1.1 Competency Based Training Process for the M&E System

The competency based training process developed for VAMESP II is shown in Figure 1 below. Whilst most elements in the process are self explanatory, several are new concepts and are defined below:

- **M&E System** – the National ODA M&E system for Vietnam as detailed in the M&E Manual under preparation. There is general concurrence on the scope of the system.

- **Capacity Profile** – A capacity profile is a diagram showing the capacity requirements (what people need to be able to do) for the M&E system to work effectively, including the sub-skills and knowledge and the relationships of different skills and knowledge.

- **Learning Contracts** - A learning contract is a documented agreement between a learner (an individual), a tutor/mentor and / or supervisor and VAMESP II which specifies an agreed set of learning outcomes directly related to the effective implementation of the M&E System, and the strategies for reaching those outcomes.

**Recommendation**

The Competency Based Training Process for the M&E System should be introduced at the June Technical Working Group (TWG) meeting and used as a basis for subsequent training activities if endorsed by TWG members and the Project Management Committee (PMC).

1.2 Training for VAMESP II local project staff

Local project staff has been defined as the Vietnamese complement to the Project Team and is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 : Local project staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functional area</th>
<th>MPI counterpart positions and names (part time)</th>
<th>Project positions and staff names (full time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project management &amp; coordination</td>
<td>NPD (Dr. Duong Duc Ung)</td>
<td>ATL (John Fargher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DNPD (Mr. Cao Manh Cuong)</td>
<td>Project Coordinator (Dr Nguyen Van Phuc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project administration</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project Administrator (Mr Nguyen Ke)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Secretary/Interpreter (Ms. Phan Thi Kim Khanh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator (Ms. Hoang Thi Kim Oanh)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Administrator (Ms. Dau Thi Hoa Yen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>Mr. Nguyen Van Cuong</td>
<td>PO-M&amp;E (Ms Nguyen Linh Chi)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Technology</td>
<td>Mr. Cao Thanh Phu</td>
<td>PO-IT (Ms Tran T. Thu Trang)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training</td>
<td>Ms. Pham T. Thanh An</td>
<td>PO-Training (Mr Nguyen DucTam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Centre</td>
<td>Ms. Nguyen T. Thuy Nga</td>
<td>PO-IT, PO-M&amp;E, PO-Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The VAMESP Project Team has a vital role in establishing the conditions and resources for the implementation of the M&E System. The terms of reference for full-time Project staff are established and those for part time counterparts are being developed. To fulfil their roles Project staff need to be competent is the M&E system and be an example and model for other Project stakeholders.
Figure 1: Competency Based Training Process for the M&E System

Competency Based Training Process for the M&E System
Each Australian TA is allocated the task of working with the local Project staff in their respective functional areas to help in developing and updating training and development programs for those staff. The manner in which this is done needs to:

- Be consistent with the adult learning approach\(^1\) adopted by the Project;
- Recognise a possible lack of confidence in self-directed learning in project stakeholders (including staff) as identified in the Ha Long workshop\(^2\);
- View all exposure to Project staff, stakeholders and project activities as a source of learning.

A learning contract/agreement approach is one that will meet the above requirements. A learning contract is a documented agreement between a learner and a tutor/mentor and or supervisor to guide the development of an agreed set of learning outcomes. Developing a learning contract is a collaborative exercise between the learner and others and typically follows the learner in these steps:

- Supported diagnosis of learning needs
- Specifying learning objectives
- Specifying learning resources and strategies
- Specifying the evidence to be collected and prepared
- Specifying how the evidence will be assessed
- Review and agreement on the contract

By participating in the process of diagnosing their needs, formulating their objectives, identifying resources and choosing strategies, and evaluating their accomplishments, the learner develops a sense of ownership of and commitment to the plan.

The DNDP was briefed on and accepted the use of Learning Contract approach and suggested that it would be a valuable supplement to the TWG M&E proposal initiative, and could be seen as “commitment contracts”.

Guidelines for using learning contracts are provided in Annex 5, and draft learning contracts for Project Officers are provided in Annex 6.

**Activities to be followed up by the Project Team**

- Finalise and get concurrence on the Terms of Reference for part time counterpart staff (ATL and DNDP)
- Prepare learning contracts for counterparts (MPI counterparts with assistance as required by PO-T)
- Finalise learning contracts for POs and counterparts
- Initiate and implement learning contracts (Mr Tam)

**Recommendations**

- Establish an agreed mechanism, led by PO-T and endorsement by project management team, for managing the formulation, maintenance and monitoring of learning contracts. (This could form part of a learning contract for PO-T)
- Examine the use of the learning contract approach for building capacity in PMUs, implementing agencies and for selected staff in national ODA agencies where relevant. As suggested by the DNDP this could be done initially through the M&E proposal process that TWG members will be undertaking. The learning contract approach is potentially a convenient and practical mechanism for packaging,
implementing and monitoring the roll out of the M&E system in the pilot projects and within an adult learning framework, consistent with the project approach.

