Annex I

Group Structure and Dynamics

1. Motivation, common goal and purpose

For a group to be effective, they must be able to work together towards a common agreed goal and have the time and enthusiasm to do this. Is the main aim of the group to raise some extra cash, to reduce costs through bulk purchase or sales, to be able to access land, water, grants, loans or advice? Is it in order to increase legitimacy of the activities or is it even a legal requirement that they work together?

Members also need to agree on how much time and other resources they will each put into the group activities and how benefits and profits (for a producer group) will be shared. The more similar the members aims and expectations from the group, the fewer the problems the group will have.

Main reasons for forming a group are:

- *Group food and nutritional security*
- *Group income generation*
- *To access land*
- *To access training/extension and other services*
- *To access markets*
- *To access credit/finance*
- *For political advocacy*

To work effectively together, the group needs to agree in particular:
- *Who will do what in the group*
- *What contributions everyone will make in terms of time, resources and money*
- *How benefits and profits will be shared out*
- *How to deal with disagreements within the group (who will decide when there are different views)*

These points can be formally written in a group constitution (or group rules) agreed by all members.

2.   Membership

Groups of 8 to 15 members are usually the most effective. Once a group has some success, others will want to join. Also in many urban producer groups, the membership will change as members leave for other work or to other areas. The group need to agree on who should be able to join with the main criteria being that they agree with the group goal, to abide by the group rules.

Membership will mean sharing in the work and profits from group activities and should also implies the obligation to:

- *Attend meetings regularly.*
- *pay the agreed membership fee (this ensures that only serious persons apply for group membership as well as helping to pay for the costs of the group activities).*
- *take part in electing the group leadership.*
- *make regular contributions to the group savings fund if established.*
- *repay group loans quickly.*
- *help other members when in need.*

The production group needs to have leaders – a chairman, secretary and treasurer **(see the group promoters guide)** – if they do not already have them. Ideally, these roles should be elected and for a fixed period so that they can be changed periodically to allow others to build up experience in running the group and to allow ineffective leaders to be replaced. In order to build up a stock of leadership experience in the group, other members can be given specific responsibilities such as for particular production, processing, or marketing responsibilities. The GA should encourage wherever possible, the development of the skills and experience needed to take on roles of responsibility within the group so that the full resources of the group members can be used within the group and if members change, the group can continue.

3.   Group dynamics

The relationship between the group members has a very large effect on how well the group operates. This is rarely fixed but will change with changing circumstances.

In general, groups go through several different stages:

1 Initial formation **(forming)**.

2 Discussion and getting used to working together **(informing**).

3 Argument and disagreement **(storming).**

4 Settling into an agreed way or working together **(performing).**

It is important to recognise that almost all groups go through a stage of conflict and that this is normal and not necessarily a cause of concern. If the group has a strong enough reason to work together, and is able to discuss the issues causing conflict openly, they will pass through this stage and be able to work more effectively together **(See also conflict management below).**

Within a group, different members have roles and responsibilities and how they carry out their roles will also affect the stability and success of the group.

The leader – needs to be open to discussion and suggestions from the other members and to encourage their contributions to the group activities if the group is to get the most from the membership. There are many different leadership styles from directing to delegating, and which is appropriate will depend on the circumstances and the people involved. In a successful group, however, the aim of both the leader and the GA should be to develop the ability of all group members to contribute the maximum possible to the group.

The secretary – needs to be competent at taking notes of meetings and passing information to members as needed

The treasurer – must be able to keep accurate accounts and be able to report to the group meetings

Other roles such as specific responsibilities for production, processing and marketing can help ensure that other members learn leadership and responsibility and feel part of the group rather than employees.

The more open the group members are to discussion about their roles and the more they are willing to help each other, the less conflict is likely. The GA should constantly watch the group dynamics encouraging the quieter members and trying to prevent the stronger members from dominating meetings.

