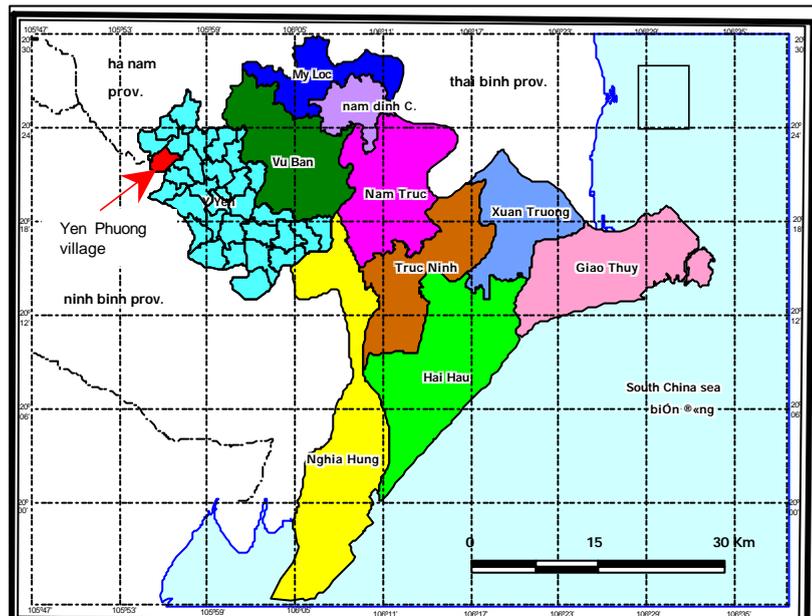
The National Plan, which aims at organizing at least one FFS in the majority of agricultural villages in Vietnam by 1999, had been approved. Over half of the target has been met. The capacity to accomplish the remainder of the plan is in place. Because of the above-mentioned developments and growing support from local governments, this was seen as an opportune time to refocus the programme on starting the development of community IPM programmes at village level.

With the IPM programme focusing more on community programmes, farmers and farmer groups will continue to take a leading role in expanding IPM to other farmers, and to other crops and agricultural systems. Since localities are diverse, community IPM programmes will be diverse as well. The content of community IPM programmes will largely be determined by the needs and priorities of farmer groups at commune level. This was the premise on which village planning meetings started in pilot districts in nine provinces of Vietnam. Yen Phuong village in Y Yen district of Nam Dinh province is one of the pilot areas for community IPM programmes.

Yen Phuong village is situated in the northwestern portion of Y Yen district in Nam Dinh province. It has a total agricultural land area of 420 hectares. Of this, about 372 hectares, or 89 per cent, are devoted to rice farms. At present, around 3,200 of its population of 6,000 are farmers. Most of these farmers were heavy pesticide users prior to the introduction of IPM in 1995 with the establishment of the first Farmers’ Field School (FFS).

The first batch of twenty-five (25) FFS-trained farmers are now applying IPM in their farms. Even as some of these farmers managed to help other farmers to learn and enjoy the benefits of IPM (e.g. increased income, lower production cost), an estimated 3,175 farmers in the village remain scarcely informed and without field school experience. Community IPM in general, and the planning meeting in particular, are designed to create a village-level process to address this issue.

Position of Yen Phuong village, Y Yen district, Nam Dinh province



ORGANIZING THE MEETING

To organize the meeting, the district trainers met with xa (village) leaders, namely the Chairman of the Village People’s Committee, the Chairman of the Party, and the Management of the Cooperative, to discuss the objectives of the activity. After reaching an agreement to conduct the activity, the group discussed schedules for a three-day village planning meeting. They came up with a set of criteria for selecting farmers who will join the meeting. This was:

1. Participated in IPM field school
2. Availability to participate in IPM activities
3. Application of IPM in own field
4. Sense of responsibility
5. Involvement in other activities like rice-fish studies

After going through the criteria, the group realized that there would not be enough farmers, because there had been only one field school in the village. Therefore other criteria were considered, like membership in other organizations, e.g., unions. The group then agreed with the Management of the Cooperative to hold a dialogue with the selected farmers to discuss the objectives of the meeting.

“During the dialogue everyone agreed to organize the planning meeting. The meeting room of the Cooperative would be the venue, because it is normally used for this purpose. The Cooperative would advance money for food for the meeting. The Plant Protection Sub Department of the province would buy the materials. The most difficult part of organizing the village planning meeting was the budget, but because we wanted to catch the season, we had to find ways to do it.” . . .Tran Duy Hang, District IPM Team Leader

“I am an IPM farmer so I always hope I can go to a meeting for discussions and to gain more experience. This is because my experience is not enough and I can gain experience from other farmers to improve my knowledge. . . I do not care about the time. I do not think participating in IPM activities disturbs me because my concern is to learn. ”. . . Mr. Do Duc Huan, IPM Farmer

“I found it interesting to join the workshop because we like more meetings like this in the village. If we have meetings, we learn and help our family and other farmers in the village. . . My husband encourages me very much to be involved in IPM activities because he knows that after attending I can help my family and other farmers in the village. . . Of course, when I am involved in IPM it will take my time but it is no problem because my husband supports me a lot. He creates good conditions for me to continue with IPM activities. Sometimes he can do household chores for me, like go to market. You cannot do any work without support from your husband and children.”. . . Mrs. Nguyen Thi Chuc, Chief of Women’s Union Branch III

CỘNG HOÀ XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

GIẤY MỜI

Kính gửi : Bà Quyên Chủ tịch xã MĐĩa.....
 Xin trân trọng kính mời : Bà Quyên.....
 Đến tại : Văn phòng UBND xã.....
 Vào hồi : 14 giờ ngày 10 tháng 1 năm 1998.....
 Về việc : Thành lập danh sách học viên lớp IPM đợt 2.....

