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FACILITATOR GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING WORKSHOPS TO STRENGTHEN NEWLY FORMED ASSOCIATIONS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS
FACILITATOR GUIDELINES

SECTION ONE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....2

INTRODUCTION.....3

THE NEED FOR WORKSHOPS.....3

THE WORKSHOP CONCEPT.....7

THE WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS.....7

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR.....7

SECTION TWO

MODULE ONE: Strengthening Governance of the Association.....12

MODULE TWO: Forming Effective Committees.....27

MODULE THREE: Strategic Thinking and Planning.....35

MODULE FOUR: Creating and Implementing a Policy Advocacy Program...49

MODULE FIVE: Building an Effective Communication Program.....67

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Reform Design and Implementation Unit (RDI) of the Agricultural Policy Reform Project (APRP) has, as a part of its mandate, planned and conducted a number of activities to strengthen and support trade associations and. Strong trade associations can help to improve the competitiveness of the various industries involved in the agricultural sector. Examples of activities to strengthen trade associations are: helping them develop their strategic and business plans; determining their priority policy agenda; fine-tuning their advocacy efforts; providing technical input for the development of policy positions to be presented to the government, and helping with public awareness to increase the membership base.

Since many of these associations are very newly formed, they can face serious problems in the first few years. They need to develop a clear vision and purpose for their association, identify and work with their constituency groups; develop the appropriate mechanisms of governance; and recruit members.

In order to address these issues systematically and maximize resources, RDI has asked that a set of user-friendly guidelines for facilitators be developed. These guidelines will help facilitators plan and conduct participative, results-oriented meetings or workshops that will enable associations to meet the challenges they face during their early years.

Section One of these guidelines contains general guidance to the facilitator. Topics covered are: The need for these facilitated meetings or workshops, including the major problems that newly forming associations must handle; the workshop concept as a tool for strengthening the organization; who might be the workshop participants; the role of the facilitator; and an overview of how associations are formed and how they function.

Section Two contains the facilitator guidelines for each of the modules.

II. THE NEED FOR WORKSHOPS

A number of information gathering interviews were conducted in order to identify issues that associations will need to address during the first two years of operation. Following are the issues that were identified and described by those interviewed:

I. Strengthening Governance of the Association

Associations in a market-driven economy are private voluntary, non-governmental organizations established to further the common interests of their members. Both members and other stakeholders are often unfamiliar with the way this type organization is formed and operated. Following are aspects of governance that must be commonly understood and agreed upon:

- Required documents such as statutes, by-laws and registration
- Roles and responsibilities of association founders
- Roles and responsibilities of the association board of directors

- Roles and responsibilities of chairperson of the board of directors (sometimes called the president of the association
- Roles and responsibilities of association members
- Roles and responsibilities of standing committees
- Roles and responsibilities of paid staff, particularly the executive director (or similar title)
- Strategic Thinking and Planning

Associations that think and plan strategically are better focused, have better member commitment and participation, and achieve better results than those that are more reactive in nature. Planning is important because it causes discussion, debate, and generates consensus among the association leaders about direction and priorities. Good planning requires consensus building, which is an integral part of an effective association or. Associations should not be predominantly "top-down" structures. In reality, these organizations by their very nature are consensus organisms. If this consensus breaks down, it will have a negative impact on results. It is important that effective strategic thinking and planning result in:

- An agreed upon mission statement that answers questions such as, "What kind of organization is this?" "Why does it exist and whom does it serve?"
- Agreed upon strategic objectives that determine future direction over the next 3 to 4 years
- Agreed upon organizational structure that is both feasible and desirable
- Agreed upon plans (action items) for what the association will do in the upcoming year and who will be responsible

C. Recruiting and Maintaining a Membership Base

For associations to be successful the leadership must concentrate on how they will recruit new members and how they will retain members. Attracting new members and keeping them can be time consuming, but attention must be focused on these activities in order to ensure building a solid future. It will be important that associations think through the following as they develop their recruitment/retention practices:

- What will people perceive as the value they receive from being a member of our association and how will we get this information?
- Membership Committee – how would this work and do we want to do this?
- What are the qualifications and entry requirements for members?
- How should we do membership solicitation?
- Membership turnover is very costly, how do we avoid this?

D. Creating and Implementing a Policy Advocacy Program

Most associations will have some type of advocacy as a major goal. Trade associations want to make certain that government actions encourage appropriate growth of the private sector. An association that is active in advocating for favorable public policy should have a work plan that identifies, analyzes and advocates for improved laws and regulations that affect its members. Creating and implementing an advocacy program will require that leadership think through these issues:

- What governmental and/or international laws, policies, regulations, and procedures constrain the growth of our industry?
- What are the impacts of these constraints?
- What new laws, policies, regulations, and procedures are needed that will encourage the growth of our industry?
- Which areas of reform (constraints and opportunities) are most important to do something about?
- What reform actions by the government will bring about desired change?
- Which reform action(s) will have the most impact? Which reform action(s) do we feel we can realistically expect to bring about?
- What are the necessary steps for the association to take to bring about the reform action? What tools or strategies do we need to develop?
- How might we work in partnership with the government?

E. Building a Strong Financial Base

Associations that are newly forming must use good financial planning to make certain they are realistically projecting both revenue and operating costs. Revenue projections based on realistic funding, either from donor sources, member dues, and paid services are essential. Based on expected revenue, the association can then build its operating agenda knowing what it can afford to do and what it cannot. If donor funds are a part of this financial base, then the association should begin at once to plan how it will be able to operate once donor funds are not longer available. Associations must also do a thorough and accurate reporting of the organizations assets and liabilities. Funds must be accounted for in a legal and transparent manner. Determining good financial management practices requires thinking through how the organization will:

- Generate revenue in both the short and longer term
- Build an operating plan that is linked to strategic plans and action items
- Build an annual budget for the operating plan based on revenue available and anticipated operating costs
- Create financial reserves
- Generate required financial statements
- Comply with appropriate laws

F. Building an Effective Communication Program

An association must communicate the positive contributions it is making to both its members and the greater public. The right information can sell the benefits or value added by the association, and it can demonstrate the organization's ability to accomplish desired goals and achieve policy agendas. Many associations generate a good deal of information for members such as marketing, pricing, industry trends, etc. Making this information available to members is an important service. The following can be an important part of a good communication program:

- Defining the core messages that association wants to communicate to its members and the public
- Determining the information that it will provide members as a service or benefit of membership
- Establishing a communication committee – clarifying its roles and responsibilities and helping it become operational
- Creating a communication plan for a one or two year time frame, including the mechanisms that will be used

G. Using Effective Techniques for Building Consensus and Resolving Conflicts

Associations operate on the basis of participation of its members. Members are both customers and consumers of the organization's products and services and owners of the association. Members elect the Board of Directors, members serve on committees and members help make critical financial and programmatic decisions - active, interested, and enthusiastic members are essential.

Consensus is the very heart of an association. If this consensus or the trust in the consensus is lost, the association will begin to decline. Consensus within an association can be lost for any number of reasons. Among the more common are differences on a major issue facing the industry, dues structures, program development and the style and perceived competence and honesty of leadership Broken consensus can be very damaging to an issues-driven association where members look to it for representation in legislative and regulatory reform. The credibility of issues-driven associations is measured in proportion to the percentage of the industry they claim to represent. Once questions arise as to whether an association can truly speak on behalf of a sector, access to decision makers can suffer.

Association leadership must work to build consensus, moving quickly to resolve any conflicts that arise. It will be important to:

- Purposefully formulate overall strategies for building and maintaining consensus
- Consistently plan and facilitate meetings that encourage member input into key organizational issues
- Organize and facilitate debate and dialogue around difficult issues

- Communicate about issues so that members have sufficient information to be and stay involved
- Confront conflict quickly and constructively, using techniques that allow for all sides of the issue to be heard
- Use techniques that encourage compromise

III. THE WORKSHOP CONCEPT

The modules or sessions for which facilitator guidelines are written deal with the issues that newly formed associations must face. The modules are designed to encourage participation, debate, discussion, and finally agreement on how the association will handle that particular issue. The facilitator is working to help the organization understand the issues, the implications of the choices they are making, and finally to reach agreement. Associations are in fact based on consensus, and if this does not become a basic part of how the association operates, chances are the association will not in the long run be very successful.

Each module contains a overview of the issue or topic, objectives or outcomes the module should achieve, an occasional short presentation covering the basic lessons learned by associations in other settings, and small group work. There are instructions for the facilitation that provide guidance on how to conduct the session. The estimated time for completion for each module is indicated. A workshop could contain only one module or modules can be linked together to form longer workshops

IV. WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS

Associations are frequently formed by a small group of individuals active in the particular industry the association would serve. These people often see the need for the association quite clearly, they have commitment, and they have vision for what the organization can accomplish; however, they do not have experience in establishing and operating an organization like an association.

The participants for the workshop modules contained in these guidelines are founders of associations, appropriate paid staff, association members, and other key stakeholders such as supportive governmental officials, representatives from donor agencies, or representatives from other associations.

V. ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

These modules are designed to be conducted by a facilitator who is skilled and experienced in working with groups. Their primary role is to act as neutral third party that is trusted by all; who will ensure that important issues are raised and addressed constructively; and who will help the group accomplish the desired outcomes. Specifically, the facilitator is engaged in:

- Gathering information to ensure that s/he understands and is aware of the key issues with which the association is dealing. It will be important to read the by-laws or statute of the association, and to gain a general understanding of how the organization has been functioning to date.

- Adjusting the basic designs of the modules to see that they are tailored to the needs of the particular situation. Since the modules are designed to be conducted as single workshops or combined to form a longer workshop, the facilitator will need to plan and arrange for the modules as needed

- Planning for the logistics of the workshop. This includes facilities that provide comfortable space both for large group discussion and small group work, flipcharts and paper, etc.

- Managing the workshop process so that all sessions begin on time and achieve their stated objectives in the time allotted. This means the facilitator must be able to move the group along tactfully. S/he must also intervene when small group activities reach an impasse, provide assistance in making notes on flipcharts, and manage full group discussions so that a few individuals do not dominate. The facilitator will also have to track agreements and monitor the support staff who will type up the group's products.

- Monitoring the process so that all participants are engaged and dealing with the issues in a positive, trusting manner. Often the facilitator will need to be a peacemaker, influencer, encourager of the timid, problem solver, or go between. Consequently, the facilitator will need to circulate constantly while small groups are working in order to keep current on the direction of the discussions. It will be necessary to find out what people are thinking that they might not be saying. This information may be useful in helping the group move toward the desired outcomes.

  There may be a need for special expertise or technical assistance provided during the sessions; however, it is not the role of the facilitator to provide this. If it is felt that the group could benefit from a special expertise that they do not have, then the facilitator should arrange for a person who has this expertise to be a part of the group. The facilitator should not attempt to provide the expertise and be the facilitator at the same time.

VI. OVERVIEW OF HOW ASSOCIATIONS ARE FORMED AND HOW THEY FUNCTION

It is not the role of the facilitator to be an expert in the establishment and operation of associations. The facilitator should not give advice either legal or otherwise about how associations are formed or operated. However, it will be helpful to the facilitator to have some general knowledge about associations. The following is intended to be generic information about associations that will help the facilitator understand the context within which s/he is working.

An association is a collection of individuals willfully working together to improve the commercial, economic, and regulatory environments in which these individuals operate. In order for an association to become a legally sanctioned entity with the right to function as an organization, it must comply with the laws of the country in

which it operates. Associations must have written statutes or by-laws that have been officially approved by members. Although newly formed associations may not have nor need all these component parts, these statutes or by-laws normally include this type of data:

- Name and location of the association
- The purpose of the association
- Names and addresses of founding members
- System and conditions of membership, including the rights and obligations of members
- Governing bodies of the association, including the basic responsibility of each; methods for selection, reelection, and discharge; and the quorum necessary for valid meetings and resolutions. Governing bodies usually include:
  - General assembly composed of all voting members of the association,
  - President of the general assembly (usually the same person as the chairman of the board of directors), sometimes elected by the general assembly, sometimes selected by the board
  - Officers of the general assembly, (usually a vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, and sometimes the immediate past president), elected by the general assembly
- Standing committees of the association, including the basic purpose and duties of each committee, how committee members are appointed and for how long and how other committees as deemed appropriate are formed. Many associations have standing committees for the following:
  - Nominating committee that works to see that well qualified members are recruited (encouraged to volunteer) to serve on the Board of Directors and other key positions.
  - Finance committee that works to make certain that the finances of the association are being handled appropriately and honestly. This committee often makes recommendations to the Board for various financial decisions.
  - Committees for special areas or issues important to members.
  - Membership committee that works to recruit new members as well as to make certain that current members are satisfied and apt to remain members.
- Staff that run the day-to-day operations for the association. As the association grows, normally the president/chairman of the board with the approval of the board has the authority to hire a chief executive officer. This chief officer is often called the executive director. This person carries out responsibilities as assigned by the president and the board of directors and is usually the professional manager of the day to day activities of the association. This individual, with board approval, then hires and manages any other paid staff the association needs to run its operations.
- Meetings that the association will hold each year. Most associations have an annual meeting of voting members. The by-laws or statute contain a description of how the annual meeting will be conducted and describe how often the board of directors meet.

