



the story workshop

educating through entertainment



in malawi

WOMEN ACCESSING REALIGNED MARKETS (WARM PROJECT)

Strengthening the capacity of women to influence agricultural policy development in Southern Africa

THEATRE FOR ADVOCACY TRAINING MANUAL

WARM PROJECT - MALAWI

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1. INTRODUCTION

FANRPAN is a multi-stakeholder, multi-national network that supports the development of better food, agriculture and natural resources (FANR) policies in southern Africa. It was started in 1997 by a group of ten agricultural policy research institutes and was endorsed by the ministers of agriculture in the region. FANRPAN's founders recognized the need for an independent source of policy analysis and advice related to FANR policies. They created FANRPAN to build the region's capacity for policy analyses and policy dialogue, and to improve policy decision making by enhancing the generation, exchange and use of relevant information.

The WARM project seeks to inform, empower and mobilize women farmers to express their needs through a culturally appropriate medium and engage their communities in developing solutions to their problems. It does this through theatre for Policy Advocacy (TPA), a form of participatory theatre that encourages improvisation and allows for community participation.

TPA performances are scripted around particular themes and issues (in this case, women's access to agricultural inputs) and serve to sensitize the entire community to that problem or concern. The performance is followed by a series of facilitated dialogues wherein different signets of the community (e.g. youth, working men and women, community leaders, NGO staff, elders, e.t.c) work in groups to develop ideas to address the issue. During these dialogues, the community also identifies leaders and spokespersons to advocate for action on these issues.

Thus, TPA works to simultaneously express a problem, develop solutions and initiate action towards those solutions.

This training manual has been developed to provide a guide to TPA training facilitators working on the WARM project in Malawi. The expected time for training is 3-4 day. The number of people to be trained is a maximum of 15 people and a minimum of 10 people. 1 to 2 facilitators can implement this training. As in most Training Manual guides: Topics, Issues & Style are modeled to be changed and re-arranged to suit the audience and relevance of particular issues.

2. POLICY ADVOCACY

Advocacy is a set of targeted actions directed at decision makers in support of a specific policy issue.

Advocacy Networks are groups of organizations and individuals working together to achieve changes in policy, law, or programs for a particular issue

Advocacy strategies and methods can be learned.

It is organized around a well-developed model—tested over time and within diverse cultures—for accomplishing advocacy objectives. The components of the model are the same regardless of the advocacy goals—whether for a campaign to secure a national law protecting women’s rights, to increase the range of contraceptive methods available, or to secure local funding for a new primary school. The building blocks of advocacy are the formation of networks, the identification of political opportunities, and the organization of campaigns

Through advocacy, networks can engage in high-level dialogue with policymakers and other influential leaders on broad policy issues and national policies. For women farmers Issues, networks might identify issues for advocacy campaigns that focus on such goals as the elimination of taxes in farm inputs or national agricultural market policy. Policy issues at the operational level are another potential focus for a campaign. Such issues might deal with the formulation of specific resource allocation and service delivery guidelines.

Advocacy includes both single-issue, time-limited campaigns and ongoing work undertaken by a network around a range of issues—conducted at the national, regional, or local level.

By generating public support for women farmers issues and linking them to other important social and economic topics under consideration by policymakers— such as poverty alleviation and job creation—a network can help change the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of major decision makers. At the same time, a network can help ensure that more appropriate and representative policies and resource allocations are in place for women to access Agriculture markets

3. PARTICIPATORY THEATRE

We hear about “development theatre”, “ theatre for the oppressed”, popular theatre, “ community theatre”, and “intervention theatre”, “ protest theatre” and “ theatre for social

change ”. These are often used interchangeably and are associated with a transformation of a social reality, by using community and individual participation.

Participatory theatre is an approach in which the actors interact with the public, based on a real problem. Throughout the participatory event, the public participates to adapt, change or correct a situation, an attitude or a behavior that is developed during the show.

This form of theatre aims to join entertainment with an exploration of attitudes and to share knowledge in order to stimulate positive social changes.