4.   Decision making

Deciding who will do what is not always easy. Some jobs everyone likes to do - others no one wants to do. Dividing the work can sometimes cause arguments and problems between group members.

In general, it is preferable for all group members to agree with decisions made by the group.

Consensus does not necessarily mean unanimity (everyone agrees) but that everyone feels they have had a fair chance to consider alternatives and are prepared to support the group decision.

Usually every effort should be made to achieve a group consensus, as this will strengthen the group. In contrast, if one or two leaders or outspoken members make all the decisions, it can lead to conflict and eventual breakdown of the group. However, while the decisions reached through group consensus are usually the ideal and will often be better than they would have been if individuals made them, they do take time. Sometimes quick decisions are needed and at these times group decision-making can be a disadvantage.

This is where good leadership is particularly important. A good group leader will know when to discuss issues with all members in a group to try to reach a group consensus, and when decisions can be made on behalf of the group. In these cases, the decision made can be discussed at the next meeting if necessary.

There will be times however, when a group do not all agree on how to do something or who should do it and one of the group rules needs to

be how a decision is reached in these cases. Possible ways to decide could be by majority vote, (with or without a minimum such as 60% majority) or a leadership decision (authority rule). It is generally not enough to assume that because all members can participate in decision-making, that if they do not, it means they agree (silence does not necessarily mean consent). In any controversial decision it is best to at least vote on the best course of action and if there is a clear majority against the decision, it will be necessary to discuss other options.

The main problem with **authority decision-making** in producer groups is that members carry out the decisions because they feel they have to, not because they agree or at least feel that their ideas and feelings have been considered. This ultimately undermines the sustainability of the group.

Many existing groups have a strong leadership which is not particularly participative or democratic which can be acceptable for a business with employees, but it less so for participative groups where members provide equal resources and time and can therefore expect to have an equal say in group decisions. Some form of election for leadership is important in such groups and leaders should normally have a limited tenure (e.g. one or two terms of one or two years) so that others have an opportunity to learn to be leaders or for leaders to be changed if it is felt by the members that they do not properly represent them. One possible course of action where traditional leaders such as local 'kings and queens' **(see box)** dominate a group, is to make a new role for them as patron rather than leader where they are honoured for their role in starting the group and are seen as 'elder statesmen' but do not have a vote or final decision making role in the group.

5.   Conflict management

Even in the most homogeneous group, there will be disagreements that cannot easily be resolved through normal group decision-making methods. For example, one or more group members may contribute less than others in time or money but still want an equal share of the profits. One or more members may dominate the group and refuse to allow others to play an equal role.

The group constitution - i.e. a written record of the purpose and rules for the group - helps the group to avoid such internal conflicts and makes the responsibilities of each member clear. If there is no such set of rules for the group, the GA should help them to formulate their own constitution through a discussion meeting where all members (men and women) are encouraged to speak freely. The constitution is for the benefit of the group only, not for outsiders so all members must agree with the rules and to abide by them. Preparing such a constitution will also provide an opportunity to encourage more open participation in groups that are dominated by one or more members.

Where even the constitution cannot solve a conflict, the role of the GA is to act as mediator helping the two sides in the conflict to concentrate on the following steps:

Conflict occurs when individuals or groups are not getting what they need or want and are seeking their own self-interest. Sometimes the

Steps for consensus decision making

1. *Identify and clarify the problem. Who is involved? Who does it affect? Can we involve them in solving the problem? Are there others who should be consulted before a decision is made?*

2. *Analyse the cause. Is it a physical cause or a social/political/personal cause? Is there more than one cause? Which is most important?*

3. *Look for alternative solutions. Identify as many ways to deal with the problem as possible BEFORE considering which is most practical and the advantages and disadvantages of each.*

4. *Select one or more alternatives for action which could be practical. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of each and prioritise them for action*

5. *Plan for implementation. Identify all the steps that must be taken and assign them to members for action with a time for completion. Who needs to be informed of the action to be taken?*

6. *Summarise what will be done and who will do it.*

7. *Evaluate the action once it has been taken. If unsuccessful, can the group try the second best alternative? Are there other courses of action that should now be considered?*

individual is not aware of the need and unconsciously starts to act out. Other times, the individual is very aware of what he or she wants and actively works to achieve it.