- How assets and finances will be handled. This usually includes a description of the source of funding, dues structure, how funds will be used, and how audits will be conducted, bonding of key officers, assets, and the fiscal calendar.
- Code of professional responsibility. Some associations adopt a code of ethics for association officers.
- Amendments to the statute or by-laws, specifically how amendments can be made.[1]

[1] Milner, Larry S. et.al. *Business Associations for the 21st Century, A Blueprint for the Future.* The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Washington, D.C. 1997

SECTION TWO

MODULE ONE: STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Associations in a market-driven economy are private voluntary, non-governmental organizations established to further the common interests of their members. Both members and other stakeholders are often unfamiliar with the way this type organization is formed and operated. In fact, a new law has been recently passed by the People's Assembly (Law No. 153/1999 Regarding Promulgating the Law on Non-Governmental Organizations) that defines how associations are to be formed and operated. There are common practices and lessons learned from well-established associations both in Egypt and elsewhere in the world that can contribute to successful association governance.

The purpose of this module is to help association members and leaders engage in discussion about how they want to govern their organization. It is assumed that before this module, the association has created and adopted its by-laws or statute. This module is directed more toward how these by-laws will be operationalized than it is to determine what should be in the by-laws themselves. However, if the association has not yet adopted its by-laws, then this module can help inform that process. By the end of the module, it is expected that agreement will have been reached on how the basic governance structure will work.

The module is divided into 7 parts:

1) Introductory Activities (30 minutes)
2) Significant Components of Association Governance (30 minutes)
3) Responsibilities of Association Members (30 minutes)
4) Responsibilities of the Board of Directors (2.5 hours)
5) Responsibilities of the Chairman of the Board (2.5 hours)
6) Clarifying Responsibilities of Board Chair and an Executive Director (2 hours)
7) Responsibilities of Standing Committees (2 hours)

As facilitator you can schedule the 7 parts of this module into one continuous workshop which will take approximately 1.5 to 2 days, depending on the numbers of people in your group and the length of your working day. On the other hand, you could schedule the seven parts in other ways such as 3 half-day workshops. It is usually best not to split a topic unless the continuation of the topic is scheduled for the following day. You may find that for some situations you may not want to do all seven parts or topics; therefore, you may schedule and sequence the topics as best fits the situation. It is unlikely that you can shorten the time it takes to do any of the 7 topics unless your group size is small. Shortening the time often results in the topic not being discussed thoroughly enough to be of value. It may be better to leave out an entire topic than to try to hurry through all the topics.

Since this session does involve agreements and planning, it will be very important that the work on the flipcharts is typed accurately and distributed to the committee

members. The facilitator should take the responsibility of working with the typist to make certain that the handwriting from the charts is legible and that what is typed is accurate.

PROCEDURES

1. Introductory Activities **30 minutes**

a. As the facilitator you may introduce yourself or be introduced by the person from the association with whom you have been working. You should make certain that either you or the individual introducing you welcomes the group to the workshop. If the group members do not know one another, take a few minutes for each person to introduce him/herself.

b. Explain the purpose of this module and why it is important in establishing and operating a successful association. Present the objectives (Flipchart 1) to the group. Have all written material on the flipchart prepared in advance. Distribute Handout 1 (copy included as an example at the end of this section), which is the participant copy of the objectives. Explain that this workshop is to promote participation, discussion, and debate over issues of governance. The outcomes from these discussions will be in the form of advice to the official board of directors. This session is not meant to be an official decision-making mechanism.

> *Flipchart 1*
> By the end of this module, we will have:
> - Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Association Board of Directors
> - Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Chairman of the Board
> - Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of Association members
> - Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of Association Standing Committees
> - Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Executive Director (or similar title)

c. Present the agenda (Flipchart 2). Explain that the times are approximate. Distribute Handout 2, which is the participant copy of the agenda. (The one included as Handout 2 at the end of this module is an example and will need to be redone to use the timing you have determined to be appropriate for your situation.)

Flipchart 2
Agenda for this workshop:

• Introductory activities	30 minutes
• Components of association governance	30 minutes
• Responsibilities of association members	45 minutes
• Responsibilities of board of directors	2.5 hours
• Responsibilities of chairman of BOD	2.5 hours
• Clarifying responsibilities of board chair and executive director	2 hours
• Responsibilities of standing committees	2 hours

2. Significant Components of Association Governance 30 minutes

a. Review with the group the significant components needed to govern their association. Adapt your presentation so that it reflects this association's by-laws. Cover the points: (Flipchart 3)

Associations are ruled by legal documents called statutes or by-laws; Law No. 153/1999 explains in detail how associations apply to become legal entities in Egypt.

Flipchart 3
Statutes or by-laws contain these provisions:
Name of association and its purpose
- Qualifications for membership, including classes of membership if there is more than one
- Voting requirements and procedures
- Dues structure and fiscal policies (not amounts)
- List of officers, how appointed, terms, power, duties, and rules for filling vacancies
- Meeting schedules such as quarterly board meetings and annual membership meetings
- Committee descriptions
- Amendments and dissolution procedures

Explain that lessons from other associations in Egypt and in other developing countries point to the following governance components as important.

Flipchart4
Association members and leaders must have agreement and a common understanding of:
- Responsibilities of the members
- Responsibilities of the board of directors
- Responsibilities of the association president/chairman of board of directors
- Responsibilities of committees
- Responsibilities of the paid executive director

Allow for questions and discussion, but move quickly to the next activity.

3. Responsibilities of Association Members 30 minutes

a. Begin the discussions about responsibilities by asking the total group a general question: In *a successful association what are the responsibilities of members?* (This first question is not limiting itself to the responsibilities of members in relation to association governance.) Put their responses on the flipchart. Examples of likely responses are: pay their dues on time, attend meetings or conferences held by the association, participate in association activities, serve on committees, promote the association to colleagues, etc.

b. Then ask the second question: In *a successful association what are the responsibilities of members in relation to governing the association?* Put their responses on the flipchart. Examples of likely responses are: participate actively in electing the officers, including board of directors, share ideas and opinions about key issues with the board members, support board decisions, etc.

Make certain the discussions on responsibilities of members point out that members are both customers and consumers of association products and services and owners of the association. Thinking as consumers members may be inclined to concentrate on the many products and services they would like to have available, but thinking as owners members know the association must follow sound business practices in order to survive and prosper.

Post these two flipchart pages where they are visible for the remainder of the workshop.

4. Responsibilities of the Board of Directors 2 to 2.5 hours

a. Begin by reminding participants that Law 153/1999 outlines requirements for boards of associations. Briefly go over the points on Flipchart 5. Spend only a few minutes on this; do not get into legal fine points as that should be left to the association legal advisors.

Flipchart 5

- BOD composed of odd number of at least 5 at most 15
- Elected by general assembly
- Term of 6 years; 1/3 re-elected every 2 years
- Cannot combine directorship with employment in GOE supervising or application granting body
- BOD shall manage the affairs of the association
- BOD shall have a chairperson
- BOD shall hold at least one meeting every 3 months
- Meeting valid only if attended by a majority of BOD members
- BOD may appoint a manager of the association

b. Divide the total group into working groups, composed of 4 to 6 individuals. Give them this task. Put the task on the flipchart, and if the small groups will be working in another room, provide the instructions to them in a handout.

> *Flipchart 6*
> 1. List what you believe to be the appropriate responsibilities of the board of directors. Be specific rather than general
> 2. Identify what you believe to be examples of "manage the affairs of the association"
> 3. Put your major points on flipchart paper and select a spokesperson who will share your group's views with the larger group in a short presentation
> 4. Use 45 minutes

c. Facilitate the small group reports out. Have each take turns. Tell them to limit the presentation to 5 minutes. Allow only clarifying questions at the end of each report out.

d. After all the reports are completed, ask the total group to identify the things on which there appears to be agreement. Then identify the differences – the things the small groups saw differently. If there is one or two significant differences, you can encourage additional discussion. Take one at a time. Ask those with one opinion to state clearly why they believe as they do. Ask if there are any questions of understanding (no debate). Then ask the other side to state their opinion and why they believe as they do. Again, ask for questions of clarity only. Then you can allow a bit of debate. Let it go for a while to see if agreement can be reached. If not, ask for a show of hands for each position. Count the hands. Write the agreement on the flipchart and move on.

5. Responsibilities of Chairman of the Board — 2.5 hours

a. Remind participants that Law 153/99 states there must be a chairperson of the board, but does not mandate how that person is selected. In some associations this person is elected by the general assembly and in others the board itself selects this person.

Divide the group into smaller groups, or let them work in table groups Ask them to take a few minutes and identify what they believe to be the major responsibilities of the chairman of the board. At this point you have two choices: 1) small groups look at the duties of the chairman when there is no paid executive director or 2) they look at the duties of the chair when there is a paid executive director. You should decide which is most appropriate given the nature of the association you are working with. (Remember, you will be working with the responsibilities of both in Number 6, Clarifying Responsibilities of the board chair and executive director.) You may need to adjust the instructions in Flipchart 7, Item 1 so it is compatible with your choice. Present this as their task (Flipchart 7):

Flipchart 7
1. List what you believe to the responsibilities of the board chair. Assume the only paid staff are administrative support staff who are not managerial.
2. Describe the actions or activities s/he would be engaged in to carry out these responsibilities.
3. Put your work on the flipchart. Take 40 minutes.

b. Rather than repeat the report out method, have all the groups display their flipcharts for a "gallery" walk. Put all the charts on a wall and ask that all participants walk along the wall and read the charts from other groups They should note where they have questions and where they see differences among the groups. Give them 10 to 15 minutes to do this.

Still standing, have the group cluster around the displayed charts. Begin with the charts from one group. Ask the larger group if they have questions or something they want to have that group to elaborate on. Then move to the next group and repeat. You do not want reports from the group, but you do want the larger group members to understand what each of the smaller groups is saying about the responsibilities of the board chair.

d. Have the participants return to their seats. Facilitate a discussion based on these questions: (Likely to take 20 minutes or so.)

1. What similarities did we see as we looked at each group's work?
2. What differences?
3. How much time would you expect the chairperson to have to devote to carrying out these duties? (Perhaps ask them to express this as an average number of hours per week.)

Encourage group discussion around time required by the chair to carry out these duties. Help participants to be realistic; this is volunteer time – can we expect someone who has other career responsibilities to devote the time that is needed or do others need to share the load. Ask who else might be expected to contribute?

During the interviews conducted to gather information needed to design this workshop, a number of people commented that the prevailing model in Egypt for a successful business organization is the "one-man show," and they were concerned that this would not be the best model for a successful association. Facilitate discussion around these two questions:

1. Do you agree that the "one dominant person" model is less appropriate for associations?
2. If you were observing an association where leadership was more of a team effort, what types of behaviors, actions, or activities would you see?

6. Clarifying responsibilities of the board chair and an executive director **2 hours**

a. Explain that a number of associations as they grow hire an executive director that is responsible for providing leadership and managing the day-to-day work of the association. Give examples of this such as Mr. Taher El Sherif at the EBA or Mr. Amr El Tonsy at HEIA.

Form new groups or use the same groups, but give them the following task: (Flipchart 8).

> *Flipchart 8*
> Assume that your association has just hired a new executive director who is a professional, experienced in managing an organization.
>
> 1. Identify and list the responsibilities of this individual.
> 2. Identify and list the responsibilities of the chairman of the board
> 3. Describe how they would relate to one another and work together productively
>
> Assign a person to take notes from your discussions. This person should have recorded the list of responsibilities for each individual so they could share this with the total group when asked. (No formal repórts out)
> Use 45 minutes.

b. Facilitate this discussion in this way. Take the first list - responsibilities of an executive director. Take one (only one) from the list of the first group and write it on the flipchart. Move to the next group; take one from their list; and so on until you have covered most of their work. When there appears to be disagreement on an item, mark it to come back to later.

Then take the second question – responsibilities of the board chair. Repeat the process. You should now have two lists. Explore any significant differences of opinion where there are several group members who feel one way and several feel another. Do this by asking participants from one point of view to explain their rationale. Ask the total group if they have questions of understanding (not debate or disagree yet). Then move to the other opinion and repeat the process. Then ask the total group, "what do we think about this – which is better? Let this discussion go for a short while. If it is obvious how it is being decided, then just summarize and move on. If there appears to still be major disagreement, then ask for a show of hands for each opinion, note how many agree/disagree, and move on.

As a facilitator, you can't always eliminate every major difference of opinion, but you can deepen the thought and critical thinking that goes on behind the opinions that participants form. This often has a persuasive impact on how things actually get done in the day-to-day life of the association.

If you wish, you could distribute Handout 3, which outlines the responsibilities of the paid executive director as developed by the Center for International Private Enterprise. The handout could supplement the work done by the working groups. However, it may not be appropriate for all situations. You may also wish to distribute Handout 4 which lists the responsibilities of the Board Chair.

c. Move on to how the group sees these two individuals working together. Ask the question, "how should the executive director and the board chair work together?"
Record their comments on the flipchart. Ask follow up questions only when you think additional exploration will make the thinking deeper and more helpful.

You want this group discussion to produce understanding and agreement around these types of issues: 1) the executive director reports to the board of directors. The board chair is the spokesperson for this body; 2) there probably should be written job descriptions for each of these roles; 3) these two individuals need to talk about and plan how they will work together – how often they will meet and what the agendas of these meetings should cover; 4) the board chair should not micromanage, but should help the board monitor progress against the strategic plans.

7. Responsibilities of standing committees **2 hours**

No association ever has enough money to hire enough staff to carry out all its work. Members must be organized into groups, task forces, or committees to perform special functions for the association. These committees are the mechanism for participation by members, and as such are a very powerful and important part of any successful association. A standing committee simply means it is a committee that exists year in and year out, members change but the committee itself remains.

a. Ask the group to identify standing committees it believes it will need over the next couple of years. (They may have done this already as a part of developing their by-laws.) List these on the flipchart.

Then ask the group which ones are the most critical. There may not be the time nor volunteer resources to fulfill all the desirable committee needs, so it is important to decide which ones are essential and which ones can wait "on the shelf" until a later time.