1.3 Competency assessment procedure
The competency assessment procedure needs to answer four clusters of questions:

- Are the competencies being assessed, priority requirements in the short to medium term - i.e. are they of current relevance to stakeholder needs and interests?
- What is the current level of capacity, what is the gap and are there any willingness factors that need to be addressed?
- What is the most appropriate learning strategy for improving competence for each individual and competency?

Supported self-assessment is probably the most cost effective method and is congruent with the adult learning approach. In situations where stakeholders “don’t know they don’t know” support and briefing will be needed.

The personal profiles and related Vietnam Learning Activity Database (VLAD) has provision for recording training needs based on stakeholder self-assessment of competency and needs. An examination of some of the returns, shows that the needs specified are too general eg professional development; monitoring and evaluation. To be meaningful the personal profile form needs to be supplemented with an assessment process that is more specific. The ITA has prepared such a form which is shown covering Information Technology. The capacity profiles could also be used to help project participants make more valid assessments about the level of competence in different aspects of the M&E system.

A competency assessment procedure using capacity profiles has been developed and is shown in Annex 7. The IT competency assessment form is provided in Annex 8. Both these forms will help individual M&E practitioners self assess their level of competence and gaps. Some external assistance will most likely need to be available for proposing different learning strategies for different needs and individuals. This assistance will be readily available if needs assessment are conducted during the monthly TWG meetings.

Issues

- As some emphasis will be placed on supported self-directed learning, it is important to ensure that there is an adequate level of readiness by participants. This could potentially be an issue as there was an indication during the Ha Long Workshop that a self-concept of being self directing (Annex 4 shows the relevance of this attribute for adult learning) may be weak or that people may lack confidence. Two things can be done to address this:
  o Undertake further assessment using a self-directed learning readiness scale, to ascertain if this is an important issue.
  o Provide training in adult learning techniques, particularly proactive learning (cf reactive learning).

- Assessing needs is one thing, meeting them is another. VAMESP II needs to ensure that if needs are being identified, that there is a mechanism and resources in place to meet those needs that are within its mandate in a timely manner.
1.4 Proposed team building and team communication processes

An assessment was made of the Project Team in terms of the four stages in the life cycle of a group:

- **Forming** – moving from individual to team member status
- **Storming** – role confusion and group member positioning
- **Norming** – increased confidence in team and team work
- **Performing** – Team routinely defines and solves more difficult issues, celebrates success

Although the team is new, the core Australian advisers and local staff have moved rapidly into the norming and performing stages. The Halong workshop was the major stimulus for this, requiring significant team work. The local team is assessed as a highly professional group, dedicated to supporting MPI through the work of the Project.

Counterpart staff adviser team relations are moving at a more normal pace. A current is the pressure of work in MPI and the part-time nature of all counterpart staff for project purposes. The joint management arrangements are normalising, however the roles of counterparts still need to be worked through and a modus operandi established. There is strong commitment from MPI and the Project for a single team, but people have to be made available for this to fully materialise.

There are regular and scheduled communications between the ATL and DPND, Friday afternoons (to discuss the next week’s work plan), and Monday mornings at full team meetings to make decisions on resources and confirm time commitments to project activities. Note that counterpart staff do not often attend these meetings – indicative of the forming stage in this part of the Project Team. It is important that the role of counterparts is discussed within their current constraints and that realistic expectations are communicated. This aspect of the Project Team needs careful management to avoid potential frustrations.

For effective project implementation, two main forms of communication need to be recognised:

- **Formal reporting relationships and lines of communication.** Together with defined roles, this is essential for the smooth operation of the project. This is are reflected in the Annual plan Annex 11. These lines of communication are shown schematically in the following diagram.

- **Informal relationships and lines of communication.** These are equally important in helping to meet project objectives and securing buy-in and commitment from project stakeholders. The major lines of communication and influence are also shown in the following diagram.

The symbolism of the open book in the diagram is important – indicating the continuing need for open communication through both formal and informal communication channels.

**Activities to be followed-up by the Project Team**

Realistic levels of current counterpart staff participation in Project activities needs to be established, agreed and communicated. Other time related parameters need to considered i.e. not scheduling activities later than 4.30 pm. This will require achieving agreement on the Terms of Reference for trainees and trainers.

**Recommendations**

To increase the opportunities to communicate formally and informally with FERD/MPI Counterparts, the rescheduling of lunches should be proposed, so that those Project personnel...
that attend lunch will have an opportunity to liaise informally with counterpart personnel, if this is what they want to do.