Conflicts are inevitable because we are dealing with people's lives, jobs, children, pride, self-concept, ego and sense of mission or purpose. Although they are inevitable, there are strategies for dealing with them that work.

Conflicts occur for many reasons, but common ones are when there is:

• Poor communication between group members (or leaders and members)

• When one or more members want more power

• When members are dissatisfied with the leadership style

• When leadership is weak

• When there is a lack of openness in the group

Providing the two sides are willing to openly discuss the conflict with the aim of resolving it, the following approach can be useful:

1 Focus on needs, not positions.

The focus of conflict resolution should be not on what people think they want (their positions) but on what they actually need. Needs, not positions, define the problem. In nearly every conflict, several different needs must be taken into account. Only by talking about and acknowledging personal needs explicitly can people uncover mutual or compatible interests and resolve conflicting interests. Every need usually has several possible ways in which it can be satisfied, and opposing positions may actually reflect more shared and compatible interests than conflicts. Thus, focusing on needs instead of positions makes it possible to develop solutions.

2 Look for ways in which both sides can win.

Before attempting to reach agreement, the two sides in a conflict should brainstorm to consider a wide range of options that advance shared interests and reconcile differing interests. In this process, the two sides

should strive to avoid four major obstacles:

- *Premature judgment.*
- *Searching for the single answer.*
- *The assumptions of a fixed pie (that there are only a fixed number of benefits available - or a fixed amount of produduction which can be made or sold). and*
- *Thinking that 'solving their problem is their problem'.*

6.   Self-reliance and sustainability

The aim of the GA is to no longer be needed by the group. The group should become completely self-reliant. This does not mean that they can do everything themselves and do not need any outside advice, but that they know who to approach and how to obtain outside advice and resources that they need. For example, they know how to manage their accounts, savings and loans, how to deal with authorities and how to find advice and information through other groups and regular organisations. In other words, their continued existence as a group does not depend on the group advisor.

Regular contributions by members to the group and a formal savings scheme are extremely important for the sustainability of the group. Outside loans or grants should only be thought of as a short-term strategy that can be helpful to get started on a new enterprise. In the long term, though, the group must be financially self reliant to be sustainable.

Some indicators of self reliance are:

- Regularity of group meetings and level of member attendance. *When regular meetings and high attendance continue in the absence of the GA, the group is obviously highly motivated and well on the way to achieving self-reliance.*
- Shared responsibilities and member participation in group decision-making. *Groups that share responsibilities and in which there is a high level of participation in decision-making learn more quickly and are better able to cope with members leaving the group. Groups dominated by a few members are often unstable and can be very vulnerable to key members leaving the group which can happen frequently in urban producer groups.*

- **A successful and sustainable group enterprise.** *For the majority of producer groups, increased income from a group enterprise will be a major objective. Success in such enterprises will itself strengthen the group and help make it self-reliant.*

- **Continuous growth in group savings**. *Group saving is a key measure of members' faith in and financial commitment to group activities. It is also a good indicator of the profitability of the group activity. Groups which do not save, or save very little, are less likely to achieve sustainability. Each group should develop its own long-term plan for achieving financial self-reliance through member saving targets.*

- **High rates of loan repayment.** *A group's capacity to repay loans on time is another indicator of group financial discipline and the profitability of its income-generating activity.*

- **Group problem-solving.** *A group which solves its own problems and takes initiatives for its self-development in the absence of the GA has a high level of member confidence.*

- **Effective links with development services**. *The self-reliance of a group also depends on its ability to establish or maintain links with government and NGO development services, in the absence of the GA. Intergroup associations can be particularly helpful in this area.*

Annex II

Participatory Learning Techniques

This Annex lists participatory learning techniques that GAs could use with groups for group formation or development. In some cases it may be appropriate for the GA him/herself to lead the group in these exercises, in others, there may be a group member or leader who can take on this role.