Committees that are common to newly forming associations are: Policy advocacy committee(ies), By-laws committee, membership committee, and finance committee.

b. The next activity will be to think through what we expect (desirable outcomes) from each of the standing committees identified as important. Assign 2 or 3 individuals to each committee identified (or more depending on the size of your group). You might want to let them volunteer to work on the committee that interests them most. This does not mean they are volunteering to serve on the committee as a member over the next year.

The task is:

Flipchart 9
1. What do you believe should be the purpose of this committee?
2. What outcomes or accomplishments would you expect from them over the next 12 months? (Be realistic. Members are volunteering.)
3. Put your work on the flipchart.
4. Use 40 minutes.

c. When completed ask each group to quickly – 5 minutes – share what they believed was the purpose of their committee and what it should accomplish over the next 12 months. When each one has finished the short presentation, ask the rest of the group these two questions: 1) does the purpose make sense to you; 2) are the accomplishments they identified feasible? Facilitate a short discussion on each, then move on. Make notes on any additions or changes the total group made so it can be typed and given to the committee when it is formed.

If committees have not already been formed for the association, ask the group for their ideas on how to get committee members. Facilitate a short discussion, charting their ideas on how they will recruit committee members.

d. Summarize and close the topic.

Handout 1
Module 1

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of this module, we will have:

- Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Association Board of Directors
- Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Chairman of the Board
- Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of Association members
- Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of Association Standing Committees
- Discussed and agreed upon the responsibilities of the Executive Director (or similar title)

Handout 2
Module 1

AGENDA

9:00	Introductory activities – welcoming participants, sharing objectives and agenda
9:30	Components of association governance
10:00	Responsibilities of association members
10:45	Mid morning break
11:00	Responsibilities of board of directors
12:30	Lunch break
1:30	Continuation with board of directors
2:30	Responsibilities of chairman of the board
3:30	Mid afternoon break
3:45	Continuation with chairman of the board
5:30	Close for the day

Day Two

9:00	Clarifying responsibilities of the chairman of the board and the executive director
11:00	Mid morning break
11:15	Responsibilities of standing committees
1:30	Close

Handout 3
Module 1

The following is taken from a publication entitled, **Business Associations for the 21st Century – a Blueprint for the Future,** published by The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). Authors are L.S. Milner, J. Low, G. LaBranche, E. McMillan, and J. Baker. The authors have many years of experience with associations throughout the world, both in highly developed industrial countries as well as those countries that are building more liberalized, market based economies.

Establishing the proper relationship between the elected volunteer officers and the paid executive director is of major importance to the association. The executive director works for and reports to the volunteer officers (board of directors). The following duties and authority are normally assigned to this executive director.

- Administers programs approved by the directors to promote and protect the welfare of the members.
- Prepares reports and agenda for board meetings, annual membership meetings, and other conferences or special meetings designated by directors.
- Is responsible for having minutes recorded of all meetings of the board of directors or other designated meetings of official bodies of the association.
- Develops and recommends new policies or changed policies for consideration by the directors and membership.
- Prepares and submits for the directors' consideration an operating budget for the organization's next fiscal year and maintains and administers proper accounting procedures for the receipt and disbursement of funds.
- Collects and disseminates all appropriate information that will be beneficial to members' business or professional activities.
- Hires personnel necessary to carry out association programs and services.
- Advises the board of directors on adjustments to unexpected changes in matters affecting industry, profession, or community.
- Assumes full responsibility for purchase of equipment and supplies necessary to maintain and carry out the association's operation.
- Originates and carries out a program of membership solicitation and retention.
- Has a comprehensive knowledge of the legislative, administrative, and technical policies and regulations governing operation of the association.
- Plans, directs, and organizes beneficial programs for association members in the field of management or technical subjects.
- Maintains contact with governmental officials and monitors legislative developments, operations, and actions of governmental agencies.
- Prepares and submits to the membership an annual report of the organizations activities and accomplishments.
- Prepares an annual financial report.
- Establishes regularly scheduled updates to an organization's external and internal policy manual for reference by leadership.
- Establishes job descriptions for all association staff employees.

- Prepares a staff policy manual reflecting the organization's internal policies.
- Maintains a close liaison with all news media.
- Exercises good judgment, inspires associates, and operates at a high ethical and moral level.

Handout 4
Module 1

The following duties are normally those handled by the Chairman of the Board. This list assumes that the association has hired an executive director; therefore, the responsibilities listed are for a Board Chair in an association that has a paid executive director. If there is no executive director, then the Board Chair normally handles both functions.

- Has a thorough understanding of the role of the board of directors and acts as a leader for this board as it carries out its responsibilities
- Has vision for the future of the association and is able to express this in powerful and motivating ways
- Plays key role in representing the association throughout the stakeholder community – is respected by this community and seen as credible with a good deal of experience in the business of the association
- Represents the board of directors and association membership at appropriate external events involving the public, governmental officials or other key stakeholders
- Has a comprehensive knowledge of all the key issues – problems and opportunities – of the association and is articulate in communicating about these issues
- Works with the executive director to plan board of director meetings – builds the agenda and communicates with board members about the meetings
- Leads all board of directors meetings
- Communicates with all board members, making certain they are informed about key association issues
- Ensures that members of the board work well together - able to explore and debate issues, comfortable with disagreement, able to compromise and reach agreement when decisions must be made
- Sees that the board makes the decisions it needs to make. Has one vote on that board just like any other member.
- On behalf of the board works closely with the executive director to assist this individual and ensure that she/he is able to carry out their role
- In coordination with the executive director maintains contact with appropriate governmental officials and other key stakeholders

- Understands or seeks to understand the various perspectives of the members on key association issues

- Communicates effectively with association members, conducts him/herself as the leader of the board of directors that was elected by these members

- Movitates members to be active in the association, often recruiting them as a volunteer for association efforts

- Exercises good judgment, inspires others, and operates at a high ethical and moral level

MODULE TWO: FORMING EFFECTIVE COMMITTEES

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Individuals join associations because they believe in its purpose and mandate, and they believe that over the long run they will benefit from the accomplishments of the association. For an association to be successful it must have active, interested, and enthusiastic members who are willing to invest their time, their skill, and their money (dues) toward the common interests the association represents. No association can hire paid staff to do all the work it wants done. Members volunteering to serve on committees do a good deal of the work of an association.

The purpose of this module is to help association volunteer members form themselves into productive, enjoyable, effective committees.

This module has 6 parts and will take 4 to 5 hours to complete:

1) Introductory Activities (30 minutes)
2) Agree on the Purpose of the Committee (60 minutes)
3) Clarify Responsibilities of Committee Members (30 minutes)
4) Clarify Responsibility of the Committee Chairperson (30 minutes)
5) Agree on Norms for Working Together (45 minutes)
6) Agree on Outcomes to be Achieved During next 12 Months (60 minutes)

These topics can be done in one meeting or spread out over two or more meetings.

If the committee has a leader or chairperson, the facilitator and committee chairperson should spend time discussing this workshop. The chairperson should understand the role of the facilitator is not to direct the committee or usurp the role of the chairperson. It is important that the leader is comfortable with the facilitator conducting this workshop, and at the same time understands that s/he will be responsible for facilitating other committee meetings.

Since this session does involve agreements and planning, it will be very important that the work on the flipcharts is typed accurately and distributed to the committee members. The facilitator should take the responsibility of working with the typist to make certain that the handwriting from the charts is legible and that what is typed is accurate.

PROCEDURES

1. Introductory Activities 30 minutes

a. As the facilitator you may introduce yourself or be introduced by the person from the association with whom you have been working. You should make certain that either you or the individual introducing you welcomes the group to the workshop. If the group members do not know one another, take a few minutes for each person to introduce him/herself. Ask them for their name,

the organization where they work, and why they volunteered to work on this committee.

b. Explain the purpose of this module and why it is important in establishing an effective committee. Mention that committees staffed by volunteers must be seen by committee members as productive, enjoyable, and effective If committee members don't feel their time is well spent, they will withdraw either entirely or partially from the committee. Explain that we want to get started on the "right foot" so this committee is productive, enjoyable, and effective! Present the objectives (Flipchart 1) to the group. Have all written material on the flipchart prepared in advance.

Flipchart 1
By the end of this workshop, we will have:
- Agreed on the purpose of this committee
- Clarified the responsibilities of committee members
- Agreed on the role of the committee chairperson or leader
- Agreed on norms for how we will work together
- Agreed on a "first draft" list of outcomes we want to achieve over the next 12 months
- Agreed on the date for our next meeting where we will agree on outcomes we want to achieve and begin working on an action plan

c. Share with them the following. The Center for International Private Enterprise has worked with over 300 associations over the past 15 years in 60 countries. In one of their publications they list characteristics of an effective association committee. (Flipchart 2)

Flipchart 2
An effective committee...
- Has a written statement of purpose that all members have reviewed
- Is chaired by an individual who guides the committee process
- Consists of members who are interested, qualified, and compatible
- Carefully plans its agenda
- Approaches assignments one at a time
- Has a sense of priorities and timing
- Keeps thorough minutes and records
- Is periodically infused with new members
- Regularly evaluates its activities against its statement of purpose

Comment that we may not all agree with every item, but it does give us a "picture" of what an effective committee might be. Take a few brief comments from participants and then move on the agenda (flipchart 3)

Flipchart 3 Agenda

• Introductory activities	30 minutes
• Agreeing on purpose of this committee	60 minutes
• Agreeing on responsibilities of committee members	30 minutes

• Agreeing on responsibilities of leader	30 minutes
• Agreeing on norms for how we will work together	45 minutes
• Agreeing on tentative list of outcomes we want to achieve over next 12 months	60 minutes
• Agree on dates for next meeting	

2. Agree on the Purpose of this Committee 60 minutes

a. On the colored paper cards in front of them ask each person to write what they believe to be the purpose of this committee. Ask that they be concise and write large enough to post on the wall. Show an example. Give them a few minutes. Post their cards on the wall in front of the group. Ask the group to identify areas of agreement and disagreement.

If there are areas of difference use the following 6 steps to work with it:

1) Ask person(s) to explain why they believe that....;
2) ask the rest of the group if they understand this – not do they agree with it, but do they understand the perspective being explained;
3) Ask the others who have a different perspective to explain why they believe that....;
4) ask the group if they understand this perspective (not if they agree but if they understand)
5) encourage some debate and discussion
6) ask for a show of hands of the members who agree with each perspective

Then summarize the tentative agreement. Say, "It looks like we are agreeing that....., but we can put this other perspective on the shelf for consideration later if you feel the need." (You don't want to close the door on differing perspectives so tightly during this first meeting. You want people to feel there could be another discussion at a later date if warranted.)

This topic should not take more than an hour, but sometimes there is a good deal of disagreement over purpose. If so, it is good to talk it out or it will come up again and again over the life of the committee and could cause any number of conflicts. If it appears to be a topic that could go on too long, you might want to summarize the agreement that is being reached and the issues still not agreed upon. Then suggest that it be added to the agenda of the next committee meeting.

b. If there is enough agreement, suggest that someone agree to put the purpose into a written purpose statement – short, 2, 3 or 4 sentences only. Then bring this statement to the next meeting for review.

3. Clarifying Responsibilities of Committee Members 30 minutes

i. Ask the group what they believe should be the responsibilities of members Chart their responses.

When there are no more contributions, ask them to reflect on the list and identify which ones they feel are the most important. Mark the ones they identify as most important. Keep the list to 5 or 6 items. Summarize and suggest they revisit these responsibilities in 6 months to see if they are still relevant.

4. Clarifying Responsibilities of the Committee Leader or Chairperson 30 minutes

i. Ask the group to reflect on past experiences and think about the role of chairperson. What did they observe or experience the chairperson doing that was effective? List their reflections on the flipchart.

ii. Ask the chairperson to work alone; divide the remainder into 2 member small groups. The task is to list the responsibilities of the chairperson. (Flipchart 4)

Flipchart 4

- List what you believe should be the responsibilities of the committee chairperson
- Put on flipchart
  Use 10 minutes

iii. Display the flipcharts. Have the group compare responses. Facilitate a discussion that results in agreement on the role of the chairperson.

5. Agreeing on Norms for How the Committee Members Will Work Together 45 minutes

i. Explain what is meant by "norms" – principles or guidelines that the group agrees to follow when they work as a committee. Agreement on operating norms can help a committee be more effective and avoid conflicts. Give an example of how this has proven effective. Use your own example or tell this story: "Recently, a committee that I observed had agreed on four guiding principles they would follow as they did their work. These principles were... agreeing to attend ¾ of the meetings or resign from the committee; agreeing to not be more than 10 minutes late to meetings; agreeing to listen carefully to one another before presenting their own opinion; and agreeing to make decisions by consensus with voting as a backup decision making mode. The committee members revisited these agreements every 6 months to review how they were doing. I observed that they were working well together and were enjoying themselves."

Typically, committees or teams develop norms around how often and when to have meetings, starting meetings on time, attending meetings, listening and

honoring one another's opinion, confidentiality, how decisions will get made, sharing work so that no one gets more than their share, etc.

Ask each person to think about and write down norms or guiding principles they would like to see this committee use. Give them about 5 minutes. Then ask that each sit with one other person and share lists. They should agree on 2 or 3 items they feel is most important and be ready to share with the committee as a whole. This will take about 10 minutes.

ii. Facilitate by asking each 2-member group to give you one of their favored items. Write on the flipchart. Go to each group and get one item, then go round again and get their second item. Continue until completed. If the list is more than 6 or 8 things, ask them to decide which ones are most important. You can use have them, individually, mark the ones they most favor. Once you get an initial consensus, go over the complete list and ask if everyone agrees that this is the list of norms they want to adopt.

iii. Suggest they revisit their norms at the end of each meeting until they feel they have developed good habits around the norms. Then they should review and perhaps revise the norms every 6 months.