Ngày 9 tháng 1 năm 1998.

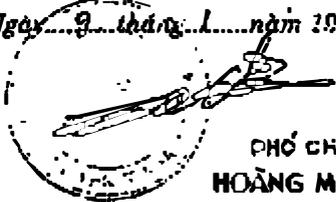

 PHÓ CHỦ NHIỆM
HOÀNG MINH TUẤN

Figure 1: Sample letter of invitation to the village planning meeting

⇒ “As you know, 80% of the population are farmers. Through IPM we have a chance to learn new opportunities/things about farming. That is why I support my wife. . . She tells me a lot about what she learns. For example, to manage pests - there is not only one means; not only pesticides but also other methods. . .I support my wife in both agriculture work and housekeeping work. For example, preparing food, cooking rice, going to market to buy food, taking care of livestock. I am not a man who thinks housekeeping is a woman’s work. Whatever I can do, I will do for her.” . . . Mr. Vu Van Chinh, Husband of IPM farmer Mrs. Chuc

⇒ Of Mr.Chinh. . . “Before, he was working outside the house and she had had to do everything. Now that he is retired, he gives her the opportunity to engage in social activities.”. . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

DAY 1

Introduction

“The difference between IPM and other activities that we have been involved in before is that in IPM, the activities are more complete. For example, one technical training course of the District Agriculture Bureau that I attended only focused on one thing. I say IPM is more complete because in IPM activities there are many things which connect to each other, not only one thing. And the method of IPM is also very good.”. . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan, Vice Chairman of Cooperative in charge of Production

“I attended the same technical training course of the District Agriculture Bureau. IPM is different in that it is more varied and brings more benefit for farmers, especially because the communication method is very easy for farmers

Mr. Tran Duy Hang, the district IPM team leader, gave a general background/briefing on what has happened in Yen Phuong Village, Y Yen District since the first field school in 1995.

“By participating in FFS, farmers gain knowledge of cultivation practices, learn skills in observing the ecosystem, and apply balanced fertilizer management. Farmers’ use of pesticides becomes rational. However, if we only do field schools, we will have a limited number of farmers. This meeting is aimed at making plans for 1998 and moving into community IPM, which should allow us to help more farmers.”

After listening to the introduction, the chairman of the cooperative and some leaders were very happy because they could make plans with the input of more people. This had not been done before, for lack of knowledge to do so. The leaders, however, had questions about the budgets. They could make their own plans, they could fund some activities themselves, but they had questions about the rest. Mr. Hang said,

“That is why we are looking at community IPM, because when we try to implement activities we will have cooperation between the village and the farmers. The village will contribute some amount, the farmers will contribute some amount. The village will support some activities but we will also find funds from outside sources.”

Activity 1: Evaluation of IPM activities

“When farmers learn how to analyze the ecosystem, they know about natural enemies and insect pests. They reduce pesticide use, resulting in a cleaner environment and increased benefits for farmers. Before, farmers used a lot of chemical fertilizers. This has been reduced because farmers have learned about good fertilizer management and they can save money.

Farmers want to develop rice-fish and rice-duck models, but their cultivation/production practices are still limited. They do not want to invest in these activities. To date, about 45% of farmers have heard about IPM through other organizations. We suggest that more field schools be organized and rice-fish/rice-duck activities be established to increase income for farmers.” . . . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan Vice Chairman of Cooperative in charge of Production

The participants worked in three groups to review IPM activities which had taken place since the first field school in 1995. They not only looked at activities, but also assessed their positive and negative points. The outputs became the springboard for the next exercise. The activities were:

Activity	Total	Comments
1. Farmer field school	One FFS; 25 IPM farmers	5 IPM farmers in Quang Diem helped 60 farm households understand IPM 2 IPM farmers in Lu Do helped 30 farm households understand IPM
2. IPM through other organizations	10 - 12 strong branches meet every month and integrate IPM in activities	
3. Fertilizer studies		Two groups in Phu Cau and Co Dam do fertilizer studies
4. Variety studies		Three groups in Thai Hoa, Quang Diem and Lu Do test varieties
5. Other activities like rice-fish	5 hectares	Two farm households in Co Phuong and Thai Hoa implement rice-fish activities

The participants deduced that the purpose of evaluating IPM activities is:

- to find out the good points and to continue doing them, e.g., making use of support of leaders. Also to find out the weak points in order to do something to improve them, e.g., limited activities and limited number of farmers - find another form of training or activity to increase the participation of farmers in the village

- to see what has been done; find out the reason for good points and weak points; find solutions to improve weak points and find directions for the future

Activity 2: SWOT Analysis

Participants looked at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to IPM activities, based on the outputs of the first session. These could be summarized as:

Activity	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
1. Farmer field school	IPM farmers apply IPM and communicate about IPM	Few IPM trained farmers; not many farmers apply IPM	Leaders support IPM because the program is interesting and they want to learn	Farmer-to-farmer field schools have not been organized because farmers still have weak technical and communication skills and there is lack of funds
2. IPM through other organizations, e.g., Women's Union	Integration of IPM in activities of other organizations and production teams	No clubs or groups as venues for discussions after field schools	Support and enthusiasm of leaders at different levels and from different organizations	
3. Fertilizer studies	Farmers conduct studies on balanced fertilizer (N-P-K) application to reduce production costs and pest problems; because of better fertilizer management, pesticide use has also been reduced			
4. Variety testing	Reduced/ managed blast disease, reducing fungicide use			
5. Rice-fish	Farmers want to develop rice-fish models		Support from Party, People's Committee and Cooperative, e.g., plots and ponds are available for doing activities	Occurrence of natural disasters
6. Give production guidance using IPM	Farmers work in cooperative groups doing field observations and making recommendations based on IPM			