The list is intended as a guide only. Be creative when using methods. Try to use drawings rather than words as much as possible. Use pictures, drawings, a flannel board, puppets and so on. Write and draw on poster-size sheets of paper. Special attention should to be paid to women's roles and work.

Activity profile

Ask different people about their daily activities. Where, when and how much money do they spend? Interview and observe or ask them to write notes.

Approach members constructively

Encourage members either verbally or through privilege for taking initiative and for actions of any kind. Everyone needs to know their contributions are appreciated. Even if their comments are not practical, a reply can begin with 'That's a good point but what about...', or 'That's an interesting point, what do others think?'

Assignments (theoretical and practical)

Ask participants to practise new roles and new skills - e.g. ask a different person to act as a chairperson or fill in record book. This is particularly important with urban groups with many transitory members. Suggest assignments for members e.g. to find out the current market prices for something. As an exercise, work out the likely demand for a product - e.g. chickens - in the group's market area for one year. Will demand vary through the year?

Brainstorming

Ask members to think of any ideas that come to mind. List all the ideas without evaluation or judgement. The quantity, not the quality, is what matters. Ideas can be discussed later for practicality. Sometimes unlikely or seemingly ridiculous ideas lead to a more practical idea that would otherwise not have been considered.

Case studies

Discuss an imaginary or real situation from the area (e.g. a successful group of marketing women) to encourage discussion on marketing strategies. Use the case study to ask questions about an activity the group is working on.

Community surveys

Survey individuals in the community for their knowledge or opinions. Ask a number of people who represent the audience you are thinking about. For example, if you are trying to find out the extent of demand for mushrooms in the area, ask a number of people - men, women, school teachers, people at the markets, etc.

Consultation with specialists

With several members of the group, meet with a specialist or knowledgeable person on an issue for which you need more information - e.g. for chicken raising, contact the department of extension. For a health issue, contact the department of health. It may be possible to arrange for the specialist to visit the group, in which case, the interview could be carried out in front of the whole group and then an open question session held.

Critical Incident

Use problem situations to analyse advantages and disadvantages and possible solutions to a given situation. Pictures or drawings will help. For example: 'A group has saved up a lot of money - enough to build a chicken house and start up a chicken raising activity. Just before they go to buy the materials, the treasurer tells them all the money has been burnt. What should they do?' Hold a discussion on the issue.

Field visits and excursions

These can be combined with observation and interviewing. Arrange a visit to a place of relevance to the group - e.g. to another group successfully running an activity your group would like to try, or to a place where they can see successful examples of production, processing or marketing or produce.

Information collection

Ask members to collect information on relevant subjects from government offices, service organizations, markets etc. This is useful for finding out what is needed or the likely results of an idea before trying it out in practice.

Local histories

Ask members for a detailed account of the past and how things have changed in the area.

Memory game

Show 20 objects found locally. Ask the participants to remember them. Put them in a bag one by one. Then ask one volunteer to name them and write them down on a list. Ask the other participants as a group to write them down as well. Compare the lists and discuss the advantages of cooperation.

Participation game

Give five sticks (or stones or other objects) to each participant. Start a discussion. Everybody who speaks has to give away one of her/his sticks. No one may speak without sticks. Discuss subjects such as dominance, shyness and importance of participation.

Participatory group discussion

Used in combination with other methods. With the members in small or large groups, discuss a topic of interest. Provoke reactions by using open questions: 'What do you see here? Why do you think it happens? When this happens in your situation, what problem does it cause?