6. Agreeing on Outcomes or Achievements for the next 12 month period 60 minutes

i. If the association has developed a strategic plan for the entire organization, it should be reviewed with this group. It may be that several of the committee members were involved in the development of the organization's strategic plan and can speak about it. Have committee members read the plan and discuss how it should guide this committee in its work over the next year.

ii. Ask the committee members to picture themselves sitting in this room in a meeting 12 months from now listing their accomplishments over this period. Have each individual write down what s/he would want to see on that list. Give them a few minutes of quiet time to write down their thoughts.

Then go from member to member taking one of the items they listed. Write it on the flipchart. Take these comments until they have all been shared and listed. Then ask the question, "If we couldn't do all this, what is the most important?" Work to see if there is general agreement on the items that are most important. If more work is needed to reach agreement, use the following scale:

1. Very, very important. We must do this.
2. Important. We should do this.
3. Good to do, but could be postponed if we can't do it.

Have each person put one of these numbers next to each of the flipcharted items. From this prioritization, make a list the items that appear to be categorized as very, very important. Then ask the group, "Is this feasible to

do? Can we do all these things?" It will be important to help the group be realistic in its planning. It is easy in planning sessions to overestimate what can be accomplished. The committee can then get discouraged because it can't achieve all it had intended.
Work with the group until you can come up with a list of accomplishments that has high priority and that the committee feels it can achieve.

iii. More detailed plans for how the committee wants to approach each of the items on the list will need to be developed. It is expected that the committee will do that at its next meeting. At this point, the facilitator can suggest a planning framework for that meeting.

1. Accomplishment/objective (from the list just worked on)
2. List the steps needed to accomplish this.
3. Decide who will work on each step.
4. Agree on a time line for completion.

Suggest that the committee may want to set a date for its next planning meeting.

iv. In closing this session, ask the committee members to reflect on the time spent together and share with one another one or two things they have appreciated about the way they worked together. As they finish with this, ask what advice do they want to give themselves on how they can improve or strengthen the way they are working together. Write this advice on the flipchart. Thank them all, wish them luck, and end the session.

Handout 1
Module 2

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of this module, we will have:

- Agreed on the purpose of this committee
- Clarified the responsibilities of committee members
- Agreed on the role of the committee chairperson or leader
- Agreed on norms for how we will work together
- Agreed on a "first draft" list of outcomes we want to achieve over the next 12 month
- Agreed on the date for our next meeting where we will agree on outcomes we want to achieve and begin working on an action plan

Handout 2
Module 2

AGENDA

9:00	Introductory activities
9:30	Agreeing on purpose of this committee
10:30	Mid morning break
10:45	Agreeing on responsibilities of committee members
11:15	Agreeing on responsibilities of leader
11:45	Agreeing on norms for how we will work together
12:30	Agreeing on tentative list of outcomes we want to achieve over next 12 months
1:30	Agree on dates for next meeting
1:45	Close

MODULE THREE: STRATEGIC THINKING AND PLANNING

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Associations that think and plan strategically are better focused, have better member commitment and participation, and achieve better results than those that are more reactive in nature. Planning is important because it causes discussion, debate, and generates consensus among the association leaders about direction and priorities. Good planning requires consensus building, which is an integral part of an effective association. Associations should not be predominantly "top-down" structures. In reality, these organizations by their very nature are consensus organisms. If this consensus breaks down, it will have a negative impact on results. It is important that effective strategic thinking and planning result in:

- An agreed upon mission statement that answers questions such as, "What kind of organization is this?" "Why does it exist and whom does it serve?"
- Agreed upon strategic objectives that determine future direction over the next 2 to 3 years
- Agreed upon organizational structure that is both feasible and desirable
- Agreed upon plans (action items) for what the association will do in the upcoming year and who will be responsible

The purpose of this module is to help association members and leaders engage in strategic planning for their organization. The module is divided into parts:

1) Introductory activities (30 minutes)
2) Creating a Mission Statement for the Organization (60-90 minutes)
3) Developing Strategic Goals that Determine Organization Direction (2-3 hours)
4) Developing Objectives for each goal area (4-6 hours)
5) Developing Plans for next 12 Months (2-3 hours)

The parts of this module can be scheduled as one continuous workshop, which would take 2 days or divided into shorter sessions. Times required may be less if the working group is small; however, strategic planning is of critical importance to an organization and often requires a good deal of time to complete. It is unlikely that this module can be done in less time than estimated, and it may require more time. In fact, it may take several sessions to reach agreement on any of the steps in this planning framework. Good participation and good analysis are more critical than the time it takes.

It will be important while planning for this module that the facilitator works closely with the designated board member. It is likely that this designated person would be the chairman of the board. S/he would need to understand and agree that the topics being covered are indeed important ones for the association. It is important to discuss the role of the facilitator, so the chairman sees the facilitator as providing the process for the strategic thinking and planning but not controlling that process nor influencing the decisions. Chairmen are in the habit of running meetings themselves, and they may not be familiar with facilitation as a methodology. The facilitator and the

chairman should work together in making sure this module serves the needs of the association.

Since this session does involve agreements and planning, it will be very important that the work on the flipcharts is typed accurately and distributed to the committee members. The facilitator should take the responsibility of working with the typist to make certain that the handwriting from the charts is legible and that what is typed is accurate

PROCEDURES

1. Introductory Activities 30 minutes

i. As the facilitator you may introduce yourself or be introduced by the chairman of the association. This may not be the first time the facilitator is working with this group; however, there may be new members present. Make certain all the group members know one another. The chairman may want to say a few words about why this is an important meeting, sharing that s/he and the facilitator have been working together to plan for the meeting. S/he may want to state that the facilitator role is helpful to him/her since it allows for their active participation rather than concentrating on running the meeting.

ii. Explain the purpose of the module and why it is important to successful operations. Present the objectives (Flipchart 1). Have all written material on the flipchart prepared in advance. Explain that to the extent possible, the outcomes from this session will comprise the strategic plan of the organization.

> *Flipchart 1*
> By the end of this module, we will have
> - Agreed on the content but not exact wording of a mission statement
> - Developed the strategic goals that will provide direction to the organization over the next 2 to 3 years
> - Agreed on objectives and plans for the next 12 months

iii. Present the agenda (Flipchart 2). Explain that times are approximate.

> *Flipchart 2*
> Agenda for this workshop:
> - Introductory activities (30 minutes)
> - Developing a mission statement (60-90 minutes)
> - Developing strategic goals for future direction (2-3 hours)
> - Develop objectives for each goal area (4-6 hours)
> - Develop plans for next 12 month period (2-3 hours)

2. Developing a Mission Statement 60-90 minutes

A mission statement is a written and agreed-upon statement that describes the organization, identifies whom it serves, and clearly states the organization's purpose in 50 words or less.[2] The following is an example of a mission statement from the Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS) and another from the National Association of Women Business Owners:

> *Flipchart 3*
> ESAS is a non-profit association organized by private sector seed producers and traders to represent their common interests. The ultimate goal is to create a liberalized and integrated seed industry conducive to private investment for the benefit of Egyptian farmers, exports, and agriculture.

> *Flipchart 4*
> The National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) is to strengthen the wealth-creating capacity of our members and promote economic development to create innovative and effective change in the business culture; to build alliances, coalitions and affiliations; and to transform public policy and influence opinion makers.[3]

Some organizations also develop a vision statement, which describes an anticipated future condition to which the organization aspires. Examples of this: "The Seaside Chamber of Commerce will unify the business community and optimize an environment conducive to commerce and industry."[4] Some organizations have a statement of purpose in the mission statement and a sentence describing the anticipated future condition. The second sentence in the ESAS mission statement is an example. It is suggested that a mission statement is sufficient; however, the facilitator should know the difference between a mission statement and a vision statement and be able to share these definitions if asked.

i. Ask that participants form 2-person working group (no larger or it will be cumbersome) and complete the following task.

> *Flipchart 5*
> 1. Create a clear, concise sentence(s) that describes why this organization exists and whom it is intended to serve.
> 2. Put your work on the flipchart so others can read it

ii. Display the sentences on the flipchart or on the wall. Ask the total group to read all the "entries" noting what they particularly liked. Remind the group that a mission statement should be memorable and inspiring. Facilitate a discussion that helps the group reach agreement on the sentences they prefer.

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[2] Etcheberry, Suzanne, "A Tool for Building a Better Business Association". CIPE (Center for International Private Enterprise) taken from their web site www.cipe.org

[3] Ibid.

[4] Milner, Larry S. et.al. *Business Associations for the 21st Century, A Blueprint for the Future.* The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Washington, D.C., 1997

When there is general agreement, it is best to stop and ask two people to take responsibility for creating a draft mission statement. Explain that they should do this at another time and send it around to appropriate others to get input before finalizing it. It is always best to avoid "wordsmithing" documents or sentences when you are working in a group. A group is not the best vehicle to use to write something.

3. Developing Strategic Goals for the Association 2-3 hours

a. Explain that the strategic planning framework uses a number of terms that are not always defined the same way. In order to clarify understanding and increase consistency, we suggest that the following definitions be used. (Flipchart 6 and Handout 3)

> *Flipchart 6*
> STRATEGY: Carefully considered general approach(es) to fulfilling the purpose of the organization. Takes into account the current situation, creates the vision for a future, and develops approaches for how to reach that desired future.
>
> GOAL: Broad statement describing what the organization intends to achieve. A goal is usually broad enough to remain relevant for more than one year. An organization usually has several goals that it intends to achieve over the next 3 to 5 years.
>
> OBJECTIVE: A statement describing the more specific, time-bound, intentions of achievement. An objective is narrower than a goal and is often for a shorter time frame. It is usually stated as a measurable outcome that if achieved will help attain the broader goal to which it is related.
>
> ACTIONS: Statements of actions or tasks that must be completed if the objective is to be accomplished. Usually these actions or tasks are defined for the upcoming 12 months

It is important not to get caught up in definitions or extreme precision around how plans are formulated. The point of strategic thinking and planning is to imagine a feasible and desirable future and plan in a careful way how best to reach that future. Strategic planning is not an evaluation framework, rather it is a planning framework that should be kept clear, easy to explain and remember so that it guides the organization to its desired future in very practical ways.

iii. Handout 4 is an example of a strategic plan developed by the Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS). Give them time to read it, then use these questions to facilitate discussion:

How might this strategic plan benefit the association?
Who should be responsible for developing it?
With whom should it be shared?
How might it be communicated?

It is not essential that all these questions be covered. Use 15 minutes or so for the group to reflect on the ESAS strategic plan.

iv. Ask each person to think by themselves of what they believe their organization should focus on and achieve over the next 2 to 3 years. Explain that these should be "big picture" items and that our work will eventually result in the 4 to 8 strategic goals for the organization. Keep the group quiet so that each person can think without being distracted.

Give each person 8 cards. (These cards should be made of colored paper, and be about the size of half page of paper.) Ask each person to write the goals they have identified, one on a piece of paper. Ask them to use magic markers not pens and to write large enough for it to be seen from a distance. Demonstrate what is being explained. In the meantime, clear a fairly large wall space on which the cards can be displayed. Have small pieces of masking tape available. Have participants post their cards on the wall.

Have the group walk around reading the cards. Suggest they group similar cards together. Ask if there are "goal areas" that are obvious at this point Write the goal areas that are identified on a separate flipchart page. Help the group come up with at least 4 but not more than 7 goal areas. At this point, do not worry about how the goal area is worded. This may take 30 to 60 minutes. It the group appears to "get stuck" then suggest that they move on to the next step, that sometimes the next step illuminates how the goal areas should be divided.

v. Ask the group to reflect on the totality of the goal areas they identified to determine future direction for their organization. Use these questions to help them reflect:

- Are these goal areas aligned with our organizational mission?
- Are these goals of interest to our larger stakeholder community?
- Have we been overly optimistic? Are these goal areas achievable?

Summarize and move on to the next step.

4. Developing objectives for each goal **4-6 hours**

i. Referring to the sample strategic plan you have from ESAS, explain to the group that the next step will be to develop the objectives or accomplishments they believe will be necessary to achieve the goals. Divide the group into smaller groups, giving each small group one or two goal areas on which to work. Each goal should have at least 3 people working on it. Try spreading the group out enough to deal with all goals concurrently; however that may not be possible. If not, do it in 2 rounds – round one covers half the goals and round 2 the other half.

Small groups are most productive if the time is not much more than an hour, at the most 1 ½ hours. Therefore, make certain the task you give them is doable within this time frame. If that is not enough time for 2 goals, then only assign one goal to a group – do two rounds to cover all the goals.

Use the following task:

Flipchart 7

- For the goal area assigned to your group, brainstorm a list of achievements that are feasible and would accomplish the larger goal. Don't evaluate or debate any items while brainstorming this list, just write down everyone's ideas and contributions
- Then go back over the list, marking the ones your group believes most important
- Review the items marked most important and use this criteria to select the ones you want to put forward to the larger group
    - Is this possible given the resources (time and money) we have
    - If we can't do all these, which are most essential
    - Which ones will bring the most value

Put the objectives on which you have agreed on flipchart to share with larger group.
Select a spokesperson that will give a short report on your work.
Use 60 minutes.

It will be important for the groups to use brainstorming as a way to identify possible objectives for each goal area. Otherwise, they tend to get buried in debate about every idea that gets shared. This tires out the group and limits their creativity.

