

Hanoi, June 20, 2005

TO THE FORD FOUNDATION

INSTITUTIONAL GRANT NARRATIVE REPORTING

This is a Narrative Report on the Ford Foundation Grant No. 1035-1206 dated February 18, 2002 to Hanoi Agricultural University for support to create a forum for meetings, workshops, small research grants and publications for upland researchers at four Vietnamese universities and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Name of the Project: “Project to Establish the Vietnam Upland Forum (VUF): A Forum for Institutions working in Vietnam’s Uplands”. It was jointly submitted by:

*Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry (HUAF);
Tay Nguyen University (TNU);
Nong Lam University in Ho Chi Minh City (NLU);
Information Center for Agriculture and Rural Development (ICARD); and
Hanoi Agricultural University (HAU).*

Project Period: Two years, from May 01, 2003 to April 30, 2005.

Amount approved for HAU: \$ 39,000 (thirty-nine thousands US dollars).

Objectives:

1. General Objective

The Forum aims to promote sustainable development in the Uplands by linking on a regular and recurrent basis researchers and development practitioners at universities and institutions within Vietnam in direct discussions, innovative learning, and implementation of participatory action research on upland issues.

2. Immediate Objectives

- To identify upland researchers, recruit them for Forum membership, and sustain their participation over time.
- To focus the Forum on a small number of key issues, for example, (i) Scaling up of site specific action research projects, (ii) Decentralization and effective local governance for NRM, (iii) Indigenous knowledge on how to effectively use diverse upland natural resources; (iv) How the research can influence policy making.
- To build up relevant pilot research projects that can add to the stock of knowledge on what works best to reduce Uplands poverty.

This report describes activities and accomplishments supported by the Grant for the two year-period of its implementation.

ACTIVITIES IN THE PERIOD OF THE GRANT AT HANOI AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

Activity 1. Establish a Forum working team at HAU

The Forum working team at HAU was established in May 2003. Forum membership was open to all persons who were currently engaged in research and teaching on some aspect of Uplands development. New members with the required background and level of interest can be added at any time.

Among the HAU Forum members, staffs of the Center for Agricultural Research and Ecological Studies (CARES) were considered as core members, others from another faculties of HAU who willing to joint into the VUF. Team members came from different fields of knowledge, and we hoped to achieve a balance between natural and social scientists and between genders. This team held monthly meetings to give feedback on the other teams' papers, on their fieldwork and develop their own knowledge to share with the team as well as with the Forum.

Please see the list of the HAU Forum member attached as Appendix 1.

Activity 2. Establish Vietnam Uplands Forum Listserv

In the original document, Hanoi Agricultural University was responsible for establishing the Forum listserv. Then, based on agreement at the Da Lat Meeting (September 15-17, 2003), this responsibility was shifted to the Hue team - the VUF coordinator, and Netnam - a communications company - that would serve as the technical supporting organization, with partial contribution both in technical and financial issues from IDRC.

At the end of 2003, specialists from Netnam and the Hue team came to HAU to check and evaluate the facility and human resources at HAU.

On 17, December 2004, HUAF organized a meeting of Steering Committee Members at Hue, funded by IDRC. Thanks to this meeting, we known that HUAF has get a supplementary funds from IDRC for promoting the listserv and also for setting up some new activities such as a Participatory Development Communication (PDC) program, Noi vong tay lon (tie friendly arms together) - a sharing information program, and upgrading skills for usage and administration of a website. It was another opportunity for upgrading the capacity for HAU team members.

From January 2005, HUAF team launched a series of themes to each individual VUF member via their e-mail address for discussion. There are some themes that have been discussed so far, such as ways to collect needed information from studied communities, to increase the community participation in our research, to promote participation of involved people in our research, and to share information. The HUAF team designed all of the themes. The HAU team appointed Mr. Nguyen Vinh Quang and Mr. Nguyen Thanh Lam to be in charge of keeping the discussion with the forum.

In April 2005, VUF team at HAU received from HUAF one digital camera, one video camera, one notebook, and one recorder free of charge. They are very useful for field trips and/or training course. At the same time, the team also received the Vietnamese version of a book named “From workplace to workplace – Using e-mail lists to work together” (Maureen James and Liz Rykert, published in Canada in 1998. It can be found at http://www.idrc.ca/index_e.html). It was translated to the version by HUAF team, and it is very useful for the HAU team members.

At the meeting at Hue (December 17, 2004) and then in the meeting at Da Nang (May 27-29, 2005), the largest concern of the participants were when the Forum Listserv will be completed since it still not complete yet.

Activity 3. Establish the Forum Committee of Junior Researchers

A committee of junior researchers was established. There are 30 junior staff who participate in the committee and their age is younger than 36 years old. This committee has its own co-chair, Mr. Nguyen Vinh Quang for social-economic issues, and Mr. Nguyen Thanh Lam for technical issues.

Since the establishment of VUF, the overall Committee of Junior Researchers has not organized any meetings, either face to face or e-meeting among VUF member institutes. The number of VUF members of each member institute has changed over time, since some of the members go away for their studies, but no one has updated this information to VUF members as a whole.

At HAU, the committee is responsible for organizing monthly research meetings on the last Saturday of every month. It is a good chance for junior researchers of the CARES and other faculties to learn about what research is going on; to share findings, ideas, and methodologies; and to become better educated in the different disciplines of those participating in the forums. We do not know about other the Junior Research Committee activities of other members, since they did not report this activity in the meeting. Senior fellows are also invited to participate in these meetings, but junior committee members operate them and the senior fellows did not dominate this activity.