Activity	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
7. Farmers apply and disseminate IPM activity		Dissemination of IPM still limited. Not many concrete IPM activities to show to farmers. Few IPM activities, i.e., only field schools.		Limitation of money/budget to develop IPM activities

The output was then translated into characteristics of sub-villages to determine symbols for mapping the village. These were:

Characteristics	Symbols
1. Farmer field school	
2. IPM through other organizations	
3. Rice-fish activities	
4. Variety testing	
5. Fertilizer studies	
6. Giving production guidance based on IPM	
7. Farmers apply and disseminate IPM	
8. Low land	
Support of unions/other organizations	

The farmers agreed to use a color code to determine the status of activities/ characteristics:

- Good - Red
- Not good; not bad - Yellow
- Bad - Blue

Figures, if necessary, would be written next to the symbol.

Participants worked in three groups with the following assignments:

- Group 1: Draw map of the village

- Group 2: Summarize data for sub-villages/teams 1 - 5
- Group 3: Summarize data for sub-villages/teams 6 - 11

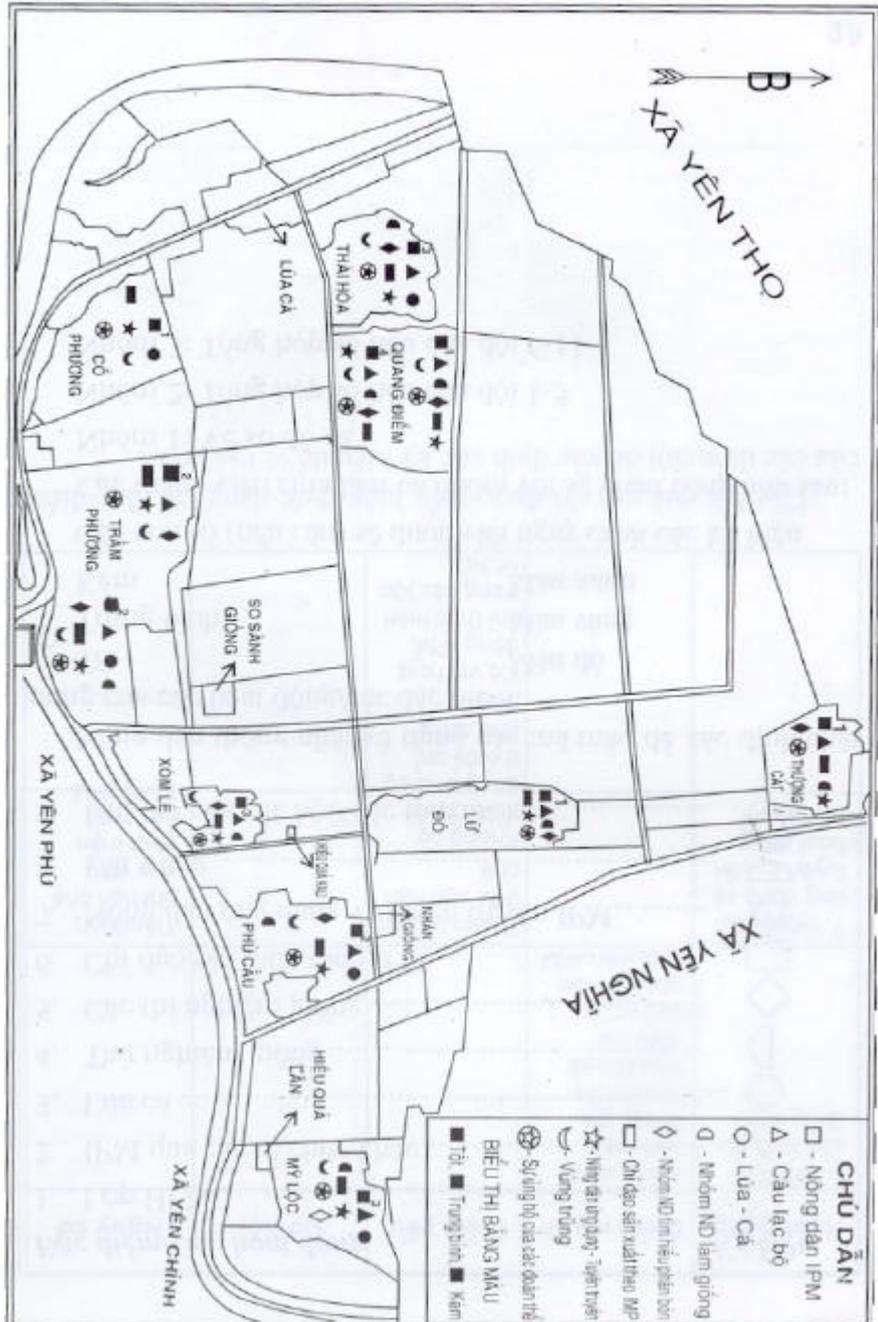


Figure 2: Map of Yen Phuong Village

DAY 2

Activity 3: Vision of a Village IPM Programme

“I want to add some activity but I want to explain. . . I dream of having a big house. I want to do rice-fish studies, but I do not have enough technical skills. I want to attend a technical course and have FAO support.” . . . Mr. Dinh Van Yen, IPM Farmer