Sometimes most of the small groups will be able to do their work in the time allotted, but one or two groups will get mired down. Don't wait for every group to finish. Have the groups that got "stuck" bring back what they were able to accomplish.

b. Have each group report on the objectives they have developed. Stop at the end of each presention to get the reactions of the total group. Use these questions to help reach agreement. Post the questions so the group understands the process:

Flipchart 8
1) Is there anything that is absolutely essential that the group has left out?
2) Have they recommended anything that you cannot support?

Work to reach agreement. When someone adds something that the group has left out, write it on another piece of flipchart paper. Then ask the small group that did the work for their response. If they agree, then ask the rest of the larger group for their response. If there is agreement, then the addition is added. If there is not agreement, then make sure that the reasons for it and the reasons against it are thoughtfully explored. Test for agreement to include or exclude the suggested addition. Ask each person in the total group where they stand relative to the suggestion or ask for a show of hands for those in favor of including the suggestion and those opposed. Total agreement or consensus is best; however, sometimes, it cannot be reached. Asking for a show of hands or polling the group will help you determine how much agreement there really is which can determine if you can move on or if the issue needs additional discussion.

Table (7
50 fedd

I T E M S	Units	Yr. 1	Yr.2
Revenues:			
Production	Ton	350.0	850.0
Price	LE / ton	1300.0	1300.0
Value of Production	LE 000'	455.0	1105.0
By product (Manure)	Ton	1250.0	2500.0
Price	LE / ton	10.0	10.0
By product (Wooden trees)	Ton	0.0	0.0
Price	LE / ton	0.0	0.0
Gross Value of by Product	LE 000'	12.5	25.0
Gross Value of Production	LE 000'	467.5	1130.0
Increm. Residual Value	LE 000'	0.0	0.0
Recovered W.Capital	LE 000'	0.0	0.0
Total Inflow	LE 000'	467.5	1130.0
Expenditures:			
Investment:			
Studies, Detailed designs	LE 000'	75.0	0.0
Land Purchase	LE 000'	500.0	0.0
Land Survey	LE 000'	1.0	0.0
Soil & Water Analysis	LE 000'	5.0	0.0
T.Land&Site Preparation	LE 000'	581.0	0.0
Equipment:			
Deep Water Pump	LE 000'	50.0	0.0
Drip Irrigation network	LE 000'	150.0	0.0
Tractors & attachments	LE 000'	42.0	0.0
Spry Motors & blower	LE 000'	13.0	0.0
Tools set, W. Maintenance	LE 000'	40.0	0.0
Manure's cutting Machine	LE 000'	20.0	0.0
Generator 125kv	LE 000'	100.0	0.0
Refrigerator 20m3	LE 000'	300.0	0.0
Green Houses (120m2)	LE 000'	150.0	0.0
Total Equipment	LE 000'	865.0	0.0

AGRICULTURAL POLICY REFORM PROGRAM (APRP)
REFORM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION UNIT (RDI)

BILLING #: 37

11/30/99

TO: USAID/EGYPT
OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER
UNIT 64902
APO AE 09839-4902

FROM: DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES, INC.
7250 WOODMONT AVE., SUITE 200
BETHESDA, MD 20814

PRIME CONTRACT #: 263-0219-C-00-7005
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 3250

ESTIMATED COST:	$13,178,643
FIXED FEE:	922,505
TOTAL CONTRACT	14,101,148

BILLING PD :		CURRENT BILLING
SALARIES & WAGES		
HOME OFFICE-STAFF (39):		810.35
OVERSEAS-STAFF (40)		49,239.52
HOME OFFICE-INTERMITTENT (41)		7,427.76
NON HOME OFFICE-INTERMITTENT (42)		0.00
		$57,477.63
FRINGE BENEFITS		
HOME OFFICE-STAFF:	32.1 %	260.12
OVERSEAS-STAFF:	15.7 %	7,730.60
		$7,990.73
OVERHEAD		
	53.0 %	4,504.06
	42.0 %	23,927.45
		$28,431.52
TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION		14,160.01
PROCUREMENT		667.89
OTHER DIRECT COSTS		34,368.28
ALLOWANCES		40,278.48
SUBCONTRACTORS		118,282.64
SUBTOTAL		301,657.18
G & A @ 8.2 %		24,735.89
SUBTOTAL		326,393.07
FEE @ 7.0 %		22,847.51
TOTAL		**$349,240.58**

40b

Use the following task:

Flipchart 7

- For the goal area assigned to your group, brainstorm a list of achievements that are feasible and would accomplish the larger goal. Don't evaluate or debate any items while brainstorming this list, just write down everyone's ideas and contributions
- Then go back over the list, marking the ones your group believes most important
- Review the items marked most important and use this criteria to select the ones you want to put forward to the larger group
    - Is this possible given the resources (time and money) we have
    - If we can't do all these, which are most essential
    - Which ones will bring the most value

Put the objectives on which you have agreed on flipchart to share with larger group.
Select a spokesperson that will give a short report on your work.
Use 60 minutes.

It will be important for the groups to use brainstorming as a way to identify possible objectives for each goal area. Otherwise, they tend to get buried in debate about every idea that gets shared. This tires out the group and limits their creativity.

Sometimes most of the small groups will be able to do their work in the time allotted, but one or two groups will get mired down. Don't wait for every group to finish. Have the groups that got "stuck" bring back what they were able to accomplish.

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Repeat the same process for the second question.

It is very important to paraphrase the agreement that has been reached. Write it on the flipchart. Ask the group to check on the agreement that you documented to make sure that you have documented it correctly. It is easy for misunderstandings to occur during the "rush" to reach agreement and move on to the next item.

Move on to the next presentation. Repeat the process. Of course, the time this all takes depends on how many goals there were in the beginning and how much discussion is required to develop the right objectives and reach agreement.

ii. When all the goal areas have been covered and objectives agreed to for each, the total group should look at the totality of the goals and objectives they have generated. These questions posed to the group can help them think through the full scope of what they have developed:

- Are these goals and objectives our best thinking for how to carry out the mission of this organization?
- Can these objectives realistically be achieved over the next several years?
- Have we been too ambitious? If so, which are the most essential to accomplish first?

Record the agreements they reach. Transition from this into the next step.

4. Developing plans for the next 12 month period 2-3 hours

i. Explain that next we will identify the priority actions or tasks that need to be taken over the next 12-month period that will ensure that objectives are being achieved. Form new small groups (or keep the same groups as before), assign each to a goal area. Give them this task:

Flipchart 9
- For each of the objectives identified under your goal area, identify one, two or three tasks (actions) that need to be carried out over the next 12 months.
- Give recommendations on who should be expected to carry out the tasks for each of your objectives.
- Put your work on flipchart.
- Take 45 to 60 minutes

ii. Ask each group to report the tasks or actions they have identified as important. Work to reach agreement in much the same way agreement was reached on the objectives. (It is often easier to reach agreement on tasks than on objectives.) There is often more discussion on "who" will be responsible for carrying out the tasks. Make certain the agreements are documented on flipchart paper and checked for understanding.

iii. When the reports out are completed, again ask the group to reflect on the totality of the actions/tasks they have identified. Again, the questions to use to help the group think through their work are:

- Can these tasks/actions realistically be achieved over the next 12 months?
- Have we been too ambitious? If so, which are the most essential to accomplish first?
- How do we want to monitor how we are doing?

Facilitate a total group discussion covering these three questions. Help them make plans for how this will all be monitored.

iv. Make certain that someone (perhaps the facilitator) is responsible for typing up the work the group has done into a draft strategic plan. This should then be distributed to the group members. The group should probably get together again to review the strategic plan, making certain that it is accurate and complete.

Handout One
Module Three

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of this module, we will have

- Agreed on the content but not exact wording of a mission statement
- Developed the strategic goals that will provide direction to the organization over the next 2 to 3 years
- Agreed on objectives and plans for the next 12 months

Handout Two
Module Three

AGENDA

Day One

9:00	Introductory activities – welcoming participants, sharing objectives and agenda
9:30	Creating a mission statement for the organization
11:00	Morning break
11:15	Developing strategic goals that determine organization direction
1:00	Lunch
2:00	Continuation with strategic goals
3:00	Developing objectives for strategic goals
5:00	Close for the day

Day Two

9:00	Getting started
9:15	Continuation with developing objectives
10:45	Morning break
11:00	Continuation with developing objectives
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Developing action plans for next 12 months
3:00	Afternoon break
3:15	Continuation with action plans
5:00	Close

Handout 3
Module 3

SOME COMMON TERMS USED IN STRATEGIC THINKING AND PLANNING

STRATEGY: Carefully considered general approach(es) to fulfilling the purpose of the organization. Takes into account the current situation, creates the vision for a future, and develops approaches for how to reach that desired future.

GOAL: Broad statement describing what the organization intends to achieve. A goal is usually broad enough to remain relevant for more than one year. An organization usually has several goals that it intends to achieve over the next 3 to 5 years.

OBJECTIVE: A statement describing the more specific, time-bound, intentions of achievement. An objective is narrower than a goal and is often for a shorter time frame. It is usually stated as a measurable outcome that if achieved will help attain the broader goal to which it is related.

ACTIONS: Statements of actions or tasks that must be completed if the objective is to be accomplished. Usually these actions or tasks are defined for the upcoming 12 months

Handout Four
Module Three

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EGYPTIAN SEED ASSOCIATION[5]

ESAS has a strategic plan characterized as a 3-year vision that consists of 6 main goals or objectives and a number of sub-objectives. The following is a partial representation of that strategic plan which can be used as an example of how a strategic plan might be formulated. All six goals/objectives are listed; however, the sub objectives and actions are listed only for the first goal. You will note the terminology they use is slightly different from goals/objectives/actions. They use objectives, accomplishment, and tasks for the next 12 months. The point is the three levels are important, not what each is called.

Objective 1: To improve the legal, regulatory, and competitive environment in the seed subsector.

Objective 2: To adopt new technologies and arrangements in seed production, processing, trade, and quality control to expand farmer adoption of high-quality seed of high-yielding crop and horticulture varieties.]

Objective 3: To establish an effective partnership with Government of Egypt decision making bodies affecting the seed subsector.

Objective 4: To establish an industry code of ethics and ensure member compliance.

Objective 5: To expand ESAS's membership base to cover all seed-related activities.

Objective 6: To expand financial resources to carry out ESAS activities.

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[5] Delouch, James C. and Way, Anthony. "Egyptian Seed Association Mission, Agenda and Services" Report No. 49. Agriculture Policy Reform Project. Cairo Egypt. 1998

Objective 1: To improve the legal, regulatory, and competitive environment in the seed subsector.

Achievements (Sub Objectives) 1: Implement decree limiting the government's role to the production of breeder seeds and their maintenance programs.

Tasks for the next 12 months:

- Prepare study of the role of GOE in seed production and distribution and propose policy changes.
- Initiate dialogue with GOE in coordination with APRP

Achievement (Sub Objective) 2: An announced government policy for seed production that encourages the private sector to perform the governmental role in seed production to fully cover all crops with a definite time schedule.

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Prepare study of the private sector capabilities in full coverage of seed production and distribution for all crops.

Achievement (Sub Objective) 3: MALR offers all breeder seeds for all new varieties to registered private sector companies via a competitive process, with safeguards to prevent any dominant company from winning most of the varieties.

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Participatory workshops with GOE personnel
- Prepare and publicize a position paper as part of an advocacy campaign
- Initiate dialogue with GOE in coordination with APRP

Achievement (Sub Objective) 4: The extension service concentrates on its role in the promotion of awareness about high quality seeds and provides technical information on all registered varieties.

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Prepare a study on the roles of the extension service and other government agencies in seed promotion and distribution.
- Initiate dialogue with GOE in coordination with APRP
- Conduct participatory workshop with GOE representatives

Achievement (Sub Objective) 5: Transparent seed policies and regulations

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Assess transparency of seed policies and regulations
- Monitor new issues
- Initiate dialogue with government in coordination with APRP

Achievement (Sub Objective) 6: Propose needed changes to existing and proposed seed laws, ministerial decrees, policies and regulations to improve the legal, regulatory and competitive environment

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Monitor and analyze proposed legislation
- Propose legislative changes through analytical processes leading to the design of new legislation for submission to GOE
- Initiate dialogue with government in coordination with APRP

Achievement (Sub Objective) 7: Achieve uniform application of rules and regulations governing the seed sector

Tasks for the next 12 months

- Identify key measures for uniform application, determine key GOE decision-makers, and provide suggestions to GOE on implementation.
- Collect and disseminate all laws, decrees and regulations governing the seed subsector.
- Initiate dialog with government in coordination with APRP

MODULE FOUR: CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING A POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAM

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

Most associations will have some type of advocacy as a major goal. Trade associations want to make certain that government actions encourage appropriate growth of the private sector. An association that is active in advocating for favorable public policy should have a work plan that identifies, analyzes and advocates for improved laws and regulations that affect its members. Creating and implementing an advocacy program will require that leadership think through these issues:

- What governmental and/or international laws, policies, regulations, and procedures constrain the growth of our industry?
- What are the impacts of these constraints?
- What new laws, policies, regulation

the workshop. If the group members do not know one another, take a few minutes for each person to introduce him/herself.

ii. Explain the purpose of this module and why it is important in establishing and operating a successful association. Present the objectives (Flipchart 1) to the group. Have all written material on the flipchart prepared in advance. Distribute Handout 1, which is the participant copy of the objectives. Explain that the workshop is to promote understanding of effective advocacy and to develop a policy agenda, including specific plans to implement the agenda. Outcomes should be agreement that the agenda is indeed the best one for the organization, and specific plans for how to implement that agenda.