Activity 4. Initial workshop in agroecology

This Forum activity focused on upland issues and specifically on the interaction among households, communities and the natural environment in the Uplands. The Forum participants needed to have a broader understanding of these issues. In order to take a first step towards focusing on these issues, some members participated in the international short course on agro ecology organized by the University of Santa Cruz, California in July 13-25 before the project began. This activity was covered by separated funds from the Ford Foundation. These funds are not included in this proposal.

Mr. Nguyen Van Hoi, a HAU staff member, was selected to participate in this training workshop.

The course focused specially on the interactions between human and ecological communities in rural landscapes. Dr. Stephen R. Gliessman's agroecology research group at the Department of Environmental Studies (UCSC), the Program in Community and Agroecology (PICA), and the Community and Agroecology Network (CAN) jointly organized this course. During the two-week short course, 41 lectures were given including the ecological basis for sustainable agriculture, sustainable resource management, agroecological structure and function, and social dimension in agroecology. Twenty-one lecturers gave advanced concepts and principles of agroecology and case studies of interdisciplinary agroecological research.

The course was especially helpful since it touched on a wide range of technical and social issues. The participant has applied much of the knowledge and experiences acquired from the training into teaching agroecology and environmental protection at HAU. The knowledge and experience also contribute a lot to other team members' research activities related to technology development in agriculture, especially those oriented towards organic farming for which ecological principles are seriously considered and applied.

Activity 5. Forum Annual Meetings

Based on the information shared through the Forum (and through the listserv, theoretically), some topics, knowledge or issues were set for discussions at two Forum annual meetings.

The first meeting was organized at Da Lat from September 15-19, 2003, in which the HAU team had the largest showing of 26 members. The participants involved face-to-face individual, small group and plenary discussions of current research, planned studies and new ideas. In this meeting, participants also agreed that the Netnam Company would be involved in the listserv as the technical assistance organization, and the Hue team would replace HAU as coordinator of the listserv operator with contribution on both technical and financial issues from IDRC.

It should be noted that, in this meeting, Dr. Charles R. Bailey, Representative for Vietnam and Thailand of the Ford Foundation gave an important speech namely *Asset Building for Equitable Development in Vietnam*. It is new initiative from the Ford Foundation that focuses more explicitly on public policies supporting asset building in the uplands, specifically forestland distribution and marketing systems. The long-term goal of this initiative is to enable the poor and disadvantaged citizens of upland Vietnam to gain more effective control over environmental assets and to increase asset productivity and value. This goal will be pursued through two intermediate goals: (1) Build knowledge and human resources for sustainable upland management in programs at selected universities, government agencies and Vietnamese NGOs for applied and policy research, training and extension; and (2) Strengthen the capacity of networks of researchers, practitioners, NGO leader, resource managers and uplands communities to contribute to decision making and resource allocation and to effect improvements in program design. Its starting point is what poor people already have, not what they lack. It was made strong impacts to behaviors and ideas of VUF researchers on their own way of concepts and approaches for researching in the uplands.

The second meeting was organized at My Khe Beach, Da Nang City from May 27-29, 2005, in which the HAU team also had the largest showing of 20 members. Other teams varied in size from three to 17 members. In this meeting, the VUF coordinator gave a report titled

Vietnam Upland Forum: Activities, Process and Results. Then, junior staff from member institutes reported their research papers, which were supported from this grant.

The HAU team presented two papers:

(1) *Factors Influencing Farmers' Adoption of Agroforestry: Case study in Seo village, Tan Minh commune, Da Bac district, Hoa Binh province*. The core research group members were Mr. Tran Nam Anh, Ms. Pham Thi Mai Huong, Ms. Pham Thanh Lan, Ms. Le Thi Thanh Phuong and Ms. Vu Thi Thao.

This paper aims to determine factors that affect households' decision in adopting agroforestry systems in a small village in the Northern mountain area of Vietnam. We focus on the Muong ethnic group in Seo village, Cao Son commune, Da Bac district, Hoa Binh province where there are favorable conditions to develop an agroforestry system (AS).

AS in Seo village can be classified into two categories (i) natural forests, perennial trees, fruits, cash crops, and poultry-raising, (ii) fruit trees, cash crops, and poultry raising.

There is no significant difference between AS adopting households and non-adopting households in terms of the age of the head of the household, total number of family members, and total area of land. However, AS adopting households have higher education levels than those of AS non-adopting households.

The research findings show that there are five main factors, (i) food security, (ii) agricultural extension service, (iii) input subsidies, (iv) the role of local organizations, and (v) land tenure that have the strongest effects on a farmer's decision about AS adoption. In order to stimulate AS development in the study site, it is necessary to implement the following solutions: (i) land accumulation, (ii) change the methods of implementing projects in this area, (iii) establish marketing channels, marketing groups or marketing cooperatives, (iv) build agricultural input cooperatives, and (v) improve the role of local organizations in designing development plans.

(2) *The land cover changes overtime and natural resource management issues in Mau Duc Commune, Con Cuong District, Nghe An Province*. The core research group members are Mr. Vu Huu Cong, Mr. Tran Trung Kien, Mr. Tran Nguyen Bang, Nong Huu Duong, and Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet.

The paper showed that land cover mapping is always a challenging task for cartographers in Vietnam. The traditional method based on field surveys and statistical data has been known to face many problems for a long time. The variation of portioning topography and the steepness of the highlands, which occupy about three quarters of the total country area, together with the lack of human resources and inaccurate statistical data often cause many uncertainties in land cover maps, which many reflect unreliably what really happened on the land surfaces.