For all team members to commit to maintaining the formal and informal channels of communication, as part of the team commitment to the work of the Project. Realistic levels of current counterpart staff participation in Project activities needs to be established, agreed and communicated. Other time related parameters need to considered ie not scheduling activities later than 4.30 pm. This will require achieving agreement on the Terms of Reference for counterparts.

If the scope of activities includes senior level officials in other ministries then it seems appropriate that FERD/MPI at equivalent levels also participate. If the scope of activities is dealing with problem solving and improving the current system of ODA M&E, again it seems appropriate that FERD/MPI staff participate. If there is not this level of engagement by FERD/MPI then there is a risk of VAMESP II dealing with the symptoms and not the causes.

1.5 Build capacity of VAMESP II team and counterparts in adult learning techniques and tools

The major capacity building activities undertaken to help build the capacity of the VAMESP II team in adult learning techniques and tools included:

- the introduction of the learning contracts and all POs working through this process (see 1.2 above);
- the conduct of a basic facilitation skills workshop, using adult learning techniques.

In addition, both the team building and facilitation skills workshops used adult learning methods, exposing the VAMESP II to different approaches to learning. Two short handouts have been prepared and distributed, one dealing with the assumptions and designs of pedagogy and andragogy (adult learning) provided in Annex 4, and covered in the facilitation skills workshop; and the other dealing with reactive and proactive learning (adult learning).

The Basic Facilitation Skills Workshop slides are provided in Annex 10.

Issue

Using adult learning tools and techniques, without strong values and beliefs about adult learning (as reflected in the above mentioned handouts) will have limited impact. Our behaviour is largely determined by our values and beliefs, and practitioners who start to use these techniques will need positive social reinforcements and feedback for those new behaviours to be sustained.

Activities to be followed up by the Project Team

The PO-T will need to provide significant and further training and more importantly support in the use of adult learning techniques.

1.6 Outline training program for VAMESP II in M&E/IT

The capacity profiles (Annex 2) define the scope of M&E training – they specify what people need to be competent in to effectively implement M&E.

Elements of the capacity profiles can be clustered into several curriculum domains. The exact scope of each curriculum domain will be dependent on the nature and magnitude of training needs identified. It would be wasteful to start scheduling training and/designing curriculum if
needs do not exist, or where numbers are very low. Table 2 provides an outline of the training curriculum for M&E including IT.

### Table 2: Outline Training Curriculum for M&E/IT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum domain</th>
<th>Key elements</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>IA</th>
<th>PMU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E Foundations</td>
<td>M&amp;E Plans</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M&amp;E and the logical framework</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M&amp;E and the project cycle</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicators, measures and tools</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M&amp;E terms</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M&amp;E principles &amp; elements</td>
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<tr>
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<td>CPRP &amp; VN 5yr dev plan</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td>Core M&amp;E Skills</td>
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<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Data analysis &amp; interpretation</td>
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<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MS Word</td>
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<td>Internet based email</td>
<td>✔</td>
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<td></td>
<td>VAMESP IT tools</td>
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<td>VAMESP X file</td>
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<td>Presentation skills</td>
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<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitation skills</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement monitoring</td>
<td>Plan; conduct; collate; analyse &amp; interpret data; prepare reports; communicate &amp; apply feedback.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement evaluation</td>
<td>Plan; conduct; collate; analyse &amp; interpret data; prepare reports; communicate &amp; apply feedback.</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialised M&amp;E applications</td>
<td>Portfolio evaluation</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applying lessons from M&amp;E</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using M&amp;E to attract new ODA investment</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Donor relationships</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organise &amp; resource M&amp;E</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manage M&amp;E consultants/contractors</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promoting effective M&amp;E</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td>✔</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It will be important that future VAMESP II training programs:
- reflect the priority needs identified from the curriculum outline in Table 2;
- ensure that learning opportunities are structured around VAMESP II pilot evaluation activities;
- allow for training preparation activities such as curriculum development, selecting and contracting service providers; and
- allow for voluntary applications of new M&E tools by Project stakeholders outside of the pilot evaluations, and where they could benefit from group-based training provided for by the Project.

### Quality standards

Given that there will be a range of training providers, flexible training implementation arrangements, and to ensure that lack of knowledge and skills is not a limiting factor in the implementation of the M&E system, it is proposed that quality standards be developed and applied around the following aspects of the competency based training system for VAMESP:
- **Learning objectives** – well stated and relate to identified needs and capacity profiles.
Learning materials and resources – access, relevance, comprehensible, and in a self-directed format for flexibility of use in a range of learning settings. Materials limited to that required to meet the objectives.