Two groups of participants listed characteristics of their vision of a village IPM programme while one group made a drawing based on these characteristics. The trainer helped the groups summarize their vision of village IPM:

1. 100% of farmers know about, implement and benefit from IPM
2. Leaders at different levels show concern and support for the IPM programme
3. Clean environment and balanced ecosystem
4. IPM training is implemented in secondary schools because children also provide labor for farming and should know about IPM; children at different levels should know about IPM
5. Good irrigation and drainage systems
6. IPM club with regular activities to improve awareness of farmers
7. IPM becomes as essential as a daily meal
8. More clean products produced for export, to improve standard of living
9. IPM applied in other crops
10. Farmers do other follow-up IPM activities
11. IPM activities are suited to localities so that they bring more benefits to farmers, e.g., rice-fish activities in low lands
12. Everybody preserves natural enemies
13. Incentives provided for people to collect rats; cat “gangs” developed to control rats; natural enemies of rats preserved by not catching cats and snakes
14. Relationship between farmers strengthened and security of village improved through IPM
15. Everyone has clean water to use - people do not throw dead rats in rivers; no fertilizer/pesticide residues
16. Roads upgraded
17. More jobs created to increase income of farmers

The participants then deduced the objective of Activity 3, Vision for a Village IPM:

“If we have a dream we will develop some activities to reach our dream. If we have a dream, we can set directions for the future and we will try our best to do the strategy.” . . . Mr. Do Duc Huan, IPM Farmer



Figure 3: Vision of a Village IPM Programme

Activity 4: Strategy Analysis

Strategy was explained as a way to reach the future from the present. This was with reference to the first three activities. The example was given of “reaching 100% of farmers,” for which the strategy could be “to train trainers”. Participants then worked in two groups for discussions on strategies. A summary of the outputs follow:

1. 100% of farmers improve knowledge
 - ◆ Organize field schools
 - ◆ Establish IPM clubs
 - ◆ Train farmer trainers in Farmer TOT
2. Obtain support from leaders at different levels
 - ◆ Select persons who are able to summarize and present results to leaders
 - ◆ Regularly report to leaders
3. Train farmer trainers
4. Information exchange
 - ◆ Organize IPM contest (theoretical and practical)
 - ◆ Organize Farmer Technical Meeting
 - ◆ Organize study tour
5. Find solutions for all problems
 - ◆ Organize workshops on different topics to solve problems, e.g., new rice varieties, rats, rice-fish model

- ◆ Set up demonstration/study fields to support workshops
6. Farmers work together

The participants deduced that the objectives of the activity were:

- ◆ to make plans for the future
- ◆ to make strategies to develop IPM activities.

DAY 3

Activity 5: Preparation of workplans

“These plans are really from farmers. It is right that we must be careful, because we have to do all the activities ourselves. But about seed breeding - do not worry, because the farmers have done that before. About the budget from the Village, we are sure we can contribute the amount. The contribution from farmers, they can also afford.” . . .

Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

A listing of IPM-related activities was made, based on the previous day’s session. The list included:

1. Phosphate study in low lands
2. Variety breeding
3. Farmer -to-farmer field school
4. Rice-fish studies
5. Training of Farmer Trainers
6. Rat management
7. Technical training (short courses) on different topics
8. Variety evaluation
9. Workshops, summing up and evaluation meetings
10. Field visits to demonstration/study fields
11. Study of the role of potassium
12. Planning meetings

The participants then prepared detailed plans and budgets for the activities on the list. Discussions followed about the plans they had prepared.

“I quite agree with the 12 activities, but wonder if they can all be implemented. What if the National Programme cannot contribute for variety breeding? How will you do it? Besides, will 25 farmers be able to do the work?” . . . Mr. Nguyen Phung Hoan, Provincial IPM Trainer

“We already worked for three days and did various activities. Now we come to the plans, and we list down 12 which we think are necessary to do. In my opinion these 12 should be done now, but we can not do all and we have to prioritize. The first should be rat management, because we are going to sow the seeds and we have to do it carefully, otherwise the rats will eat the seeds. Also, the rats destroy other crops. Therefore, we think the first activity should be rat management. The second thing we want to do is variety evaluation. Then phosphate and potassium studies. We should have technical training for these things. The other activities are necessary but can be done later.” . . . Mr. Vu Ngoc Nang, Chief Accountant of Cooperative

“In our opinion we should implement all 12 activities. Some of the items in the list, like field visits and field days, relate to the other activities. Don’t worry about the technical skills of IPM farmers - they can do the activities.” . . . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan, Vice Chairman of Cooperative in charge of Production

“I quite agree with the activities. It is true to say that we can do it successfully, because farmers already have experience in doing some activities. The only problem is funding from the National Programme. The only thing I think can not be done now is to use farmers as trainers. The farmers in Yen Phuong are very poor but when we make the plans we will try our best to do them.” . . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

Evaluation of the Village Planning Meeting

“I think that after the workshop all participants here will get additional knowledge so they can help other farmers in the village.” . . . Mr. Do Duc Huan, Farmer

“I am sure that after the workshop when I come back to my home, other neighbors will come and ask me about the workshop. I will share what I have learned.” . . . Mrs. Nguyen Thi Chuc, Chief of Women’s Union Branch III

At the end of the three-day planning meeting, the Chairman of the Cooperative provided an evaluation of the activity based on comments from the farmers. The farmers’ group looked at content, organization, and process and gave other comments on what they thought about the planning meeting. The following is what the farmers had to say.

Content:

- The content of the planning meeting was varied.