With the worldwide use of a new method developed on the application of Geographical Information Systems' tools known as GIS, and remotely sensed data, mapping land cover nowadays can obtain a higher accuracy in less time.

Towards the new approach, this research aims to propose a method of using multi-temporal Landsat TM and ETM imagery in detecting land cover change over from 1989 to 2003 in

Mau Duc commune, Con Cuong district, Nghe An province. The method, an image-supervised classification using maximum likelihood function, shows a good result in mapping the land cover change with the overall accuracy of 82 percent.

Being further investigated is whether the land cover change in this region over last period has been strongly affected by some national government policies regarding the programs of forest protection and plantation with the decrease of swidden cultivation and the expanse of forest and fallow areas.

It should be noted that, some research results that were presented at the meeting by other VUF teams were naive, but it was welcomed by most participants since the research was truly done by junior staff. In other instances, some research was not done by junior researchers; and also, might be, were not funded by these grant funds, as we designed and expected. This might have made a negative impact on young researchers.

Activity 6. Training Workshops

This activity was divided into two sub-activities: (1) Training workshop organized by HAU, and (2) Training workshop organized by other VUF member institutes.

Training Workshop organized by HAU

Hanoi Agricultural University organized two training workshop as following:

The first training workshop was organized on 24-27th May 2004 titled “Applied Methodology for Environmental Planning and Management”.

The objectives of this workshop were:

1. To overview methods used in the applied research for environmental planning and management;
2. To review methods those have been used among the member universities.
3. To recommend additions, improvements to the applied research methods in each of the participating institutes.

Three resource persons were invited to provide lectures in different sections of the workshop as follows:

1. Dr. Soparth Pongquan, Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
2. Dr. Dao The Tuan, Vietnam Agricultural Science Institute (VASI)
3. Dr. Nguyen Duy Binh, Ho Chi Minh National University

The HAU workshop organizers invited a wide range of institution/organizations in Vietnam to make the workshop output more useful and beneficial for many Vietnamese stakeholders on environmental planning and management. In result, representatives from other organizations involved in environmental planning and management, particularly, Vietnam Upland Forum attended as participants at their expense supported by the Ford Foundation and/or the Rockefeller Foundation, others supported from a Danida funded project named “University Support to Environmental Planning and Management (USEPAM)”.

The Vietnamese institutes that participated in this workshop are:

1. Hanoi Agricultural University
2. Hue University of Agriculture and Forestry
3. Tay Nguyen University
4. University of Agriculture and Forestry in Ho Chi Minh City
5. Information Center for Agriculture and Rural Development
6. Ho Chi Minh National University
7. Vietnam Agricultural Science Institute

Please see Appendix 2 for the detailed list of participants.

The workshop was divided into three sections. All activities are summarized in the workshop agenda at the Appendix 3.

The second training workshop, namely “Field Research on the Human Dimensions of Upland Agricultural Systems” was organized at HAU from September 27 to October 13, 2004.

Participants were junior academic staff from Vietnam Agricultural Universities, and research Institutes of MARD.

Course objectives were:

1. to improve participants’ technical and methodological skills for doing research on upland agriculture;
2. to develop proposals for research by participants on upland agriculture in Vietnam; and
3. To share knowledge about Vietnam upland agriculture among participants.

The five resource persons were invited to provide lectures in different sections of the workshop as follows:

1. Dr. Neil Jamieson, Indochina Institute, George Mason University;
2. Dr. Kjeld Rasmussen, Institute of Geography University of Copenhagen;
3. Mrs. Ingrid M. Foik, Expert on Extension and Agricultural Economics, the Ford Foundation;
4. Mr. Stephen J. Leisz, Research Fellow, Institute of Geography, University of Copenhagen; and
5. Ms. Amanda Allbriton, Research Fellow, the CARES.

Grant funds from the Ford Foundation and from the Rockefeller Foundation (in case of Thai Nguyen University) supported this course. Others were supported from the USEPAM (in case of Dr. Kjeld Rasmussen).

Please see list of participants at Appendix 4 and the syllabus of the course in Appendix 5 for more detail.

Training workshop organized by other VUF member institutes

Hue University for Agriculture and Forestry

On December 17, 2004, with funds from IDRC, HUAF organized meeting with the Forum Steering Committee members to preliminary wrap-up activities of the forum assignments up to date, and announced some additional activities supported by the IDRC such as

Participatory Development Communication Program (PDC), Noi Vong Tay Lon (tie friendly Arms Together) Program, Improving Forum website and Listserve.

Then HUAF organized the training workshop on “Upgrading skills on Usage and Administrative a Website” from December 18-21 for first section, and then from March 4-8 for second section. Three HAU staff took part in the first one, and two in the second one. VUF members at CARES who took part in the course were Mr. Tran Nguyen Bang, Mr. Hoang Van Tuyen and M. Tran Manh Tuong. It was a good course for people who are in charge of the management of a website.

The second training workshop, which was organized from March 24-26 by HUAF was a course on social-gender and political analysis. Ms. Nguyen Thi Huyen and Ms. Pham Thi Thu Thuy from the CARES participated in this course. The knowledge that participants get from the course is valuable in our research, especially concerning gender issues.

By other member institutes

Nong Lam University and Tay Nguyen University did not organize any training courses to our knowledge. If they did, they did not inform the HAU team.