> *Flipchart 1*
> By the end of this module, we will have:
> - Reviewed the components of effective policy advocacy, including the most commonly used methods and tactics
> - Discussed and agreed upon the key issues that will require advocacy efforts, thus formulating our advocacy agenda
> - Discussed and agreed upon a plan of action for implementing this policy advocacy agenda

iii. Present the agenda (Flipchart 2). Explain that the times are approximate. Distribute Handout 2, which is the participant copy of the agenda. (The one included in these guidelines is an example; you may need to prepare one that uses the timing that is most appropriate for your situation.)

> *Flipchart 2*
> Agenda for this workshop

• Introductory activities	30 minutes
• Reviewing components of effective advocacy	60 minutes
• Developing an advocacy agenda	3-4 hours
• Developing an action plan for implementing the agenda	2-3 hours
• Agreeing on next steps	30 minutes

2. Reviewing the Components of Effective Advocacy 60 minutes

i. Begin this discussion with the question, "How would you define advocacy?" Take several examples. Then give this definition (flipchart 3).

> *Flipchart 3*
> POLICY ADVOCACY is the presentation of a case to promote an "interest" or a perspective. It is concerned with bringing about change. It has two key aims:

- To carry out a long-term process of affecting changes in target audiences' views on a wide range of issues
- To influence the legislative process so that laws and regulations are enacted that support that "interest"[6]

Continue with the following short presentation to increase understanding of what we mean by policy advocacy. (See Handout 3 for additional information.)

- In a market-driven economy, government can either help or hurt the expansion of business enterprises. The role of associations is to make certain that government encourages business growth.
- Influencing the passage of better laws or helping repeal unfair regulations are vital roles for associations. (Use an example that would be relevant for them.)
- Government and business groups should work together as partners with a common goal of improving the living conditions of all people by creating additional job opportunities.
- Sound governmental policies foster investment, encourage entrepreneurship and help create economic growth.
- It is easier for a government official to make informed decisions when s/he understands how the policy affects business.

Continue the presentation by identifying and explaining the following principles of effective policy advocacy by associations. (Handout 3) Use Flipchart 4 to supplement your presentation.

Flipchart4
Components of Effective Policy Advocacy
- Listen to members
- Use a step-by-step approach to develop the policy agenda
  - Establish a policy committee
  - Gather information; create policy briefs
  - Develop preliminary advocacy positions
  - Select which issues to pursue (involve members)
  - Selected issues become the policy agenda
  - Board approves
- Know the legislative process; get involved with it
- Contact key lawmakers and government officials
- Insist on integrity from association leaders and members
- Build coalitions with other interest groups

[6] DeLouche, James C. and Way, Anthony. Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS) Mission, Agenda and Services. Report 49. Agricultural Policy Reform Project (APRP), Reform Design and Implementation unit (RDI). November, 1998.

ii. Facilitate a brief discussion of these components. Ask which ones are most important for their association right now and why. Take a few examples. Ask if there are additional important components to good policy advocacy that are not included in this list. Ask which ones give them the most concern – perhaps will be the hardest to use. Keep this discussion to no more than 15 to 20 minutes.

iii. Move on to discussions on advocacy tools. Distribute Handout 4. Ask that they take a few minutes to read it. Explain that on the first page are a number of questions that can be used for issue analysis and strategy development. Ask if there are any questions. Then move on.

3. Developing an Advocacy Agenda **3-4 hours**

i. Explain that an advocacy agenda for your association is composed of these parts: (See Flipchart 6).

> *Flipchart 6*
> Advocacy Agenda consists of:
> 1. Identification of the legal and regulatory issues the association has determined it will work on and why they are important.
> 2. A description of the position the association has taken regarding the issue – what it is advocating.
> 3. A list of advocacy activities that will be undertaken for each issue.
> 4. This is in written format.
> 5. The Board has approved the advocacy agenda.

Describe what is meant by each item. Distribute the example of the advocacy agenda for the Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS). Point out how they have described the advocacy position the association has taken for each key issue. Mention the analysis work that would have had to be done in order to determine which issues were the best ones for this association to work on. Explain that we will be beginning this in a few minutes. Then distribute the example for ESAS that lists the advocacy activities they will be undertaking (Handout 5). See if there are questions or comments. Explain that, of course, there are numerous ways of documenting an advocacy agenda, and the ESAS example is only one way.

ii. Ask the group to list the legal and regulatory issues (problems) that they believe are most important for their industry. Record their responses. Then ask them, which are the most important. If the list is relatively short, they may all be important; however, if the list is long, then they need to select the ones they believe to be the most important.

If it looks like they may have trouble deciding which ones are most important, then give each person five "sticky dots" which they can place (one on an issue only) on the five issues they think more important. Have each issue written up on flipchart paper with plenty of white space between the issues. Let them place their dots (or initials if you don't have dots) next to the issues they feel are most important. Count the number for each issue. It is not easy to

estimate how long this will take since it will depend on how difficult it is for the group to determine which issues are most important. Also explain that once they have done additional analysis, they may decide an issue should be dropped. This priority list need not be the final one they recommend to the Board for approval.

iii. Explain that you are suggesting they use several questions to help further their thinking for each issue. Use Flipchart 7 to explain the questions the work sheet contains. Distribute the issue working sheets. (Handout 6)

> Flipchart 7
> Working sheet questions
> 1. What is the legal/regulatory issue or problem?
> 2. Whom does this issue affect (either positively or negatively)?
> 3. What is the status of any legislation connected to the issue?
> 4. What should be the association's ideal position?
> 5. What are the arguments to support this?
> 6. Who/what are the individuals or bodies that will be decision-makers on the issue?
> 7. Will they be for or against our position?
> 8. How could we best influence them?

iv. Suggest the group work on the issues in 3-member teams. Give each team one or two issues. See Flipchart 8.

> *Flipchart 8*
> - Using the worksheets provided, answer the questions for each of the issues assigned to your group
> - Be prepared to share your analysis with the larger group
> - Have one person take good notes, using the form. This will be typed.
> - Use 60 minutes.

Monitor the time. It may take more than an hour. Give time extensions as needed.

v. Facilitate the working group reports. When a group has completed their report on one issue, ask the larger group if they have any questions of clarity. Then ask if they have something they would like to add. Facilitate as much discussion as is necessary. Then move to the next issue. The time this takes depends on the number of issues you are trying to cover and the amount of discussion that each one requires.

There may still be issues that have not been worked. At this point you and the group can decide how to proceed. You can do another round of working with issues; however, they may be tired and want to do it on the next day or schedule it at another time. The facilitator should remain flexible about how a group works through developing their advocacy agenda.

4. Developing an Action Plan for Implementing the Agenda 2-3 hours

i. Explain that now we are going to identify and agree on the activities that will be undertaken to implement the advocacy agenda. Refer to the ESAS example that was distributed earlier. (You probably should have extra copies.)

Put them back into the 3-member teams that worked on the issues. Give them this assignment (Flipchart 8)

> *Flipchart 8*
> - Using your issue worksheet, list the activities that must occur in order for your advocacy agenda to be implemented
> - Put your list on the flipchart.
> - Select a group member who will share your list with the total group
> - Use 60 minutes

ii. Facilitate the small groups reporting on their recommended activities. At the end of each report, ask the larger group if they agree with these recommendations. If there appear to be too many, ask the larger group to help identify those that are the most important. Help the group remain realistic with the planning. It makes no sense to recommend many more things than there is resources to do them. Keep asking them, "Is this doable?"

Then ask the group to identify who is responsible for seeing that the activities get done. Often these responsibilities are done partly with the association paid staff and partly with volunteers. If there are no paid staff, then the entire thing will need to be done by Board members or other volunteers. If that is the case, then the number of activities they undertake will need to be reasonable. Most Board members and volunteers have other jobs.

Again, the time this takes will depend on the number of issues that planning is being done for and the amount of debate needed to reach agreement on the recommended activities. Help them keep things simple. Remember that it is much easier to sit in a room identifying all the things that ought to be done than it is to find the resources to do all those things. Keep them focused on things that it is feasible to do.

5. Summarize and Identify Next Steps **30 minutes**

i. Briefly summarize what has been accomplished. Ask what the next steps should be. When will they get together again? How will they monitor progress? How will they stay involved with the advocacy agenda? Write their commitments on flipchart paper.

ii. Close the session. Be sure to make arrangements to have the flipcharts typed up.

Handout 1
Module 4

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of this module, we will have:

- Reviewed the components of effective policy advocacy, including the most commonly used methods and tactics
- Discussed and agreed upon the key issues that will require advocacy efforts, thus formulating our advocacy agenda
- Discussed and agreed upon a plan of action for implementing this policy advocacy agenda

Handout 2
Module 4

AGENDA

Day One

9:00	Introductory activities – welcoming participants, sharing objectives and agenda
9:30	Reviewing components of effective advocacy
10:30	Mid morning break
10:45	Developing an advocacy agenda
1:00	Lunch
2:00	Developing advocacy agenda continued
4:00	Close for the day

Day Two

9:00	Developing an action plan for implementing the agenda
10:30	Mid morning break
10:45	Continue on action plan
12:30	Summary and next steps
1:00	Close

Handout 3
Module 4

The following draws heavily from a publication entitled, **Business Associations for the 21st Century – a Blueprint for the Future,** published by The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE). Authors are L.S. Milner, J. Low, G. LaBranche, E. McMillan, and J. Baker. The authors have many years of experience with associations throughout the world, both in highly developed industrial countries as well as those countries that are building more liberalized, market based economies.

BUILDING POLICY ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

Why Policy Advocacy Is Important

In market-driven economies, government can either help or hurt the expansion of business enterprises. The role of associations is to make certain that government encourages business growth. Government actions affect the operations of business either positively or negatively. Influencing the passage of better laws or helping to repeal unfair regulations is an important role for associations. Unnecessary regulations increase the costs of production, and slow-moving bureaucracies hinder the ability of a business to take advantage of market opportunities.

Governmental and business groups should work together as partners with a common goal – improving the living conditions of all people by creating additional job opportunities. Effective governmental policies encourage investment, entrepreneurship and help create economic growth. When a strong case can be made for or against a particular policy by showing how the policy affects a certain business, government officials will usually listen and make informed decisions. Public policy advocacy is a very useful way to explain the effects of a law on the citizens. Many times government officials do not have the time or resources to enough background study to understand all the perspectives of every issue that comes before the legislative body.

Components of Effective Policy Advocacy for Associations

1. Listen to Members

   To form a policy advocacy agenda, seek input from the members of your association. Ask them what laws or regulations need to be changed. A good way to develop a public policy program that is supported by members is to carefully survey what members have to say about how laws and regulations are affecting their business operations.

   It is important that the association's advocacy agenda truly reflects the opinions of the members. It is a grave mistake when association executives form or appear to be forming an advocacy agenda that is based on their own personal political agendas.

2. Use a Step-by-Step Approach to Developing an Advocacy Agenda

- Many associations establish a public policy committee to analyze legislative and regulatory issues. In newly formed associations, the Board often plays this role.

- Paid association staff should gather appropriate legal and economic information and prepare issue briefs for the committee or Board to use in their deliberations. An issue brief is a one or two-page document that concisely explains the problem, outlines what actions could be taken that would have a positive effect on the problem, and describes the reasons why others might support or oppose this action.

- The committee or Board should use these briefs in analyzing the issues and developing preliminary advocacy positions.

- Using the issues and the preliminary advocacy positions, the committee should make priority recommendations on which issues are most important and which issues the association can really influence. It will be very important to gain member input and support for these priorities through communication and discussion meetings.

- Once priority issues have been agreed upon and the policy advocacy positions agreed upon and clearly stated the list should be presented to the Board for approval. Once adopted by the Board, the positions become the policy advocacy agenda for the association. Associations must be seen externally as a single unified voice for the industry. It must not break up into the representation of a few special interests of a few companies or individuals.

3. Know the Legislative Process and Get Involved With It

An association wanting to influence the lawmaking process must understand the details of how the legislative body works. This, of course, differs from country to country but all governments have established traditions and entrenched proceedings to which lawmakers adhere. The association must know how to use hearings, legislative debates and proceedings to their advantage.

Associations wanting to influence the legislative process should find opportunities to be involved in this process. There are a number of ways to do this. Several are listed below:

- The association can disseminate information to members, legislative leaders, governmental officials, news media and the general public about the need for legislative reform.

- The association can create the forum for government officials and members of the business community to discuss how the proposed regulations or laws can effect the economy.

- The association can provide guidance for its members on how to contact politicians and government officials directly.

- The association can prepare its leadership to testify before appropriate governing bodies.

4. Contact Key Lawmakers and Government Officials

An effective method of direct advocacy is sitting with key persons in the legislative process to present the case for the association's policy agenda. Of course, it is important to prepare carefully for such a meeting. It will be necessary to be brief and concise, present the facts, and be truthful. Ask for their support. Try to get a commitment for a particular vote.

Many associations ask their members to contact appropriate officials by letter, phone, or fax. They often provide the content of the letter or fax for the member. It will be important that the member speaks for her/himself as a private citizen, not for the association. The leadership should always represent the association.

5. Insist on Integrity from Association Leaders and Members

Effective advocacy requires that associations develop carefully considered positions on public issues. Government officials should be able to expect from an advocacy group an honest presentation of the facts based on good research. Deception never works in the long run. Using inflated figures, untrue analogies, or false data will cause enormous problems. Once an association is seen as factually or truthfully unreliable, their ability to influence the political process has been severely damaged.

Some associations develop a set of clear, agreed upon member's business practice guidelines that go hand-in-hand with advocacy efforts. This can help to ensure that the association is seen as transparent and honest in its dealings with the government.