- We had a chance to discuss and express ideas and aspirations for the future.
- Trainers guided us in making plans by going through exercises.
- We were willing to make plans, but had apprehensions about not being successful as well as about the costs to implement activities.
- We are hopeful that with the assistance of the National Programme we can prove our ability to contribute to the improvement of the village economy.
- We are convinced that economic benefits will improve if all farmers apply IPM.

Organization:

- We came to an agreement to organize a core of thirty farmers to take responsibility for implementing community IPM activities.
- Part of the responsibility of the 30 farmers would be to reach other farmers through other social organizations and farmer groups.

Process:

- In the process of evaluating IPM activities, farmers should be clear and specific about what has been done well and what has not been done well. The reasons should be explored and solutions drawn up.
- Mapping is an easy exercise which gives a general view of what IPM activities should be carried out.
- The farmers felt that the ‘strategy statement’ is what they wish for. The process of translating strategies to relevant examples made it possible to draw up means to implement the strategies.
- More realistic work plans can be accomplished by providing farmers with budget ceilings and information about the kind of activities that the National Programme support. This should help the group avoid making plans to carry out too many activities, which might affect the quality of results. Farmers should be clear about their responsibility for observing and following up on activities.

Other comments:

- The farmers’ group felt that three days is not enough for making plans because they need time to check out field sites proposed for studies. For more reasonable/realistic plans, we recommend that this be considered for future planning activities.
- It is necessary to have planning meetings for the coming seasons, because farmers’ groups like to try out and apply other/new studies.
- Farmer technical meetings will provide the venue for us to exchange production experiences and help to foster closer relations between members of the community. The content will be easy to understand and relevant for all farmers because it comes from the activities that farmer groups are implementing.

“Because there are funds from the National Programme at the moment, we make use of those funds to show farmers what activities we can do. When farmers realize that the activities benefit them, then they themselves

will apply/implement them. Because now everything is new, even if we say everything is good the farmers will not believe us. When activities are carried out and seen by farmers they will volunteer to use the techniques/methods. In the future, when there is no more support from the National Programme we will continue to support farmers to do some new activities.” . . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

28 – 29 APRIL 1998

Three and a half months after the first village planning meeting we went to the field to learn from farmers and others what was happening as a result of the planning meeting.

Of the 12 activities in the original plan which the group of 30 farmers presented during the 12 - 14 January 1998 Planning Meeting, the farmers were implementing only the activities listed below. Some of the activities were not being implemented for various reasons. For example, there had been no Training of Farmer Trainers (TFOT) because the village was not going to conduct Farmer-to-Farmer Field Schools. District level, instead of village, technical meetings were to be held. If possible, regular and summing-up meetings were to be supported by the Cooperative. (The term “summing up meeting,” commonly used in Vietnam, is a forum for reviewing what has been done, presenting results, evaluating good and bad points, drawing experiences/lessons, developing plans or defining thrusts/directions for the next period, and giving recognition/reward to those who have shown outstanding performance of duties or tasks. It is an activity regularly conducted by government offices and organizations. The scheduling of the meeting depends on the objectives and nature of the activity being reviewed.)

- Variety studies (1)
- Seed rehabilitation (1)
- Phosphorous study (1)
- Potassium study (1)
- Planning meeting (end of season)
- Farmer field school for 25 farmers by local funds (1)

Ideas about the Planning Meeting and Community IPM activities at provincial level

The following are the comments of farmers and others on field activities and other issues.

“After the planning meeting we thought that the plans we made were very important, so we immediately began preparatory work like site selection. We did this on 02 February. Then, beginning on 13 February, we had a short training course. It was a Technical Training Course where we met for five mornings to discuss studies that we were going to carry out. The meetings were facilitated by the District Trainer. The studies were initially designed by the Cooperative technical group and district trainers and presented to the rest of the farmers for discussions during the course.” . . .

Mr. Pham Xuan Kinh, IPM Farmer

“ After the planning meetings, the four villages in Y Yen are implementing their plans. Conditions are favorable to implement the plans. The farmers are very enthusiastic because the activities are essential for them. The leaders of the village and the cooperative show concern. The district trainers have experience in conducting field studies, and help the farmers

a lot. The budget for the activities comes from both central and local governments. Although the weather has not been normal because of El Nino, the farmers still implement the plans.

The district trainers are very busy with Community IPM activities. However, within the Plant Protection Sub Department we have already made arrangements for other staff members to take on other regular functions of these district trainers.”. . .Mr. Nguyen Huu Dan, Plant Protection Sub Department

“District trainers gain much from doing Community IPM! Farmers need more field practice which involves district trainers. When the district trainers are more involved, they gain more technical skills. They also gain planning skills and management skills. Even skills in problem solving are improved. Trainers are active in the implementation of activities. Because they are involved, they develop a bigger sense of responsibility.” . . . Mr. Nguyen Phung Hoan, Provincial IPM Trainer, Nam Dinh Province

The Planning Meeting and Community IPM activities at the village level

“Farmers tell me about the studies, e.g., fertilizer, variety. They are very happy. They find the studies effective. The study fields look nicer than the other fields around them. Other farmers ask why they are not involved, but we have to wait until we have results from this season and then introduce the studies to other farmers. On behalf of the village leader we would like to thank the National Programme. We hope that it will continue to provide technical assistance to farmers. We promise to try our best to implement the studies and other necessary tasks for Community IPM.”. . . Mr. Nguyen Huu Nghiem, Charman of Village People's Committee.