ICARD has informed CARES that they would organize a training workshop on GIS application to poverty and NRM research that was fully funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. Supporting the training course, each participant would also get a small amount of funds to carry out an applied research. The HAU team did not take part in this activity since (1) content of the course was nothing new to the CARES staff, and (2) the senior staff of the HAU team had the funds from the Ford Foundation to do their own research on GIS application already.

Activity 7. Junior Researchers undertake participatory action research projects

Junior researchers identified topics of interest for participatory action research in the Uplands of Vietnam. After self-identification of common interests, junior researchers developed collaborative research proposals for participatory action research. Junior researchers developed topics into research proposals and the HAU Forum working teams provided feedback on topics and research proposal development. Junior researchers with local community co-researchers undertook participatory action research projects.

In the beginning, HAU Junior Researchers’ study topics were: (1) for the Social-Economic Group: “Influenced factors on decision making of local people on their composite swiddening agroecosystem”; (2) for the Ethnical Group: “Geographical Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) application to evaluate of land allocation policy to land use system in upper part of the Ca River Basin”. The projects would be carried out in Hoa Binh and Nghe An, respectively.

Then, through several seminars, the topics were changed to: (1) “Factors Influencing Farmers' Adoption of Agroforestry: Case study in Seo village, Tan Minh commune, Da Bac district, Hoa Binh province”. The core research group members were Mr. Tran Nam Anh, Ms. Pham Thi Mai Huong, Ms. Pham Thanh Lan, Ms. Le Thi Thanh Phuong and Ms. Vu Thi Thao; and

(2) “The land cover changes overtime and natural resource management issues in Mau Duc Commune, Con Cuong District, Nghe An Province”. The core research group members are Mr. Vu Huu Cong, Mr. Tran Trung Kien, Mr. Tran Nguyen Bang, Nong Huu Duong, and Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet.

The process of the preparing and implementing of the studies as showed in Appendix 6.

As agreed upon in the first annual meeting at Da Lat, in order to promote sharing ideas, for more participation in the research and in the whole process of preparing and implementing the studies, the CARES team and ICARD team would join their research together. Unfortunately, since some seasons, the two teams had no chance to carry out any studies together.

Activity 8. Publications

The HAU team has used its publications fund for purchases and exchanges of publications among the Forum organizations. Thanks to these resources, HAU team has purchased and received offers from other member institutes. CARES has about 500 books and/or CD titles in its library. Among them are approximately 70 titles on ecology, 30 on agriculture, 10 on forestry, 20 on agroforestry, 60 on economics, 60 on policy, 50 on water resource management, 10 on Indigenous knowledge, and 30 on GIS and RS Application.

During this period, CARES has also shared publications with other Forum member Institutes, such as:

In Vietnamese version

1. *Agricultural production on Sloping Lands: Challenges and Opportunities;*
2. *Mountainous Areas: Research toward a Sustainable Development Ways;*
3. *Human ecology approach to sustainable development in Southwestern Mountain of Nghean Province;*
4. *The Achievements and Challenges on Natural Resources Management and Rural Livelihoods in Vietnam's Uplands;*
5. *Indigenous Fallow Management in Vietnam;*
6. *Rational Utilization of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection in Binh-Tri-Thien.*

In English version

7. *Red books, Green hills: The impact of economic reform on restoration ecology in the midlands of Northern Vietnam;*,
8. *Farming Systems Research and Development (translated publication in Vietnamese,*
9. *Marketing and agroforestry development in Vietnam's Uplands);*,
10. *Development trends in Vietnam's Northern mountain region;*,
11. *The use of Melia azedarach in Indigenous Fallow Management: An experience from Northern Vietnam;*,
12. *Soil Erosion and Nutrient balance in Swidden Fields of the Composite Swiddening Agroecosystem in the Northwestern Mountains of Vietnam;*,
13. *Bright peaks, dark valleys;*,
14. *Resources Management in the Ca River Basin: Policies, People and Poverty;*,
15. *The social and environmental dimensions of changes in land use in the Ca River Basin, Vietnam;*

16. *Social Organization and the Management of Natural Resources: A case study of Tat Hamlet, a Da Bac Tay Ethnic Minority Settlement in Vietnam's Northwestern Mountains ;*
17. *Culture, Environment, and Farming systems in Vietnam's Northern Mountain Region;*
18. *A Nutrient Balance Analysis of the Sustainability of a Composite Swiddening Agroecosystem in Vietnam's Northern Mountain Region;*
19. *Changes in the Composite Swidening System in Tat Hamlet in Vietnam's Northern Mountain in Response to Integration into the Market System;*
20. *Hydrological consequences of landscape fragmentation in mountainous northern Vietnam: evidence of accelerated overland flow generation.*

The HAU team also received some publications from its VUF member institutes.

From HUAUF:

1. *Research Results in the period of 1998-2001 on Community-based NRM (Vietnamese version);*
2. *Living with the floods: Coping & adaptation strategies of households & local institutions in central Vietnam (English version);*
3. *From workplace to workplace – Using e-mail lists to work together (Vietnamese version).*

From ICARD:

1. *Three Mechanisms the Market, the State, and the Community: Apply to Vietnam (Vietnamese version)*
2. *Income Diversification and Poverty Situation in Northern Uplands: Forms, Trends and Policy Petition (Vietnamese version).*
3. *Socioeconomic Atlas of Vietnam (English version)*

Thanks to this activity, sharing information among member institutes and among individual members was promoted; it enriched not only their libraries, but also their knowledge on the upland research and development situation and its trends.