Learning procedures – including procedures that minimise obstacles to learning, maximise learner choice, maximise learner engagement with the subject matter, learning contracts and other.

Practice – allows for learner to practice until ready to demonstrate competence.

Instructors/mentors – specialists in the field, model the behaviours, enthusiastic.

Learners – motivated to learn, have pre-requisite skills, and opportunities to practice.

Performance assessment – opportunities to demonstrate competence when ready, immediate feedback available, assistance available where there are difficulties.

Issues
Although the provision of IT training in the core M&E skills curriculum domain will not be a problem, it is anticipated that there will be a significant amount of curriculum design work required for many aspects of M&E.

Activities to be followed up by the Project Team
Refine the training quality standard for VAMESP II.

Recommendation
VAMESP II support the development of curriculum for priority areas of M&E and where there is limited capacity in Viet Nam to provide this training.

1.7 Identify customer needs for Resource Centre with ITA/MEA and counterparts

The role of the Resource Centre and the Help Desk are evolving. FERD/MPI has allocated resources to these functional areas. It is essential that those counterparts responsible have an in depth understanding of VAMESP II, the Project Team and responsibilities and what resources and assistance the Project is able to provide.

Customer needs are likely to include:
- Legal documents and GOV regulations covering M&E
- M&E reference books and publications
- Reports from ODA agencies
- M&E manual
- M&E tools and reports covering their application
- M&E training course materials and handouts
- IT tools and help documents

The Help Desk will be part of the FERD website which is managed by MPI staff. It is proposed that this have an internet based web site forum for Project stakeholders to use and share experiences and issues on M&E. This is consistent with the adult learning approach to the project.

Activities to be followed up by the Project Team
- Establish a protocol for ensuring the Resource Centre has copies of relevant documents and materials related to M&E.
- Explore the use of the Resource Centre as a holder and manager of materials for self-directed learning
# Summary of Training Sections (Themes) for VAMESP II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>Section 2</th>
<th>Section 3</th>
<th>Section 4</th>
<th>Section 5</th>
<th>Section 6</th>
<th>Section 7</th>
<th>Section 8</th>
<th>Section 9</th>
<th>Section 10</th>
<th>Section 11</th>
<th>Section 12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction to M &amp; E</strong></td>
<td><strong>National M&amp;E system</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foundations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Planning for M&amp;E</strong></td>
<td><strong>Indicators</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data for monitoring</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data for evaluation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluation for results</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluation for results</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reporting</strong></td>
<td><strong>Portfolio &amp; sectoral evaluation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Results Based Management</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Concepts and benefits  
• M&E in the investment cycle  
• Introduce evaluation criteria | • Legislation  
• Decree 131  
• Circ. 06.  
• Key principles elements | • Introduction to communication  
• e.g. run the Chinese whispers game. | • Logframe –Theory & use  
• Monitoring planning & logistics | • Types of indicators  
• SMART principles | • Data and information  
• Data journey  
• Data types  
• Collection methods  
• Baseline data  
• Data collation. | • Review logframe  
• Eval Type & Criteria  
• Evaluation logframe  
• Link eval to monitoring data | • Four evaluation steps I (case study)  
• Evaluation Quality Guidelines (not yet available) | • Four evaluation steps II (practice) | • Communicate findings of monitoring  
• Audience  
• Presentation of results  
• Integration  
• Use of AMT. | | • Concept & definitions  
• Outputs Vs outcomes. |
| **Elementary** | **Introduction to M & E** | **National M&E system** | **Foundations** | **Planning for M&E** | **Indicators** | **Data for monitoring** | **Data for evaluation** | **Evaluation for results** | **Evaluation for results** | **Reporting** | **Portfolio & sectoral evaluation** |
| • Rapid review  
• Elementary  
• Introduce tools & methods | • Review relevant legislation  
• National system  
• Hanoi C S | • Teambuilding  
• IT training for M&E teams (no materials) | • Evaluation planning  
• Preparing Annual Plan for ODA | • Establish monitoring system for PMU  
• Using IT tools for indicators | • Simple tools for data management  
• Use of Aligned Monitoring Tools  
• Use of PMT | | | | | | |
| **Practice** | **International best practice**  
**Meaning & example**  
**Training skills (ToT) [stand alone course]**  
**Teamwork**  
**Problem solving.** | **PMU M&E framework**  
**Annual Plan for Project**  
**Programming for Evaluation** | **Establish monitoring system for agency**  
**Indicators for results.** | **Using monitoring data to manage ODA projects**  
**Data analysis**  
**Interpret results**  
**Archiving data.** | | | | | | | |
| **Advanced** | | | | | | | | | | | |