Results of the Planning Meeting and Community IPM activities

“Up to this time we cannot say anything about the results of the study, but we have an initial idea that potassium is essential for rice. The study on dosage of potassium is useful for farmers.”. . . Mr. Dinh Van Thuan, IPM Farmer

“The seed rehabilitation study is very good for farmers because through the activity we can produce seeds for ourselves and we do not have to buy from outside. Also, we can keep the characteristics of a variety for a long time.”. . . Mr. Pham Xuan Kinh, IPM Farmer

“When the season started and we were starting up activities it was difficult. But we did things step by step. Now, I find many new things because of my involvement in Community IPM activities. I can learn technical things from studies and apply them in my own field. My field is nicer because I use more balanced fertilizer and more appropriate cultivation practices. Other farmers who are not involved in Community IPM observe my field and ask me about planting density, fertilizer, and pest management. If I had a chance, I would like to continue being involved in Community IPM activities because I learn very much.” . . . Mr. Pha Van Do, IPM Farmer

Now, based on our experience in the first season, we can design some studies. However, we still need assistance from the trainer because sometimes there are differences due to the season. Many farmers come to my field to ask about the study and they are also willing to do studies.” . . . Mr. Pham Xuan Khinh, IPM Farmer

“I have worked with the Cooperative since 1992. Before IPM, our production cost was very high. This has been reduced because now we apply IPM in our field. Our Cooperative has become stronger because of Community IPM. For example, the 25 IPM farmers help other farmers. In the future they will be able to reach all farmers in the village.” . . . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan, Vice Chairman of Cooperative

“Community IPM activities come from the wishes of farmers. For example, planting density. That is why they are willing and enthusiastic to carry out the study. The farmers are active learners. Through Community IPM activities, the relationship between farmers is closer, they are much involved in the community and they also reduce production costs.” . . . Mr. Nguyen Phung Hoan, Provincial IPM Trainer, Nam Dinh Province

What Community IPM is...

“Community IPM is not only for my family but also for other farmers - the new things I am now involved in, I can later spread to others for them to apply also. In field schools, we learned from field studies. Now, we make plans, design field studies, and make our own schedules for activities. The relationship between farmers is closer.” . . Mr. Pha Van Do, IPM Farmer

“In Community IPM, everybody is involved in the activities - doing things, solving problems. Farmer groups are doing studies. The relationship between farmers is closer.” . . . Ms. Bui Thi Cay, IPM Farmer

“The word community means many people. Community IPM is different from IPM because it now involves more people and gaining more knowledge because of spending more time observing and studying the field.” . . . Ms. Bui Thi Ngo, IPM Farmer

“In technical terms, Community IPM is more detailed. When we were doing the field school, IPM was more general and we understood only a small study. Now, we are doing more studies to find out suitable varieties and fertilizer in more detail.” . . . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan, Vice Chairman of Cooperative

“In Community IPM, first we learn by working in groups. Then we share experiences with other farmers. Before IPM, farmers sprayed a lot. Through field schools, farmers learned about technical things like life cycles, pest damage and natural enemies. Pesticide use has been reduced. Through Community IPM we are doing more activities than we did in field schools and reaching more farmers.” . . . Ms. Hoang Thi Rac, IPM Farmer

“Community IPM is getting people involved in IPM and involved in doing studies. At this stage, I have been able to share information about IPM activities with 258 women who are members of the Women’s (With No Third Children) Club ” . . . Ms. Pham Thi Duyen, IPM Farmer

Involvement in Community IPM..

“I think it is a big opportunity, not only for myself but for my family. It is good for me to learn more from doing studies.” . . . Ms. Bui Thi Cay, Farmer

“If I had a chance to continue being involved in Community IPM, it would be very good for me because I would learn more. I feel sorry because now I am getting old, but if I had the chance I would still like to learn more.” . . Ms. Bui Thi Ngo, IPM Farmer

The involvement of women in Community IPM..

“My wife has a good opportunity because she has been selected for Community IPM. Before, I was a government officer. Now I am retired and I want to create the conditions necessary for her to be involved in Community IPM activities. The rights of women are the same as those of men. Both of us are members of Unions, the Youth Union and the Women’s Union, and we know that the role of women is important. From our experience in working together we have seen the strengths and

weaknesses of both sexes, and we share work based on this.” . . . Mr. Do Luan Luu, Husband of Ms. Bui Thi Cay

“I feel good about my wife’s involvement in Community IPM activities because she has access to new technical information. I work as Vice Chairman of the Council in another village, so I can understand that she needs time for the activities.” . . . Mr. To Van Dan, Husband of Ms. Bui Thi Ngo

“I am very happy about my wife’s involvement in Community IPM. Now I do not feel worried like before, because she can learn new technologies for growing rice and she can help the family. It takes much of her time, but we are able to manage time with the help of our children. Our eldest child is 14 years old.” . . . Mr. La Van Minh, Husband of Ms. Pham Thi Duyen

The future of Community IPM...

“Villages are asking where they will get funds for activities if the programme develops. In the North, farmer cooperatives have a conference every two years where they raise the most important issues and activities. Discussions are held about whether or not to implement various activities. Normally, plans are submitted on a yearly basis, after the activities are evaluated. If the results of this season are successful, the farmers intend to include them in the plans for submission to the conference. The farmers can then find funds from the cooperative. However, this depends on the capacity of the village or the district. Farmers themselves can also contribute or find outside sources.” . . .