As agreed upon in Da Nang Meeting, all papers that were presented at this meeting would be sent to Dr. Tran Duc Vien before June 20, 2005, and he would work thoroughly on them as editor in chief for a publication. He has received the drafts from Tay Nguyen University (one paper) and HAU (two papers) as of that date. Participating institutes need to be reminded of this more.

OVERALL EVALUATION AND RECOMENDATIONS

After the VUF meeting at Da Nang, the CARES organized a meeting to review the HAU Team activities in particular and all of VUF activities as a whole.

The VUF team members at HAU expressed that they were very happy to be members of the forum. It is very clear that the VUF is helpful not only to participating institutes and to individual persons who registered to be a member of it, but also to other institutes and individuals who are not members of it.

This project brought them many benefits mostly that opened opportunities for junior researchers when they were successful in carrying out participatory action research and for cross-institutional collaboration. They had the chance to take part in the valuable training courses, to get more and more knowledge and skills to do research, to join in the research activities which they really enjoyed, to make new friends and colleagues, and to meet and learn a lot of good things from their peer colleagues as well as from local farmers with whom they work with. In normal conditions, it is rather difficult to get benefits like that is the VUF helped the junior researchers upgrade their capacities for their own studies in the future.

The VUF established and helped develop an open forum for all registered participants from the institutes to have face-to-face and virtual exchanges on issues related to upland development, as is evidenced by regular contacts among forum members.

The VUF is a demonstration of inter-institutional collaboration as shown by the completion of all planned joint activities, annual meetings, training workshops, and publication sharing.

Junior researchers actively participated in doing a series of research projects that focused on a small number of critical issues and solutions for upland development through sustainable resource management (e.g. “Determinants of Farm-gate Price of Cashew nut in Binh Phuoc”, “Factors Influencing Farmers' Adoption of Agro-forestry”, and “The Change of Land Cover over the time and Natural Resources Management at the Ca River Basin”). This set of issues is explored in depth by researchers, especially junior researchers in a participatory way and are convincingly presented to policy makers.

As this project was considered a pilot period, this project is cannot avoided some small shortcomings, mostly related to structure, coordination, and individual and institutional cooperation. These shortcomings in no way dim the success and achievements of this project. Now, at the end of the pilot period, some recommendations should be stated for a future improvement of the VUF:

1. Since Vietnamese society is still somewhat of a feudal system, a strongly coordinated board needs to be set up. This board should have the ability to finalize and agree upon among member institutes. It should operate with participatory regulation of the forum and then all of members should follow the regulations of the board.
2. The Board should conduct all activities based on this regulation. It should set up a clear and transparent mechanism and coordinate and facilitate all systems by doing the following:
 - 1) *Develop a list of key stakeholders involved or interested in upland issues/problems*
 - 2) *Commission a study to identify key messages, allies, and targets of ongoing advocacy work*
 - 3) *Ensure that participating universities both understand and actively support advocacy messages*
 - 4) *Foster links with key allies and targets in advocacy campaign*
 - 5) *Based upon "best practice" findings, test the use of key messages targeted at GOV, donors and non-participating universities*
 - 6) *After testing, develop a long-term advocacy strategy*
 - 7) *Undertake visit to each university to check on and offer advice regarding ongoing project implementation*

- 8) *Solicit annual findings from universities, summarize and write synthesis reports*
 - 9) *Feedback summaries of synthesis reports to each university, with specific comments to each one*
 - 10) *Create a clear, concise format for financial reporting. Contract accounting experts to share with and explain to the process to each university (via phone, fax and email)*
 - 11) *Develop key indicators, monitoring schedule*
 - 12) *Review monitoring indicators and schedule for each participant university to ensure that they are mutually comparable*
 - 13) *Periodically review monitoring undertaken by each university*
 - 14) *Spot-check final evaluation implementation, as appropriate*
 - 15) *Undertake audits of each university's financial reports, as appropriate*
 - 16) *Develop a website to facilitate rapid and transparent information exchange among participating universities and the Ford Foundation*
 - 17) *Analyze program progress, monitor findings, and present "best practice" issues. Summarize emerging "best practices" on a regular basis*
 - 18) *Plan and facilitate cross visits, as appropriate, that demonstrate success*
 - 19) *Promote cross learning by using participating university staff members as key resource people for specific topics*
 - 20) *Analyze findings from periodic reviews*
3. To be more effective, The Coordinating Board should be divided into three divisions: Division on Human Resources Development, Division on Research and Outreach Activities, and Division on Information and Communication. The Board should not rotate among participating institutes in the first phase. It should remain with the same members for at least five years.
4. In addition to supporting junior staff with small grant funds for research, VUF should also provide support to senior staff for carrying out comprehensive research that are absolute requests by the MARD and the government. These project topics could be include:
- Sustainable livelihood for farmers who lost their land since expanding urban areas (or by expanding coffee state farm or by Son La Dam) in the Uplands;
 - Alternative production for swidden agricultures in the Uplands;
 - Policy analysis and environmental problems at different scales;
 - Market and marketing of upland agricultural and NTFP products;
 - Changes in the uplands after 20 years *doi moi*;
 - Environmental services and land use change in the uplands, e.g:
 - 1) From recognition to regulation or reward;
 - 2) Loss of biodiversity and its social cost in an agricultural landscape;
 - 3) Environmental and socio-economic impacts of institutional reforms on the agricultural sector of Vietnam Uplands.