This form of theatre is useful in a number of ways. The play presented to the public becomes a mirror of the problems experienced in the community:

- The participatory approach provides an opportunity for the public to think, talk and ask questions about these problems;
- The public is forced to propose an approach that could improve the situation presented, avoid violence and transform the conflict. Different audience members are on stage offering ideas. They become stakeholders in the piece and at the same time agents of social change. The audience can "live" a different future, which could become the tomorrow's reality.
- A representation is not, in itself, the end of the process. But the public experience dialogue, reflection, and active participation in seeking the solutions to issues of concern in their community - is the beginning of a process of conflict transformation.

4. THEATRE FOR POLICY ADVOCACY

Therefore Theatre for Policy Advocacy is among the Participatory Theatre which falls under the category of Debate theatre.

Debate Theatre: This technique features an interactive performance from start to finish, followed by discussions immediately after the show. The issues are directly linked with the show, and the discussion seeks to encourage the sharing of opinions, advice and clarifications.

This type of theatre is therefore very effective in policy advocacy. It not only encourages the spectator to identify with characters in conflict and then asks audience members to step onto the stage and literally fill characters shoes.

The act of empathizing is taken one step further as the public attempts to find novel and positive solutions to the conflict. Participatory theatre productions offer communities the opportunity to actively reflect together by using the stage as a place to explore new ways of living and to express new visions of the future. In the end, participatory theatre provides an outlet for the native interest both actors and audience members alike have in transforming their persistent disagreements into an opportunity for better communication, growth and development

"Theatre is a form of knowledge: It should and can also be a means of transforming society. Theatre can help us build our future, rather than just waiting for it."
- Augusto Boal

5. TRAINING MANUAL

5.1. Lesson One: Project Brief

ACTIVITY ONE: WARM UPS

GAME ONE: GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER & GETTING IN THE MOOD TO PLAY

Participants stand in a circle. One person says her name and demonstrates an activity with the name. The whole group repeats. This goes on until everyone has done it.

E.g. Takondwa. She claps hands twice, whistles and rotate on her toes. Then the whole group repeats this.

ACTIVITY TWO: SONG & DANCE

Let the participants sing their favorite songs and dances

ACTIVITY THREE: DISCUSSIONS

From the themes of the songs generate a discussion that will lead to project ideas, goals and objectives.

E.g. you could start by saying “in the song who is working harder men or women?”

Do you think women have the right to complain as they are doing in the song?

Do you think women and men have equal agricultural market opportunities?

ACTIVITY FOUR: PROJECT BRIEF

From the discussion introduce the project goals and activities within the relevance of the discussion.

Ensure that the participants note and participate in the discussion.

Encourage them to propose/guess/ say some of the project objectives and activities.

Project objectives

Overall: empower women & sensitize decision makers of women special needs for women to gain access to services & markets

Kupereka mphamvu/kuthekera kwa amayi komanso kuwunikira/kudziwitsa anthu omwe ali m’maudindo zakufunikira koti amayi azipeza misika ya mbewu zawo komanso chithandizo chosiyanasiyana cha za ulimi.

Objectives:- provide platform for dialogue on this issue

-Empower women to be active in driving development agenda

-Align development agenda, input supply to women farmers issues

-Bring women concerns into inter/national policy debates

5.2. Lesson Two: Introduction to policy advocacy

ACTIVITY 1: SONG & PLAY

“Tabwela kutola Mtedza”

In this game, people play, singing a song and selecting players until two teams make a tag of war.

ACTIVITY 2: DISCUSSION.

Based on the game discuss that

- () people are always in conflict
- () we develop relationships to support the weak
- () advocacy is a way of providing support to the weak

Policy: A policy is typically described as a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s). The term is not normally used to denote what is actually done, this is normally referred to as either procedure or protocol

Advocacy: active support of an idea or cause etc.; especially the act of pleading or arguing for something

Policy Advocacy: At national, regional and international levels, involving policymakers in the dialogue process and contributing to preparation of global policy documents and national policy briefs.