Mr. Nguyen Phung Hoan, Provincial IPM Trainer, Nam Dinh Province

“Even if the National Programme cannot provide funds for Community IPM activities, that’s no problem. The budget of the village is not big and activities will be limited, but still we will maintain the IPM programme. However, we will maintain only the very necessary activities on pest management. The other activities will have to wait until there is money. Pest management is important, because in recent years the weather has not been favorable and many pest problems have occurred, causing yield loss up to about 30% or more.” . . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

Community IPM and Planning Meetings

“Planning meetings are important. By making plans we set directions for Community IPM. We are able to get ideas from farmers about what activities they want to do. By making plans, we are able to develop studies and distribute responsibilities among ourselves. We will discuss with members of the farmers’ group how to plan activities for the future.” . . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

22 - 23 JULY 1998

We returned to Yen Phuong village on 22 - 23 July 1998, after the second planning meeting held June 19 - 20. The rice farmers were facing many difficulties due to drought. The farmers and the cooperative management board/committee were working together to use all means of bringing water into the fields. They were very busy, but we were still warmly welcomed everywhere. We saw that the success of some Community IPM activities last season had a great effect on farmers. It also determined the subsequent steps and future of Community IPM in the village.



“During the first planning meeting I gave maybe two ideas. During the second I gave maybe four. I think it is because of more knowledge and more confidence. If I recall the vision of the group during the first meeting, I think we have been able to do something to reach our goal. Little by little we will reach our model village by strengthening/improving our economy. This comes through the specific activities that farmers are doing to reach the goal.” . . . Ms. Pham Thi Duyen, IPM Farmer

Farmers are sharing experiences and knowledge with other farmers

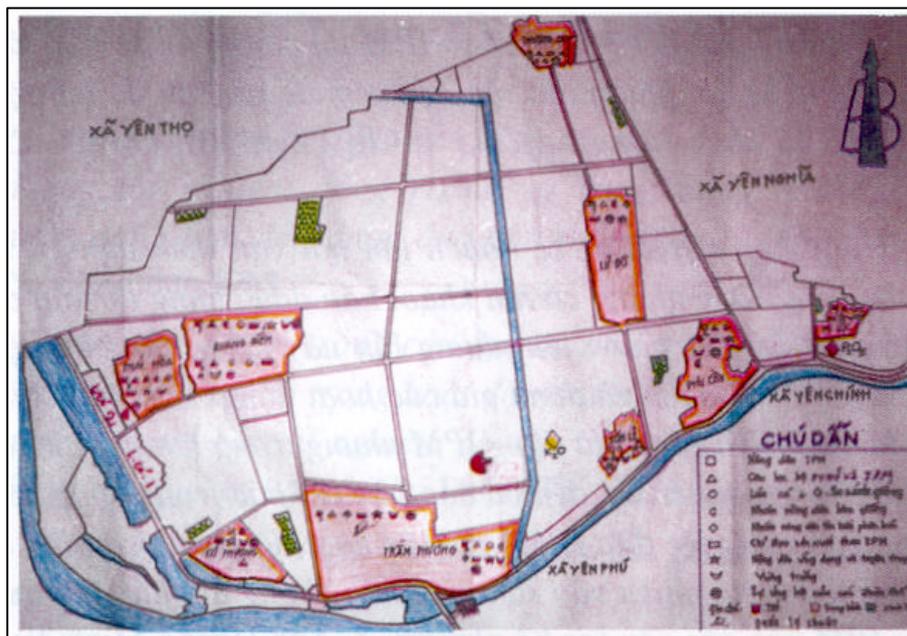
“Farmers involved in Community IPM share their experiences and knowledge with us. But I can only apply it in the fields near my house which I can visit often. I have learned something about variety and plant spacing, which I have tried. Now I also observe insects. Instead of just following what I am told by my IPM farmer neighbour, I observe things

for myself. I can not join Community IPM activities because I am very busy”. . . Ms. Hoang Thi Thinh, Non-IPM Farmer

Farmers have taken the lead in the planning meeting

“During the first planning meeting, we did not know many things and we had to learn them. During the second village planning meeting, we had more experience and we were more confident. Ten farmers who participated in community activities in the first season facilitated the second planning meeting. Before the planning meeting, the ten farmers met with the Cooperative Management Board and district trainers to discuss and prepare. I had mixed feelings, happy and worried, about being chosen as a facilitator. I felt I was given more responsibility, and felt that I should try my best to share what I learned in the first planning meeting.” . . Ms. Pham Thi Duyen, IPM Farmer

Farmers are using a modified planning process



Revised map of Yen Phuong village which includes information about the village and community IPM activities

“The process of the second planning meeting was different from the first. New farmers were involved. Before, trainers facilitated the meeting and helped farmers make plans. During the second meeting, evaluation of the first season’s activities was included. For example, discussion of why we made many plans but could only implement some. We tried to find solutions to the problem. We did mapping again. We used the old maps to

show to the new farmers, but we added new information to the map. We also explored internal/local resources and how to integrate IPM into activities of other organizations like the Women's Club. We think that if we develop a good program for Women's Club and IPM later on, we can invite leaders of the Women's Club from the district to see. Then they can expand it to other villages in the district". . . Ms. Pham Thi Duyen, IPM Farmer

"The second planning meeting followed the same process as the first planning meeting. But there was a difference. The first time, we still needed the guidance of trainers. The second time, farmers were more active in making plans and evaluating activities. The first time, we only considered IPM activities, but during the second time we also discussed the idea of bringing IPM into Women's Clubs." . . . Mr. Hoang Minh Tuan, Vice Chairman of Cooperative