CONCLUSION

The Vietnam Upland Forum is another Ford Foundation initiated and funded program for universities and institutes, which work on Vietnam's Uplands issues. The forum aims to

promote the sustainable development in the Uplands of Vietnam by linking on a regular and recurrent basis researchers and development practitioners of the partners in direct discussions, innovative learning, and implementation of participatory action research on Uplands. This initiative was expected to help foster a research process, which involves various stakeholders on upland integrated development. This first two years of the project can be considered as a pilot period for the realization of its vision and mandate. Researchers of the forum have many different chances to participate in the training and they have confronted a wide range of problems in conducting such research in the Uplands. Knowledge and skills of the local people in the upland and in the research process generated during the period has helped junior (and senior) researchers to identify gaps in their own knowledge that are significant to their own work in advancing and implementing various aspects of asset building in the Uplands.

VUF has brought a lot of benefit to the member institutes, especially to young researchers-the leadership of near the future. It has opened opportunities for junior researchers and for cross-institutional collaboration.

This project has significantly improved the working capacity of university staff in research skills and professional knowledge, and it has facilitated the adoption of a more farmer-driven approach to resource management and development in the Uplands, mostly for poverty reduction to the poor. All proposed plans have been carried out and the objectives have been achieved.

This project has positive impact on the staffs of HAU who are interested in building up the assets of poor people in the Uplands as well as in sustainable resource management in the Uplands. These efforts have also provided basic knowledge of the social sciences to natural scientists who are working with ethnic minorities and poor people in the Uplands.

All the participatory research topics basically aimed to help participants deal with concrete, site-specific knowledge about trans-sectoral aspects of upland development issues. The results so far express participants' commitment in conducting participatory research. This is the critical foundation for an ongoing process of exchanging experience and adopting new perspectives in particular ecological and social environments. In this sense research topics can be considered as on-the-job training events. It requires interaction with other actors, focusing on specific ways of implementing sustainable development. We are happy with the result so far. It was really done by junior fellows of the CARES. The junior and senior researchers at HAU have a deeper understanding of the great ecological and cultural diversity in Vietnam Northern Mountain Region.

Furthermore, HAU has demonstrated a series of research and its application in the Uplands and the benefits were given directly to upland households. The results have also transferred into lecture notes and many generations of HAU students as well as other agricultural and forestry universities have opportunities to get this knowledge and information about upland development.

A more structured information sharing program will foster inter-institutional coordination. The forum needs to work out ways of encouraging active participation, including a variety of discussion topics, instruments and methods, and other supports. To do so, the forum management needs to be re-organized and its transparency need to be evaluated. We hope that the re-organization will stimulate and help member institutes and individuals to better

understand the interconnected nature of resource-related problems and to work out solutions within their local working environment.

Dr. Nguyen Thanh Lam and Mr. Nguyen Vinh Quang prepared the first draft of this report. Then the draft report was distributed to the HAU staff for their further comments and suggestions. Finally, Dr. Tran Duc Vien, the director of CARES, approved this report according to the suggestions and comments from all project personnel.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 HAU Uplands Forum Membership List

Name	Gender	Background	Individual E-mail Address
1. Tran Nam Anh, Ba	M	Economics	namanh@cares.org.vn
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Total membership at HAU is 33, in which 15 staff is women. People who are highlighted are away for graduate studies.

Appendix 2
Participants of the Workshop on the
Applied Methodology for Environmental Planning and Management

Hanoi Agricultural University, 24-27th May 2004

No	Name	Institution/organization
1	Ms.Phan Sophary	RUPP, Cambodia
2	Mr. Ham Kim Kong	RUPP, Cambodia
3	Mr. Seak Sophat	RUPP, Cambodia
4	Mr.Kenchanh Sinsamphanh	NUOL, Lao PDR
5	Mr. Khamvieng Xayabout	NUOL, Lao PDR
6	Mr. Chanda Vongsombath	NUOL, Lao PDR
7	Dr. Soparth Pongquan	AIT, Thailand
8	Dr. Dao The Tuan	VASI
9	Dr. Nguyen Duy Binh	Ho Chi Minh National University
10	Mr. Tran Thanh Tan	Nong Lam University
11	Mr. Le Thanh Van	ICARD
12	Ms. Ha Thi Mung	Tay Nguyen University
13	Mr. Y Trou Aleo	Tay Nguyen University
14	Ms. Le Thi Thuy Hang	HUE University
15	Mr. Tran Ngoc Liem	HUE University
16	Dr. Tran Duc Vien	HAU
17	Mr. Mai Van Thanh	HAU
18	Mr. Ngo The An	HAU
19	Ms. Nguyen Thi Bich Yen	HAU
20	Mr. Bui Le Vinh	HAU
21	Mr. Nguyen Minh Ngoc	HAU
22	Ms. Le Thanh Phuong	CARES/HAU
23	Ms. Nguyen Thi Minh Nguyet	CARES/HAU
24	Mr. Tran Nguyen Bang	CARES/HAU
25	Mr. Tran Nam Anh	CARES/HAU
26	Mr. Tran Trung Kien	CARES/HAU
27	Mr. Nguyen Vinh Quang	CARES/HAU
28	Mr. Nguyen Quang Ha	CARES/HAU
29	Mr. Dang Viet Quang	CARES/HAU
30	Ms. Pham Thanh Lan	CARES/HAU
31	Mr. Pham Tien Dung	CARES/HAU
32	Ms. Dinh Hai Van	CARES/HAU

Appendix 3
Agenda of the workshop on the
Applied Methodology for Environmental Planning and Management