Policy Advocates: these are people or someone who speaks on behalf of another person a person, who pleads for a cause or propounds an idea

5.3. Lesson Three: Concepts of Participatory Theatre

ACTIVITY ONE: SONGS & DANCE

The participants sing their favorite songs & dances

ACTIVITY TWO: ROLE PLAYS

Divide the participants in groups of three and ask them to do a role play of their choice and perform to the rest of the whole group.

ACTIVITY THREE: DISCUSSIONS

Based on the role plays introduce the group to the participatory theater concepts below.

Introduce the topic by asking questions like:

How did you come up with your topic? (Introduce research)

How did you come up with the story? Who decided who will act who? (Introduce story line creation e.t.c)

Do you think we enjoyed your performance? (Introduce open ups. Verification of issues)

The Participatory theatre process:

Participatory theatre for conflict transformation includes a number of steps. Each Step has its own value and they all contribute to the success of the following step.

These steps are:

1. Information collection;
2. Compiling information;
3. Scene development;
4. Character development;
5. Preparation of the performance location;
6. Interaction with spectators;

5.4. Lesson Four: Research

The themes, characters and conflicts in your play should reflect the reality of the community where you are performing as much as possible. The first step is to understand the community in a way that will allow you to create a true portrait.

ACTIVITY ONE: RESEARCH GAME

The group should be divided into pairs. Give them ten minutes to chat with each other. Then after the exercise everyone should report about their friend.

ACTIVITY TWO: DISCUSSIONS

Based on the exercise introduce the topic of research. Ask them the following questions:

Were you comfortable talking about yourself to a stranger?

Did you hide some things?

Were there things you wanted to say that weren't asked?

Were you truly represented? Would you have said the same about yourself?

Tips for a good Research

- Make your approach polite and respectful
- Practice active listening
- Avoid talking too much
- Ask simple questions
- Evaluate the quality of information you are gathering
- When possible take notes
- Talk to a cross-section of the community

ACTIVITY THREE: HOMEWORK

From the research discussions ask the participants to conduct a research on *"the challenges women face in accessing input markets"*

5.5. Lesson Five: Storyline Creation & Scene Development

After an exchange between the actors after their experience with the population, compile together the information gathered.

The goals of the compiling session are:

- To put together all the information collected by the actors on the ground;
- To identify the most serious conflicts, especially those which could result in violence;
- To identify the conflict that is related to the theme or the goal of the project
- To choose the conflict that will be the object of the scenario you will develop

ACTIVITY ONE: SONG & DANCE

The participants should sing songs that are most relevant to the information they have just gathered. Or create traditional songs that are relevant to the issues they have been discussing so far. In this case about women's access to input markets.

ACTIVITY TWO: STORY LINE CREATION

Divide the group in two. The groups should create a story that best portrays the issues women face in accessing women inputs and how they can be resolved.

After coming up with the story, both groups report to the others. Then the whole group agrees on one story line.

ACTIVITY THREE: SCENE DEVELOPMENT

Re-divide the group into two different groups. The groups should develop play scenes based on the story line. After coming up with the scenes, both groups report to the others. Then the whole group agrees on one play scene sequence.

Things to remember:

- A good story has one MAJOR conflict
- A good story & play has the following sequence: root cause of the problem → effects of the problem → conflict → solutions to the problem → benefits of solving the problem/ideal situation
- Traditional songs and dances are an essential part of a participatory performance

5.6. Lesson Six: Rehearsals

Three things are needed to bridge this gap between what input assistance women farmers need and the services and programs that are currently in place.

Empower women to speak for themselves so they can express their needs and concerns.
Participate in developing solutions and advocate for appropriate programs and services
Develop the capacity of researchers and policy makers and development agencies to collect more fine-grained and practical information from the field, so that assistance can be provided in a responsive way
Sensitize relevant policy-makers and advocates to the special needs of women farmers to create an environment that is conducive to women farmers.

When rehearsing the play developed the thought above should be pertinent in the whole play.

ACTIVITY ONE: CHARACTERISATION

Identify all the characters in the play.