6. Build Coalitions with Other Interest Groups

Coalitions with other special interest groups can broaden the base of support for a particular position. Associations need to find like-minded partners with whom they can ally to form a special purpose coalition. Partnering around one issue is possible even if the interests groups do not at all agree on other issues.

Handout 4
Module Four

The following is drawn from Report 49, Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS) Mission, Agenda, and Services, prepared by James C. Delouche and Anthony Way in November 1998 as a part of their consultancy for the Agriculture Policy and Reform Project (APRP), Reform Design and Implementation Unit (RDI).

SUGGESTED TOOLS AND METHODS FOR ADVOCACY

To advocate is to plead for or make a case for a cause publicly. It is to espouse a cause by argument. In many ways it is the construction of an argument. Advocacy for an association includes the gathering of information that will support a particular position and the preparation and dissemination of this information in ways that can inform and persuade others.

For each major issue concerning governmental laws and regulations affecting the businesses of the members of the association, there needs to careful analysis. Of course different issues will require emphasis on different elements of the advocacy process; however, the main steps of analysis would include the following:

1. What is the issue to be advocated for?
2. Who does it affect?
3. What is the status of any legislation regarding it? (Does any exist or not? Is it in the form of an old law/decree? Is there any legislation being developed?)
4. What is this association's ideal position?
5. What are the arguments to support this position?
6. Who/what are the individuals or bodies that will be the decision-makers on this issue?
7. Are these individuals likely to be for or against our position? If "for", how best could we recruit their assistance? If "against", how best could we make them neutral change their minds?
8. Who can bring positive influence to bear on the situation?
9. What are the implications for agriculture (or appropriate sector) by not agreeing with our position?
10. Is there a compromise position, which we will accept?
11. What time scale is realistic to achieve change?
12. Which tools would be appropriate for this issue?
13. How will we make certain we have the support of a majority of our members?
14. How will we monitor our progress within government or follow up on inactivity?

Some common tools used for advocacy are:

- **Verbal** – informal conversations with deciders (governmental officials) to assess government views on a particular issue involve them in the advocacy process or provide advance notice of your position.
- **Written** – studies to research a particular issue to help in developing a position; position papers on an issue to outline arguments backing your position; formal policy papers to recommend legislative change; briefing

notes to key target audiences; resolutions passed by the association and formally passed to the government body; and member newsletters outlining main objectives, current issues and efforts to resolve them.

- **Organizational** – workshops to discuss issues and develop arguments; formal training sessions for groups involved with reform; involvement of the association in all relevant government committees to provide a representative private sector voice; and inviting officials to relevant parts of association meetings to participate in discussions.

- **External influencers such as the media** – if involved selectively, the media can be of great benefit in advocacy campaigns. They can influence ideas, prepare the ground for presenting an argument, ensure wide awareness amongst key audiences, and help publicize successful achievements in order to help stop backsliding by government.

  In working with the media, it is important to identify independent journalists and publications; develop a relationship through informal briefings on your industry, providing background information on size, key sectors, main issues facing the industry, key factors for development; prepare press releases on specific issues of concern to obtain editorial coverage on your position; carry out interviews on major issues; and keep journalists interested by occasional update on issue progress.

Handout 5
Module 4

The following is an excerpt drawn from Report 49, Egyptian Seed Association (ESAS) Mission, Agenda, and Services, prepared by James C. Delouche and Anthony Way in November 1998 as a part of their consultancy for the Agriculture Policy and Reform Project (APRP), Reform Design and Implementation Unit (RDI).

EGYPTIAN SEED ASSOCIATION (ESAS)
DRAFT AGENDA FOR LEGAL AND REGULATORY REFORM ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

These activities are general guidelines for ESAS to follow. Each issue will need further examination and more specific steps developed as it is taken up for advocacy. It should be remembered that, as well as trying to cause legislative change in these activities, ESAS is developing a corporate identity and recognition for itself as an organization.

Newsletter

An advocacy and communications tool that ESAS will find useful for a number of these issues is a newsletter. This could take the form of a simple, black and white photocopied document that does the following:

- Always states that ESAS wants to represent the entire seed sector in Egypt, and welcomes new members with suitable qualifications
- Outlines the major issues ESAS is currently advocating for and the position the association holds on each
- Considers other potential legislative and policy issues that the government or ESAS are considering for the future, to try to get debate underway within the association early
- Ensures that members are informed of advocacy successes (and failures), and outlines the next steps involved in ensuring that change happens.

Step-by-Step Advocacy Recommendations for ESAS Agenda List

Seed Law Revision

- ESAS to identify individuals or bodies responsible for Assembly time tabling and submission of legislation (sponsoring department, MALR, Chairman of Agriculture and Irrigation Committee)
- Ensure through the ESAS Board that all members support the measures included in the Seed Law Revision
- Prepare letter from ESAS listing member company names and signed by the Board expressing the association's support for these measures and its importance to the development of Egyptian agriculture and the private sector.
- Seek meetings with the Committee Chairman and Minister to present the letter

- Monitor developments through the Committee Chairman to check progress
- Repeat meetings if necessary to continue to maintain pressure
- When passed, prepare a newsletter edition to inform members and main non-members of the exact changes and ESAS's part so the private sector has the same information. (This demonstrates that ESAS is working on behalf of its members, and ensures that there is clarity about how the law now stands.)

ESAS Representation on GOE/MALR Councils

- ESAS to review existing involvement with councils, and identify others on which ESAS is yet to be represented
- For both existing and new councils, ESAS working group to examine councils' Terms of References and discuss/establish ESAS agenda (what ESAS wants to get out of each council) and opportunities for influencing
- Identify suitable ESAS members to represent the association and ensure that they fully understand and comply with ESAS' agenda. Councils should not be used to further individual ends of the representative
- Agree and undertake elections of individuals to represent ESAS.
- Board to undertake application to "new" councils for membership
- Each individual to request an opportunity to outline ESAS' activities and how it can assist the council concerned. This reinforces the point that it is ESAS being represented, not an individual company.

Privatization of Seed Production and Supply

Seed production and supple privatization is clearly one of the most critical issues facing the Egyptian private sector. The media should be used carefully by ESAS to help promote and support this liberalization – it forms an additional push to the Seed Privatization Committee's work. Exact media involvement would require additional consideration, but general recommendations are:

- Select and brief a small number of responsible journalists representing printed media, radio and TV on the background to and expectations of a privatized seed sector
- Inform the journalists of general ESAS activities to support the government's privatization efforts.
- After meetings with the Seed Privatization Committee and obtaining the results of submission of Ministerial petitions to reaffirm the government's privatization policy, brief the media again in order to obtain extensive coverage. This informs all members and non- members of the reaffirmation and ESAS's involvement in this success, and it will help to ensure no "backsliding" by the government.
- As a related campaign, consider providing all ESAS members and main non-members with a draft letter text demonstrating support for ESAS' petition in this area. Ask all parties to send the letters, signed by themselves to arrive at the same time as the presentation of the petition to the Minister for maximum impact.

Seed Production and Supply for the Varieties of Self-Pollinated Field Crops

- ESAS to set up a working group to research members' intentions for operating in the self-pollinated field crops sector
- The ESAS member who is already a member of the Seed Privatization Committee should familiarize the working group with the deliberations to date of this Committee
- ESAS to develop a position paper on private sector intentions of operating in the sector covering: possible crops grown, research programs, estimates of total yields over a 3 year program, etc.
- Working group should request meeting with the Seed Privatization Committee to present the paper and obtain feedback
- Working group should also inform senior MALR advisors of activities in order to gain their views and support. ESAS is concerned with building strong, long term relationships with these individuals.
- ESAS to inform members of the presentation and recommendations through the newsletter.

Note: This is an excerpt that is intended to demonstrate how an advocacy plan or agenda might look. The actual ESAS document continues for several pages.

Handout 6
Module 4

WORK SHEETS FOR LEGAL/REGULATORY ISSUES

Use the following questions to analyze the legal/regulatory issues or problems that have been identified.

1. What is the legal/regulatory issue or problem?

2. Whom does this issue affect (positively and negatively)?

3. What is the status of any legislation connected to the issue?

4. What should be the association's ideal position?

5. What are the arguments to support this?

6. Who/what are the individuals or bodies that will be decision-makers on this issue?

7. Will they be for or against our positions? Why? Do we know for certain?

8. What should we do to persuade them?

MODULE FIVE: BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

An association must communicate the positive contributions it is making to both its members and the greater public. The right information can sell the benefits or value added by the association, and it can demonstrate the organization's ability to accomplish desired goals and achieve policy agendas. Many associations generate a good deal of information for members such as marketing, pricing, industry trends, etc. Making this information available to members is an important service. The following can be an important part of a good communication program:

- Defining the core messages that association wants to communicate to its members and the public
- Determining the information that it will provide members as a service or benefit of membership
- Establishing a communication committee – clarifying its roles and responsibilities and helping it become operational
- Creating a communication plan for a one or two year time frame, including the mechanisms that will be used

The purpose of this module is to help association leaders and members work together to develop a communication program for the organization. The module is divided into parts:

1) Introductory activities (30 minutes)
2) Increasing understanding of what is an effective communication program (45 minutes)
3) Identifying the audiences for our communication efforts and the key messages to be communicated to each (2 hours)
4) Determining appropriate communication tools (90 minutes)
5) Agreeing on a communications plan for the next 12 months (90 minutes)

As in previous modules, these five parts can be scheduled as a one-day workshop or be split into several shorter sessions.

PROCEDURES

1. Introductory Activities 30 minutes

i. As the facilitator you may introduce yourself or be introduced by the person from the association with whom you have been working. You should make certain that either you or the individual introducing you welcomes the group to the workshop. If the group members do not all know one another, take a few minutes for each person to introduce him/herself.

ii. Explain the purpose of this module and why a communication plan is important for all associations. Present the objectives (Flipchart 1) to the group. Have all written material on the flipchart prepared in advance. Distribute Handout 2, which is the participant copy of the objectives. Important outcomes should be a common understanding of how the organization will communicate with its members, stakeholders, and the public and a plan for the next 12 months.

> *Flipchart 1*
> By the end of this module, we will have:
> - Increased understanding of what is an effective communication program for associations
> - Identified and agreed on who are our major audiences and what are the key messages we want to communicate to them
> - Agreed on which tools will be most appropriate for us
> - Discussed and agreed upon a communication plan for the next 12 months

iii. Present the agenda (Flipchart 2). Explain that the times are approximate. Distribute Handout 2, which is the participant copy of the agenda. (The one included in these guidelines is an example; you may need to prepare one that uses the timing that is most appropriate for your situation.

> *Flipchart 2*
> Agenda for this workshop

• Introductory activities	30 minutes
• Reviewing what is an effective communication program for associations	45 minutes
• Identifying who are our major audiences and what key messages we want to communicate to them	2 hours
• Agreeing on which tools will be most appropriate for us	90 minutes
• Agreeing on a communication plan for next 12 months	90 minutes

2. Reviewing What Is an Effective Communication Program for Associations — 45 minutes

a. Begin this discussion with the question, "What does an association need to communicate about?" Take several examples. Then give this definition of communication for associations (Flipchart 3).

> *Flipchart 3*
> By COMMUNICATION we mean ...
> The approach, strategy and tools used to tell its "story" to members, stakeholders, and the general public
> Includes publicity, public affairs, marketing, and advertising

b. Continue with the following short presentation to increase understanding of what we mean by communication program. (See Handout 3 for additional information.)

- Associations need to be purposeful about communicating with its key constituencies.
- It is extremely important that members, other stakeholders, and the public have opportunities to know about the organization's mandate, its goals, and the positive contributions it is making to the economy and society as a whole.
- The association must be seen as honest, credible, and effective in achieving its goals.
- A communications program purposefully sets about conveying this information in ways that others see as interesting, meaningful, and valuable.

c. Continue the presentation by explaining the following elements of an effective communication program (Handout 3). Use Flipchart 4 to supplement your presentation.

> *Flipchart 4*
> Elements of an effective communication program
> - Identify major audiences for the association
> - Develop key messages for each audience
> - Select most appropriate communication tool for conveying messages
> - Develop and implement a communications plan

d. Ask participants who the audiences are for this association. Discuss this briefly. Define what you mean by key message. It would be good to have examples from a successful association in Egypt. (The Egyptian Businessmens Association, Horticulture Export Improvement Association, or Egyptian Exporters Association would have examples of key messages they developed for critical audiences.)

e. Refer them to the list of communication tools in Handout 3. Ask them which tools are they curious about. Facilitate a brief discussion of tools. Ask them which ones they think would be the most effective in Egypt. At this point you are not planning, just getting participants to talk about the topic so their understanding of what is meant by tools is enhanced.

f. Explain what is meant by a communications plan. Use Flipchart 5.

> *Flipchart 5*
> Steps to Develop a Communications Plan
> - Review the mission statement
> - Review the strategic plan
> - List the major opportunities and problems confronting the association
> - Determine which activities are the most important to promote
> - Identify key target audiences the association needs to influence
>
> *Flipchart 5 continues*
> - Develop major messages for each audience
> - Decide which communiciation tools are most appropriate for us
> - List the steps necessary to use these communication tools
> - Write up the plan

- Get approval
- Agree on how and when to monitor and revise if needed

iv. Ask if there are questions. Stimulate a brief discussion about the steps of a plan. Ask which ones might be most important for this association. Facilitate a discussion about resources available to implement such a plan. Help the group agree to make their plan feasible. New associations don't need to have a long, difficult to implement plan. They should agree on what they feel can be done and then plan how they will do that.

3. Identifying Major Audiences and Developing Key Messages For Each **2 hours**

i. List the key audiences or stakeholder groups that have been identified as important for your association. Select 3 or 4 that are the most critical. Ask participants to divide into groups, each small group taking one audience. Give them the following task (Flipchart 6).