Hanoi Agricultural University, 24-27th May 2004

Day 1. May 25, 2004		
Time	Activities	Speakers
9h00- 9h15	Opening of the Workshop	Dr. Tran Duc Vien, Vice rector of HAU
9h15-10h30	Type of research	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
10h30-11h00	Coffee Break and taking picture	
11h00-12h00	(Cont.) Type of research	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
12h00-13h30	Lunch Break	
13h30-15h00	Data collection method for qualitative research	Dr. Dao The Tuan, VASI
15h00-15h15	Coffee Break	
15h15-16h30	Data collection method for quantitative research	Dr. Dao The Tuan, VASI
Day 2. May 26, 2004		
9h00-10h30	Data and information need for environmental management	Dr. Nguyen Duy Binh, HAU
10h30-10h45	Coffee Break	
10h45-12h00	(Cont.) Data and information need for environmental management	Dr. Nguyen Duy Binh, HAU
12h00-13h30	Lunch Break	
13h30-15h00	Sampling design and Sample size	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
15h00-15h15	Coffee Break	
15h15-16h30	(Cont.) Sampling design and Sample size	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
Day 3. May 27, 2004		
9h00-10h30	Data analysis	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
10h30-10h45	Coffee Break	
10h45-12h00	Data presentation and Reporting	Dr. Soparth, Thailand
12h00-	Lunch Break	

13h30		
13h30-15h00	Participants are divided into three groups to simultaneously discuss about applied methodology that have been chosen so far	
15h00-15h15	Coffee Break	
15h15-16h15	Group Presentation	
16h15-16h30	Closing Workshop	Dr. Tran Duc Vien, HAU
19h00-21h30	Farewell party	Nha Thuyen Ho Tay, 28 Thanh Nien street

Appendix 4
Participants of the Workshop on
Field Research on the Human Dimensions of Upland Agricultural Systems

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38	Dang Thi To Nga	Thai Nguyen UAF	
39	Ha Minh Tuan	Thai Nguyen UAF	
40	Nguyen Duy Phuong	Institute for Soil and Fertilizer Research, MARD	ndpptn@yahoo.com

Appendix 5
**Syllabus of the Workshop on Field Research on the Human Dimensions
of Upland Agricultural Systems**

September 27 - October 09, 2004

Participants are:

- Junior teachers/researchers (younger than 36 years old) from Vietnam's universities of Agriculture and Forestry;
- Currently carrying out a research/study in upland areas
- Bringing their research proposal (both in hard copy and in floppy) and data when attending the workshop.

Day 1: September 27

09:00-09:30 Opening: Purpose, scope, organization and schedule of workshop

09:30-09:45 Break

09:45-11:00 Lecture 1: *Elements of scientific methodology*

What is science?

What is knowledge?

'Proper' scientific methods

- Induction and the induction problem
- The hypothetical-deductive method
- How do we come up with a hypothesis?
- What is a 'good'/'proper' hypothesis?

The use of models in science

Scientific explanations

Types of explanation

The critique of 'positivistic', empirical science

11:00-11:15 Break

11:15-12:30 Lecture 2: *Research design – 1*

Converting a research theme into a hypothesis or a research question

What determines the choice of research theme?

Practical research design

12:30-14:00 Lunch break

14:00-15:30 Computer Lab. Exercise 1: *Participants revise research questions in his/her proposal*

Each participant prepare

- a. The title of his/her research proposal
- b. The research objectives and research questions/hypothesis in his/her proposal
- c. A brief critique on these research questions/hypothesis
- d. Revised research questions/hypothesis (if any)

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45-17:00 presenting result of exercise 1: Critique by instructors and participants.

Day 2: September 28

09:00-10:30 Lecture 3: *Research design - 2*
Working through all the steps from ideas to design

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45 - 12:15 presenting results of exercise 1: critique by instructors and participants (continuing)

12:15-13:30 Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30 presenting results of exercise 1: critique by instructors and participants (continuing)

15:30 - 15:45: Break

15:45 - 17:00 Computer Lab. Exercise 2. *Outlining research questions.*
Each participant prepares: One research question in the proposal he/she wants to outline
Etc.

Homework assignment: Participants to revise questions to submit to instructors at 0900

Day 3: September 29

09:00-10:30 Lecture 4: *Systems analysis and models*
Systems analysis and explanation
Nested systems and sub-systems
Causal loop diagramming: Land use/cover change in an upland hamlet
The concept of a model
Types of models
Outlining a simulation model of a composite swiddening system

10:30 - 10:45 break

10:45 - 12:15 presenting results of exercise 2: critique by instructors and participants

12:15 - 13:30 Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30 presenting results of exercise 2: critique by instructors and participants (continuing)

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45 - 17:00 Exercise 3. *Construct a relatively SMALL system* (or any others - decide by instructor). Participants working in-groups of five people (or team, if any already from one university), using A₀ papers to present results.

Homework assignment: Participants to revise diagramming of questions to submit to instructors at 0900

Day 4: September 30

09:00-10:30 Lecture 5: *Farm Household Economic Research (1)*

Objective of the sessions

Reference material

Definitions of systems

The set of systems comprising the agricultural sector

The eight properties of farm household systems

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 *Continue Lecture 5 (or exercise)*

12:15-13:30 Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30: Presenting results of exercise 3: critique by instructors and participants

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45 - 17:00 presenting results of exercise 3: critique by instructors and participants (continuing)

Day 5: October 01

09:00 - 10:30 Lecture 6: *Farm Household Economic Research (2)*

Economics as the framework for farm household analysis and alternative bases

Modes of farm-household economics research

Analytical situations within modes

Possible objectives of farm household systems

Research methods and comparative analysis

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 Lecture 7: *Participation-observation as a research technique*

12:15-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:30 Lecture 8: *Key informants and semi-structured interviewing*

15:30-15:45 break

15:45-17:00 Computer Lab. Participants revise research proposals (Individual or Team, if already from one university)

Day 6: October 04

09:00-10:30 Lecture 9: *Survey research and questionnaire design*

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 Exercise 4. Working in groups, develop a small questionnaire on any subject, administer this questionnaire to a sample of the class; derive simple statistics from the results. Be ready to present these statistics and an interpretation of what they mean to the class.