Make a character analysis of each character. (Why do they act the way they act? What is their background? Are they strong/weak characters? In this project are they victims/perpetrators/agents of change?)

Ask each participant to select a character they will play.

ACTIVITY TWO: GAME – CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

The facilitator will present a scenario and ask the participants to demonstrate how they would react in a similar situation

Then the facilitator will present the same scenario and ask the participants how their “chosen play character” would react in a similar situation

The scenarios could be:

- Someone has stolen your harvest (you have been offended)

- Your father has just passed away (you are very sad)
- You have just got married (very happy)
- Emphasize the need that characters are true to life; maintain their character throughout the play, have meaningful actions.

ACTIVITY THREE: PLAY REHEARSALS

The group rehearses the play in their chosen characters.

Concepts to use in the performance

Miming:- the use of imaginary stage props to enhance creativity

Songs and dances:- traditional songs to familiarize audience to performance

Open ups:- open/direct questions to the audience to verify issues/find solutions to problems

Entry & exit points:- various to ensure that the whole audience is actively participating in the performance

Suspense:- to sustain/facilitate/motivate audience reactions and feedback

5.7. Lesson 7: Performance

The groups take note of the following issues before the performance:

Where can we perform? Choose a location with a steady audience like a market or the village ground. Avoid areas near the main road or with a lot of disturbances.

How do we choose the place? Access to the performance shouldn't be subject to any restrictions; the place should be large enough to accommodate the audience; it must be accessible; the acoustics must be good

How to arrange the location? Arrange the audience in a circle. Ensure that those in front are sited all placed in away that everyone can see the stage.

"I engage in dialogue because I recognize the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing."
- Paolo Freire

Promotion and Publicity? It is always important to inform the local authorities and ensure that your company has permission to perform in public. To ensure that the public is informed about your mission, it is also important to notify the public of your show through appropriate means for transmitting information in the community: for example, by radio, through posters, mega phone.

The Performance format

The group can present the performance in the following format. Or any format that best suits the environment, takes into consideration local performances and create a mood for audience participation.

Here's how a show unfolds and interaction with the public is organized. This description provides a model that could be amended in relation to the target audience and context.

1. The actors welcome the audience: This can be done through theatrical games, singing, drumming and dance, or interactive games with the audience. This is done to encourage trust with the audience, and to create an interest on the part of the audience to pay attention to the show.

2. Introduction: The conductor/facilitator presents the goal of the show and the reasons why it is taking place. He/she announces the show and invites the audience to pay attention, in order to participate later through participatory theatre.

3. Beginning of the performance: The show begins with the first scene. The whole show is played out.

4. Open-Up questions: Throughout the performance; the facilitator and the actors asks for reactions from the public, by asking (for example), "Do you recognize this situation?" "What do you think of the situation described in this show?" "do you do what the actors are doing?" "would you do the same in similar situations?"

5. Repeat the play: If necessary (based on the context and audience concentration), have the actors redo the show in its entirety. To emphasize the conflict areas, the play can also change its pace and tone.

6. Summary: The conductor/facilitator asks the audience to give a summary of the show, by pointing out the message targeted by the show. Ask the audience if there is anyone among them who has experienced a similar story.

7. Feedback: The conductor/facilitator invites the person to give a testimony of his story, and to explain the link between his own story and the story that was just played out. Ask the person how he/she would have reacted when faced with this situation. After having given his/her point of view, have the person might play the role of one of the actors to show a different version of the same scene.

10. Conclusions: End the show after having proposed with the audience several behaviors and attitudes that could transform the conflict you are addressing. It's also the time for the conductor to repeat the information and the specific facts concerning the problem of the conflict (ex. reintegration of combatants, land laws, etc.) which will help the public to not believe false information and rumors. This information will also help in conflict transformation. The length will depend on the context and the atmosphere.

5.8. Lesson Eight: Performance Evaluation

Activity One: performance Analysis

After the performance the performers, together with the facilitators should make the following assessment about the performance.