Farmers have identified ways to sustain Community IPM

"I want to add something about Women's Clubs. . . Some women who are involved in Community IPM belong to Women's Clubs. Integrating IPM in Women's Club activities provides opportunities for them to share their IPM experiences with other members of the club. The IPM activities done through Women's Clubs are not the same as those in field schools. However, members share new IPM ideas, what they learned from field schools and field studies. Women's Clubs were established two years ago but they are integrating IPM only now. We have had to do this because there is no money to establish FFSs and because last season women were very active in Community IPM activities. In Yen Phuong, 70% of the women are involved in cultivation and about 80% of work in the field is done by them. They also want new knowledge. They also wish to learn". . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

"IPM through Women's Clubs is done through discussion. The results from last season's Community IPM field studies, as well as studies currently being done, are discussed." . . Ms. Bui Thi Thon, IPM Farmer

"IPM through the Women's Club includes collecting insects and rearing them in insect zoos. We discuss results of field studies in order to bring information to members of the club." . . Ms. Pham Thi Duyen, IPM Farmer

Farmers are thinking of ways to make changes in working methodologies

"With the development of Community IPM, the functions of the Cooperative Plant Protection Team will have to be re-defined. Before, the plant protection workers would go to farmers' fields to check and give

advice. Through Community IPM, farmers are being trained and their knowledge increased to enable them to make decisions for their own fields. Now, plant protection teams are composed of IPM farmers networks who collect and summarize information and who assist other farmers in making field management decisions.” . . . Mr. Dinh Van Thuan, IPM Farmer

Farmers are finding sources for funds

“About budgets. . .In addition to the Women’s Clubs, we have tried to get funds for Community IPM from local governments” . . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

“There are two areas of difficulty in implementing Community IPM. These are organization and budget. The organizational aspect becomes difficult when you cannot get all the farmers together. The budget aspect becomes difficult if you have to depend on the National Programme for funds to do activities. But, there are ways to deal with both difficulties. As long as activities keep farmers interested and they see the benefits, Community IPM will go on and on. For budgets, aside from local government funds, farmers agreed in April 1998 to contribute 0.35 kg of paddy rice/sao each, which will be used to generate funds for science and technology programs including Community IPM”. . . Mr. Dinh Van Khue, IPM Farmer

Farmers have gained new ideas about doing things together

“Before the first Planning Meeting, we had no idea about doing field studies. It was only during the meeting, when we discussed about farmers’ needs, that we thought about it. Last season I was involved in carrying out a study comparing two brands of phosphorous fertilizers, Lam Thao and Ninh Binh, in lowland rice. Before, no farmer household used Ninh Binh fertilizer. Now 40 farmer households in Quang Diem are using it on 16 mau in the lowlands. . . Also, Co Phuong has a Women and IPM Club with 50 members. During a meeting on 21 July 1998, they discussed fertilizers. Based on results of last season’s fertilizer study, everyone in the club agreed to apply potassium and Ninh Binh phosphorous fertilizer in their rice fields”.. . . Mr. Tran Van Bo, IPM Farmer

CONCLUSIONS

Planning Meetings and Community IPM:

“Planning meetings and Community IPM go together. Plans are made for Community IPM. Planning Meetings set the directions for Community IPM. They support each other” . . . Mr. Dinh Van Khue, IPM Farmer

“If there was no planning meeting, there would be no Community IPM. If there was no second planning meeting, Community IPM would not continue because there would be no new activities.” . . . Ms. Nguyen Thi Ngan, IPM Farmer

“The Planning Meeting is important in Community IPM for spelling out activities to be done. We have been able to accomplish much of what we have planned because farmers are active in implementing plans, and because we receive much support from village leaders and trainers. Seeing the support of the leaders makes us feel that we should try to accomplish our task. Carrying out the studies is not difficult, but requires enthusiasm and diligence. Farmers are active because we feel that the activities are relevant to our needs and that if we are involved, we can later apply the results in our own fields” . . . Ms. Bui Thi Thon, IPM Farmer

Farmer Planning Meeting: then and now

“During the first planning meeting we did not understand Community IPM well, so we developed some unrealistic plans. This time, we knew the procedure, so we were more careful about selecting activities.” . . Mr. Lu Huu Thuan, Chairman of Cooperative

“During the first planning meeting, only a few farmers participated. Now, as a result of community IPM activities last season, IPM activities are integrated into programs of existing organizations. Results of activities have been communicated to more farmers. Therefore, during the second planning meeting there already seemed to be a strong IPM movement in the village” . . Mr. Nguyen Van Dien, Vice Director of Plant Protection Sub Department

Where the first village Planning Meeting has brought Community IPM



The rat problem is now being addressed in Rat Management Field Schools

In its second season, summer season 1998, the community IPM activities responded to field problems with the following activities:

- Field study on disease management (bacterial leaf blight)
- Field study on variety evaluation
- Field study on effect of foliar fertilizer
- Field study on effect of complete fertilizer and micro-nutrients
- Field study on effect of planting density
- Rat management field school
- Farmer-to-farmer field schools

Activities to strengthen and support training are:

- Training of farmer trainers
- Farmer trainer meetings
- Village planning meetings

There are also different forums for summarizing, evaluating and sharing experiences, such as:

- Farmer technical meetings
- Field days

IPM has been integrated into the programs of existing organizations such as:

- Women's clubs
- The village agriculture cooperative

These things have all become possible because of the efforts of cooperative leaders, farmers and trainers.

The current thrusts of Community IPM in Yen Phuong village are:

- Continue to train farmers to increase their understanding and application of IPM;
- Continue to consolidate, expand and improve the knowledge of IPM-trained farmers;
- Continue timely communication of results of IPM activities to the community through existing organizations such as clubs, and through mass media.

The farmers in Yen Phuong village are confident that these thrusts will provide the force for a strong IPM movement in the community.



Farmers following up a field study