What can we do about it?' Ask questions that need definite answers: 'When was the last time ... and what did you do then? What did you do yesterday? How many ...? What happens in your family ...?'

Practical demonstration

Show exactly how something should be done - e.g. filling in a record book. Then ask the members concerned to do the same thing. If you do not have the skill in question, ask an expert to demonstrate - e.g. for compost production, ask the department of extension to arrange a demonstration or where the members can go to see a demonstration.

Preference ranking

Ask members to rank items according to their own criteria (e.g. for six seed varieties -which is best to worst for harvesting, fodder, food, storage, etc.).

Presentation by a resource person

Ask a specialist to give a presentation to the group - for instance a market woman or trader explaining about purchase and sale.

Presentation of a progress report

Ask a member to give a personal report about the group's progress. Discuss the presentation among the group. If one member is very critical, you can always ask them to do better!

Presentation of experiences

Ask one participant to describe personal experiences related to daily life or work - e.g. a woman telling what she does from morning until evening, or a man telling how he runs his market stall.

Problem-solving

Make a table with four columns. List main problems of participants in the first column, possible solutions in the second column, what prevents them from solving the problem in the third column, and what will help them solve the problem in the fourth column. Discuss.

Testing and experimenting

Carry out practical trials or experiments (e.g. test different seed varieties to see which work best).

Time line

Ask the members to draw a line and mark on it major events in the community, with the approximate dates. Discuss changes that have occurred.

Two-circle exercise

Draw two circles - one circle represents the community, the other the group in the community. List the problems in the community and list the problems that affect the group especially in the group circle. Discuss how the problems are connected, possible solutions to the problems and how solving group problems will affect the community.

Venn diagrams

Ask people to draw a circle to represent themselves and other circles to represent groups and institutions with which they have relations. The distance to their circle indicates the strength of the relation, the size of the circle their importance to the people. Circles can overlap.

Annex III: Example result of situation analysis

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
Very low land/space availability. Land used may be alongside roads, rail, rivers, temporary land to be built on and on any green spaces. Also backyards and rooftops and balconies. Animals can and are kept wherever there is space for them, (stall fed).	Mapping of cities to identify land available. Temporary user licences. Collaboration on parks and gardens Participatory city planning	City authorities/NGOs/Aid agencies/ University departments interested in funding this City authorities
Land tenure very low or non existent	Temporary licences Provision of land in peri-urban areas Reservation of land in Peri-urban areas Participatory city planning	City authorities City dwellers and community representatives
High cost of land	Zoning or protection of green areas for UA	City authorities/National policy
High level of construction - land either already built or under pressure for building land	Zoning or protection of green areas for UA	City authorities/National policy

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
High population density	Provides ready market – an opportunity as well as a problem. Can make it easier to organise in groups	National policy – an issue for rural to urban migration in general.
Often a temporary or part time job	Recognise problem of temporary positions in group organisation and ensure enough trained to take over as needed. If other work pays better, this will be the best choice for most	GA
Mainly confined to the very poor with no alternative (in developing countries). In richer countries, UA is from choice, not necessity. The majority in (most) cities are NOT involved in UA	For many, UA is a survival mechanism only. If higher value and more profitable production is possible, it may be sustainable, but may also be seen by the authorities as promoting UA, which they are often reluctant to do. In negotiations, UA should be seen as a transition phase to other work for some, a way out of poverty, and a useful service to the city for others.	Dialogue with City authorities and other stakeholders to improve the conditions of production of UA to mitigate the worst effects which promoting the better aspects
Water easily available but variable quality. Often heavily polluted	Education and training on how grey and sewage water can be used. What level of treatment is needed for what type of water. Testing and controls of water use.	Water boards, city authorities for dialogue with producer groups