They should ask the following questions:

Participant focus and ownership: Was the audience fully participating? Did they “own” the performance?

Flow of Issues: did issues flow logically? Was the story believable? Weren't some issues left hanging? Weren't the story/ conflict confusing?

Stakeholder Participation: Were stakeholders present participating? Did they achieve our objective of having them?

Relevance of issue: Were the issues relevant to the audience? How can we prove the relevance of our play? Did the people "identify" with the characters?

Dramaturgy: Sometimes in the attempt to make an "information packed" play we forget the basics. So ask yourselves: was the play entertaining? Did it have some drama? Were the performers' good actors?

A focus group is a small group of six to ten people led through an open discussion by a skilled moderator. The group needs to be large enough to generate rich discussion but not so large that some participants are left out.

Things that worked well: Document areas that worked well

Things that need improvement: Document areas that did not work well, that need improvement

Suggestions for future performances: Document areas that need improvement.

Everything should be well documented and clearly described.

Activity Two: selection of group leaders

The group should then select their leaders and clearly state their roles.

The leaders should include, but not exclusive to:
chairperson, secretary, treasurer and co-coordinator.

Activity Three: Developing an Action Plan.

The group should finally develop an Action plan about all the activities they plan to implement.

Below is a sample of the Action Plan Format. It is subject to amendments and improvements depending on the groups' plans.

Time Frame	Activity	Venue	Facilitator	Comments.
E.G. December	TPA Performance	Nearby School	Chairperson	It was a good performance.

5.9. Lesson Nine: Focus Group discussions

After the performance the Facilitators would conduct focus group discussions to analyze the audience reactions to the play and solicit their solutions to the challenges highlighted during the TPA.

ACTIVITY ONE: PREPARATIONS

1. Identify the major objective of the meeting.
2. Carefully develop five to six questions (see below).
3. Make sure you have your writing materials, recorders, flip charts and camera handy.

ACTIVITY TWO: DEVELOPING QUESTIONS

1. **Develop five to six questions** - Session should last one to 1.5 hours -- in this time, one can ask at most five or six questions.
2. **Always first ask yourself what problem or need will be addressed by the information**

gathered during the session, e.g. will you have new ideas? Will you verify existing ideas? Are you confirming an idea? Etc.

3. Focus groups are basically multiple interviews. Therefore, many of the same guidelines for conducting focus groups are similar to conducting interviews (see the Basics of Conducting Interviews).

ACTIVITY THREE: FACILITATING THE SESSION

1. Major goal of facilitation is collecting useful information to meet goal of meeting.
2. Introduce yourself and the co-facilitator, if used.
3. Explain the means to record the session.
5. Carefully word each question before that question is addressed by the group. Allow the group a few minutes for each member to carefully record their answers. Then, facilitate discussion around the answers to each question, one at a time.
6. After each question is answered, carefully reflect back a summary of what you heard (the note taker may do this).
7. Ensure even participation. If one or two people are dominating the meeting, then call on others. Consider using a round- table approach, including going in one direction around the table, giving each person a minute to answer the question. If the domination persists, note it to the group and ask for ideas about how the participation can be increased.
8. Closing the session - Tell members that they will receive a copy of the report generated from their answers, thank them for coming, and adjourn the meeting.

ACTIVITY FOUR: IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE SESSION

1. **Verify if the tape recorder, if used, worked throughout the session.**
2. **Make any notes on your written notes**, e.g., to clarify any scratching, ensure pages are numbered, fill out any notes that don't make senses, e.t.c.
3. **Write down any observations made during the session.** For example, where did the session occur and when, what was the nature of participation in the group? Were there any surprises during the session? Did the tape recorder break?

6. CONCLUSIONS

As stipulated in the introduction of this manual, this training manual is largely a guide to the process.

7. REFERENCES

- <http://managementhelp.org/evaluatn/focusgrp.htm>
- Networking for Policy Change: An Advocacy Training Manual
- Participatory Theatre for Conflict Transformation: Training Manual

ⁱ Please refer to Focus Group guide for more details.