12:15-13:30 Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30: Continue Exercise 4.

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45 - 17:00 Presenting results of exercise 4: critique by instructors and participants.

Day 7: October 05

09:00-10:30 Lecture 10: *Farm Household Economic Research (3)*
Research methods and comparative analysis (cont.)

10:30 -10:45 break

10:45 - 12:15 Computer Lab. Participants revise research proposal (Individual or Team, if already from one university)

12:15-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:30 Lecture 11: *Community mapping and spatial analysis*
What is community mapping?
What types of data can be collected using community mapping?
What is spatial analysis? (simple and complex)
Examples of how it can be used in Uplands research.

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45-17:00 Computer Lab. Participants revise research proposal (Individual or Team, if already from one university)

Day 8: October 06

09:00-10:30 Lecture 12: *Farm Household Economic Research (4)*
Risk and uncertainty
Time dimensions in economic analysis

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 Computer Lab. Participants revise research proposal (Individual or Team, if already from one university)

12:15-13:30 Lunch break

13:30-15:30 Lecture 13: *Data recording and data base management*

Introduction to key functions, strengths and weaknesses of EXCEL

Statistical packages – discuss some of them that are available, what they do, what the dangers of using them are. What the advantages of using them are.

The advantages of entering and managing data in ACCESS

Example of a simple ACCESS database for the Ban Tat and how data is stored in it and can be extracted from it.

15:30 - 15:45 Break

15:45 - 17:00 Lecture 13: *Continuing*

Day 9: October 07

09:00 -10:30 Computer Lab. Exercise 5. *Data analysis.*

Each participant will make use of the Ca River Basin ACCESS Database to extract simple statistics for the villages that have been studied and answer questions related to the data.

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45 - 12:15 Computer Lab. Exercise 5. *Data analysis* (continuing)

12:15-13:30 Lunch break

13:30 - 15:30: Presenting results of exercise 5: critique by instructors and participants

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45 - 17:00 presenting results of exercise 5: critique by instructors and participants (continuing)

Day 10: October 08

09:00-10:30 Lecture 14: *Elements of a research proposal*

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 Lecture 15: *Academic writing and oral presentations*

12:15-13:30 Lunch Break

13:30-15:30 Computer Lab Participants continue to revise research proposal (Individual or Team, if already from one university)

15:30-15:45 Break

15:45-17:00 Team working: Teams complete revision of their research proposals

Day 11: October 09

09:00-10:15 Presentation of revised proposals and critique by instructors and fellow participants (this too is a key learning experience)

10:15-10:30 Break

10:30-12:00 Presentation of revised proposals and critique by instructors and fellow participants

12:00-13:30 Lunch break

13:30-15:00 Presentation of revised proposals and critique by instructors and fellow participants

15:00-15:15 Break

15:15-17:00 Presentation of revised proposals and critique by instructors and fellow participants

Homework assignment: Participants to complete research proposals to submit to instructors at the end of this day

18:00-20:00 Farewell dinner

Appendix 6

The process of the preparing and implementing the studies of the CARES Junior Staff

Group I (Social and Economics)		Group II (GIS and RS)	
Works	Time	Works	Time
Draft of the fundamental/guideline	July 1-15/03	Draft of the fundamental/guideline	July 1-15/03
Discussion of the guideline at the CARES annual meeting	July 19/03	Discussion of the guideline at the CARES annual meeting	July 19/03
Report the guideline at the Da Lat Meeting	Sep.16/03	Report the guideline at the Da Lat Meeting	Sep.16/03
Adjustment of the guideline	Oct./03	Adjustment of the guideline	Oct./03
Report the guideline and information/data need to be collected at the CARES annual meeting	Nov.22/03	Report the guideline and information/data need to be collected at the CARES annual meeting	Nov.22/03
Questionnaire Design	Dec./03	Questionnaire Design	March 1-5/03
Selecting study site	March 10/04	Selecting study site	March 10/04
Testing the questionnaire and then adjustment it	March 15-17/04	Allocate Tasks to each member	March 15/04
Allocate Tasks to each member	May 05/04	First field trip	March 18-24/04
Field trip	May10-18/04	Design database	March 29-April 02/04
Design database	May 25-30/04	Meeting to install data	April/ 04
Report all of works have been done and first results at the CARES annual meeting	Sept. 04	Install data	April and May 04
Writing workshop	Nov.29-Dec.03/04	First writing workshop	July 01-09/04
First revision of the report	Jan-Feb/05	Second field trip	August 9-20/04
Deliver report to the senior fellows to get comments	March/05	Install data and completed field notes	August 22-30/04
Second revision of the report	April/05	Second writing workshop	January 05
Present the paper at the CARES annual meeting	May 21/05	Deliver report to the senior fellows to get comments	March/05
Present the paper at Da nang Meeting	May 28/05	Revise the report	April/05
Completed of the final paper	June 01-15/05	Present the paper at the CARES annual meeting	May 21/05
		Present the paper at Da nang Meeting	May 28/05
		Completed of the final paper	June 01-15/05