Flipchart 6
For your audience...
- Identify the "interests" of this audience vis-à-vis your association
- Describe how you want this audience to "view" your association
- List the key "messages" that your association should communicate to this audience
- Prepare to share your work with the large group
- Use 45 to 60 minutes for your work

Note: You may need to explain in more detail the terminology you are using, providing examples for more clarification.

By "interests" we mean to define what this audience might expect, need or want from our association – what are their opinions and perspectives about our mandate and the issues and topics with which we will be working. Will our association threaten this audience? Distrustful? Hopeful? Enthusiastic? Curious? If we are to communicate with them effectively, we need to know what their interests are – how they might understand or experience our work.

By "view" we mean how do we want this audience or stakeholder group to feel, believe, and understand about our association, our mandate and our positions.

By "key messages" we mean what do we need to communicate to this audience in order for them to view us, as we want to be viewed.

ii. Ask each group to report on the work they have done with the audience or stakeholder group assigned to them. As each report out is completed, ask the participants if there are questions of clarify or understanding about what was meant. Then ask if there are additions they would like to make or concerns they have. Chart these concerns or additions. Then move to the next report

out and repeat the process. This reporting out process will likely take 60 to 90 minutes.

4. Selecting Communication Tools that Will Be Appropriate 90 minutes

i. Ask the participants to look over the list of communication tools that are listed in Handout 3 and select the ones that would be feasible and desirable for the association. List these on the flipchart. Make certain that participants are considering issues of feasibility – selecting the tools the association has the resources to develop and selecting the tools that are most appropriate for this setting. This will probably only take 15 minutes or so.

ii. Ask each small group to reconvene and decide which tools they would recommend be used for their audience or stakeholder group. Remind them to be realistic and consider the resources it would take to develop and use this tool. Use Flipchart 7.

Flipchart 7

- Consider both the nature of this audience and key messages you want to communicate
- Consider the resources that are realistically available
- Identify which communication tool(s) you recommend
- Prepare to share your thinking with the large group by listing your recommendations on flipchart paper
- Use 40 minutes for your work

iii. Have the small groups report out. Display the recommendations. Highlight the most commonly identified tools. Ask the group if this list is feasible or does it include more than can be done. Ask the group to identify the tools that are the most essential. Help them agree on priorities – perhaps a list of what tools must be used, and another list of tools that we ought to use and will if we can.

5. Building a Communications Plan for the Next 12 Months 90 minutes

i. Explain that we have been building a communication plan. We identified major audiences and discussed what they might need and want from us; we described how we wanted each of these audiences to view our association; we identified key messages we want to communicate to each audience; and we identified the most appropriate communication tools to use. Now we need to identify the steps for implementing that tool.

ii. Break into 2-person teams, give each team one communication tool to work with. Give them this assignment (Flipchart 8).

Flipchart 8

For your communication tool...
- Identify the steps that need to occur over the next 12 months for this tool to successful
- Create a time line, either my quarter or by month
- Identify who should be responsible for making this tool operational
- Put your work on flipchart and prepare to share
- Take 30 to 45 minutes

iii. Have each team display their steps and time line. Ask the group to walk around looking at all the steps. Ask for questions, concerns, or additions. Ask if the group agrees in general with this plan. Discuss areas of responsibility. Facilitate agreement on who is responsible and who will do the work. Identify appropriate next steps. Agree on when and how the implementation of this plan will be monitored.

iv. Summarize the work that has been done throughout the module. Thank everyone for his or her participation. Close the session. Remember to make arrangements to have the flipcharted notes typed up and distributed.

Handout 1
Module 5

OBJECTIVES OF THE MODULE

By the end of this module, we will have:

- Identified and agreed on who are our major audiences and what are the key messages we want to communicate to them
- Agreed on which tools will be most appropriate for us
- Discussed and agreed upon a communication plan for the next 12 months

Handout 2
Module 5

AGENDA

9:00	Introductory activities – welcoming participants, sharing objectives and the agenda
9:30	Reviewing essentials of an effective communication programs for associations
10:15	Mid morning break
10:30	Identifying major audiences and the key messages we want to communicate to them
12:30	Lunch
1:30	Agreeing on which communications tools are most appropriate for our Association
3:00	Mid afternoon break
3:15	Agreeing on a communication plan for next 12 months
5:00	Close

Handout 3
Module 5

CREATING A COMMUNICATION PROGRAM FOR ASSOCIATIONS

Why Communication Is Important

By using the term communication, we mean the approach, strategy, and tools used by an association to tell its story to its members, stakeholders, and the general public. This includes publicity for the association, public affairs, marketing, and advertising.

An effective association will need to be purposeful about communicating with its key constituencies. It is important that association members, other stakeholders, and the general public know about the organization's mandate, its goals, and the positive contributions it is making to the economy and society as a whole. The association must be seen as honest, credible, and effective in achieving its goals. A communications program conveys this information in interesting and compelling ways. Good communication helps members know the benefits they are gaining from their fees and keeps them motivated to participate; it helps government officials understand the purpose of the organization and where it stands on key issues; and it helps the general public understand how the organization contributes toward a better livlihood for everyone.

Identify Major Audiences

Each association has several major audiences. Obviously members are a very important audience. Other audiences may be government officials and politicians – those individuals you need to influence or persuade so they support your policy positions. Another audience may be advocacy groups that do not agree with your positions. The general public is always an audience. They will be interested in the contributions you are making to society as a whole.

Each association should identify who it believes to be its major audiences – those who need to be kept informed about the association, the progress it is making, and its contributions to the greater good.

Develop Key Messages for Each Audience

The term "message" is used to describe in a broad sense the vision and goals of the association. The message can tell of activities and achievements of volunteer workers, or it may argue a particular point of view or explain a program. It is the essense of the written or oral communication, the core meaning of what the organization is trying to accomplish.[7]

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[7] Milner, Larry L. et.al. *Business Associations for the 21st Century, A Blueprint for the Future.* The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Washington, D.C., 1997

An important part of communicating effectively with audiences is carefully crafting the key messages that will be essential for that particular audience to hear. Behind a well crafted key message is a good understanding of the audience – what their concerns and aspirations are, how they tend to relate or react to critical issues, how credible they believe the association to be, etc. Carefully crafted messages convey the essense of what needs to be said: 1) in ways the audience can easily understand, 2) with words that convey positive outcomes, and 3) in ways that are memorable.

Effective communication is truthful. Associations that tell partial truths, distort the facts, or make unfounded claims will in the long run have serious problems. It is essential that audiences believe and trust in what the association is saying.

Select Most Appropriate Communication Tools for Conveying Messages

There are many tools to use to convey messages. The most appropriate ones will be those that fit the needs of your association and the requirements of your audiences. Following is a partial list of communication tools.[8]

[8] Milner, Larry S. et.al. *Business Associations for the 21st Century, A Blueprint for the Future.* Page 108. The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Washington, D. C. 1997.

- Face-to-face discussion
- Speeches
- Interviews
- Web Sites
- Telephone calls
- Questionnaires
- Letters
- Press releases
- Media contacts
- Media background briefings
- Television/radio news interviews or talk shows
- Featured articles in newspapers
- Letters to the editor
- Opinion articles on editorial pages
- Brochures and flyers
- Paid for advertising in mass media
- Magazine articles
- Special research reports on trends
- Policy papers on political issues
- Academic and scientific journals
- Books
- Photographs
- Videotapes
- Bulletin boards
- Membership solitation
- Call-to-action mailings
- Newsletters

Association meetings or events can serve as communication tools. The following are examples:

- Fairs
- Trade exhibits
- Awards banquets
- Special lectures
- Political debates
- Town hall meetings
- Annual meetings of the association
- Committee meetings
- Workshops on issues, laws, regulations
- Business subject seminars
- Tours of members' plants and offices

Work with the Media

The media – newspapers, radio and television can be helpful to an association by accurately reporting about association purpose and current activities. Of course, the media sees its role as objectively reporting the news. While you may not be able to tell the media what to say, you can make sure they are well informed about your issues. The following are suggestions for working effectively with the media:

- Keep a current list of key media that cover agriculture – newspapers, radio, TV, or magazines – and the individual reporters who report on agriculture. Update this list at least once a year.
- Take the initiative to develop a good working relationship with each of these key people. If you don't know who these individual are, call the editor or other person in charge and find out who reports on agriculture or business. Call this person, introduce yourself and set up a time to meet. Provide a media information packet that includes information about the association, biographical data on key members or the Board (with their permission), fact sheets on the association, etc.

- Maintain the good media working relationships you have established. Quarterly, schedule time to call and visit with each of the people who cover agricultural news. Provide information on national issues involving agri-business. Send them position papers on critical industry issues. Describe the effect these issues might have on the country. Educate yourself about the interests and needs of the reporters covering agri-business. For example, know their deadlines and what kind of stories they have typically written about agri-business. Monitor their concerns, attitudes and opinions.
- Write and send out one news release every month or two. Don't expect your release to be published unless you make personal contact with the editor or reporter.
- Make certain you return all phone calls. Prepare yourself for the possibility that you will be interviewed by the reporter. If asked for an interview: a) find out the topic of the interview and agree to call back in 30 to 60 minutes; b) consider your own objectives from the interview; c) prepare your response; and d) return the call.
- Invite the media to special events to create awareness that your association is getting results and making an impact.[9]

Newsletters

Newsletters can be a very effective communication tool. Many associations send newsletters to their members on a regular basis. These newsletters can be one page in length, short but multiple pages with simple layout, or a full-color production with text, pictures and graphs. They do not have to be fancy, glossy, or expensive. Newsletters keep members informed about what is going on – upcoming meetings, interesting issues, progress on advocacy issues or other association goals, changes in staff, election of officers, and other activities or achievements of the organization.
It is important to remember that people are busy and do not have time to read everything they might want. The newsletter must catch their attention and be interesting and easy to read. Members like to read about themselves or other members in the newsletter It is a good idea to place articles and pictures of what the members are doing. It is a good place to recognize and appreciate the activities and accomplishments of volunteers.

Working with Government

The module on creating and implementing an advocacy program speaks of the importance of establishing and maintaining good relationships with government officials. Certainly, a part of your communication plan must include how you will work with government. Following are suggestions:

- Develop a list of government officials that are connected to your industry.
- Get to know what issues are critically important to them, as well as what issues are of mutual importance to their consitituents and your members.

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[9] *Essential Skills in Public Affairs,* A TRG Training Program provided to the Cable Television Industry in the Unites States, 1992-1998.

- Take the initiative to introduce yourself to critical government officials. Set up a meeting to introduce yourself. Provide an information packet on your association.
- Have a regular and routine approach to communicating with key government officials. Schedule time to meet with them to brief them on key issues of concern to your members. Routinely distribute written reports on new information or policy positions developed by the association. Compile and send copies of favorable news articles that mention your association.
- Take personal responsibility for calls and contacts from important government officials. Respond to them promptly.
- Attend appropriate meetings and forums. Educate yourself on procedures and how items get put on the agenda. Know key officials by sight and help them remember you.
- Invite government officials to special meetings and events. It will help build their awareness of your association as a very player in regulatory and policy reform areas.[10]

Meetings, Conferences, Roundtables

One of the most effective means of communicating a message is through face-to-face discussions around a conference table.[11] Associations that communicate effectively know how to make meetings, conferences and roundtables an effective communication tool. The following are suggestions for making meetings effective:

- Consider carefully who should attend and what is the ideal size of the group.
- Send out early notices of the meeting and then follow up with a phone call as a reminder. Work hard to make certain you get the attendance you want.
- Make certain that people know the purpose of the meeting, a overview of agenda topics, where the meeting will be held, when and how long the meeting will last.
- Pay close attention to the room arrangements. The room should be large enough to accommodate the group, including the capacity for concurrent small group discussion if working with a large group. Tables should be set up to facilitate discussion. It is likely that you will want to serve coffee, tea or soft drinks.
- Start and end on time.
- Make certain that the meeting begins with introductions of participants. Then share meeting goals or purpose and the agenda. Make certain that someone(s) are assigned to facilitate the meeting. They should concentrate on making sure that everyone is participating, that discussions are moving at the appropriate speed, and that conclusions or agreements are recorded.

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Milner, Larry S. et.al. *Business Associations for the 21st Century, A Blueprint for the Future.* Page 116. The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE), Washington, D. C. 1997.

- The meeting should end by summarizing conclusions and agreements, identifying next steps, and thanking everyone for their contribution.
- Make sure the meetings are enjoyable – lively, positive, with appropriate humor. People will love to come to your meetings if they see them as useful and enjoyable.

Develop a Communications Plan

Undoubtedly your association's communication needs will be greater than the resources you have to devote to it. Therefore, you will want to be purposeful about what you do and what you are unable to do. The following items describe steps for creating a communication plan for associations:

- Many associations prefer to establish a communication committee or task force who is responsible for developing the plan.
- Review the association's mission statement to make certain all communication efforts reflect the organization's philosophy.
- Review the strategic plan to make certain all areas of the organization are receiving attention and that the communication plan is coordinated with other organizational strategies (especially with advocacy strategies).
- List the major opportunities and problems confronting the association.
- Set priorities to determine which are the most important activities or programs to promote.
- Identify the key target audiences that the association needs to influence.
- Develop major messages for each target audience.
- Consider the most appropriate communication tools to use, taking into account available resources.
- List the steps that are necessary to implement the plan, including who is responsible.
- Write up the plan.
- Get required approval of the plan (Board of Directors or the association executive director).
- Review and revise the plan periodically.
- Survey occasionally to see how your messages are being received.