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
More services (banks, schools, medical centres, power, communications etc.)	No particular action needed. This is an advantage of cities. Group pressure may improve access to some services. Groups may also be able to access loans from banks or NGOs but Savings should be promoted before loans	GA, Financial institutions, service providers
Inputs relatively easily available or from nearby peri urban areas	Bulk orders and supplies can better be arranged through groups	GA/Extension services/NGOs
Good access in many cases to advice and support due to proximity to aid agency and government headquarters	May be better arranged through groups or inter group organizations	GA/Producer groups/extension/ NGOs/Govt departments
Knowledge of UA farmers often limited unless they are recent migrants from rural areas. They may not be familiar even then with production techniques needed in urban areas	Learn from others/learn from extension or Agriculture department/NGO training courses on specific subjects	GA/Extension/NGOs/IGAs/University departments/colleges and schools
UA often practiced by poor urban dwellers for survival purposes	Improve quality and reduce health risks through training and extension advice and communication campaigns	Extension /health/ NGOs/ govt regulation of use of water/sewage/ market facilities

Annex III

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
Reasonable availability of inorganic fertilisers, high availability of compost and organic waste	Promote use of compost as a cheaper, safer and better alternative in cities for UA. Can also become a business for sale to other groups/UA producers	City waste authorities/GAs/NGOs/Agric or extension department for training on compost making.
Lack of space and proximity to buildings often requires use of low space technologies (e.g. hydroponics) and use of bio-pesticides and organic fertilizers	Training on low space technologies IF financially viable (needs financial analysis study first). Similar for use of bio-pesticides. Use of bio-pesticides may be required for health and safety regulations.	City authorities/Health and safety/NGO/Universities/Aid agency cost benefit analysis/Extension dept or NGO/AID Agency for training courses on Hydroponics etc.
Very easy access to markets	Problem may be cartels in cities preventing access. Group pressure may help. Also problem of hygiene in city markets	Dialogues with GAs and Producer groups/IGAs with municipal authorities and other stakeholders. Hygiene in markets is an issue for the city authorities – provision of facilities and monitoring/regulating markets.

4

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
Urban producers economically dependent on the city but also produce largely for self consumption	Not necessarily a problem. Need to improve market access and explore alternative production/value addition to produce. GAs and stakeholder dialogue for market access. Group discussion on market analysis and diversifying production. Training on new production techniques by extension/GA/NGOs as appropriate	GAs, IGAs, NGOs and training providers
Mainly subsistence based	Increase production levels and move to higher value produce where possible to provide a surplus/other produce for sale	GA or IGA/NGO for group discussion on improving production/diversifying production
Small-scale, scattered and often low-value crops produced in cities	Collaboration in groups may provide enough production to be of interest for markets. Link to dialogue on land availability and on increased value of production.	NGOs, IGA, stakeholder dialogues

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
Attitudes often negative to Agriculture by consumers. Producers often work in UA from lack of choice	If quality and hygiene can be improved, attitudes will also improve. For smells and nuisance from animals, this needs to be either kept under control, or the animals moved out to peri-urban areas. Tight controls are needed on animal heath particularly regarding zoonoses. Lack of choice – beyond the scope of this manual – general development issue	GAs, IGAs, extension, health and city planning for education of producers, controls on production and health and improving quality. With improved quality, publicity may be worthwhile to advertise the improvements.
Few incentives. Policies rarely supportive. May even be illegal in some cases	Work with local authorities and institutions to improve quality of produce and to integrate in city food production.	IGAs with GAs and other advisors working together with city authorities and departments of agriculture, health and environment

Situation analysis	What can be done	Who can deal with the issue
Poor air quality	Technical issues such as avoidance of production of leafy vegetables near to roadsides. Emphasise production of crops and animals less affected by the air pollution.	Extension/health/NGOs for training on production
High health risks from confined animal production and from use of sewage water and other effluent, air pollution from vehicles and city life in general and from unhygienic transport and sales of produce	As above plus general training on improved hygiene from production to consumption of produce	Extension/health/NGOs for training on production

Annex IV

Annex IV – country and city contacts

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