



CHAPTER **5**

National policy support for the WIND training programme  
– Extending WIND farmer volunteer system through the National OSH Programme



CHAPTER 5

Chapters 2 – 4 describe how the people in the Mekong Delta area of Viet Nam, in cooperation with the Institute for Science of Labour, Japan, developed and applied the WIND training programme as a practical method to help farmers improve safety, health and working conditions. The WIND farmer volunteer systems extended practical OSH improvement ideas to many farmers through the village health centre networks. Learning from these positive experiences, the next important challenge was to link the WIND programme to the national OSH policy of Viet Nam to achieve a wider impact and sustainability (Figure 5-1). The ILO (International Labour Organization) actively participated in the WIND training programme development from this stage, and worked together in the course of developing nationwide WIND farmer volunteer systems in Viet Nam.

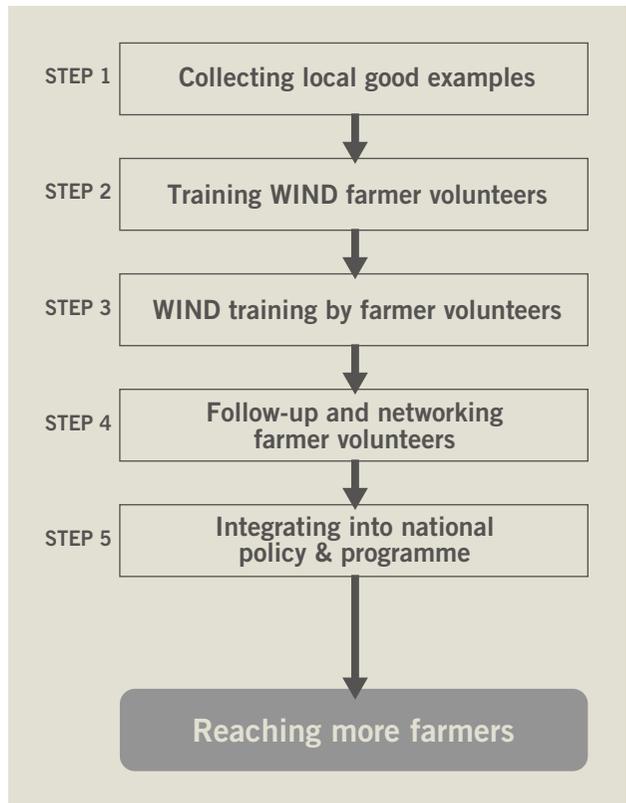


Figure 5-1. Steps taken to extend WIND training and reach more grassroots level farmers



## 5-1. Promoting national policy support for improving OSH of farmers

In 2004, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MOARD) jointly developed a consolidated national policy for improving OSH in agriculture and the quality of farmers' lives.<sup>1</sup> The government of Viet Nam needed practical measures to implement this new policy. The WIND training programme was one measure that filled this immediate need.

The Bureau of SafeWork (BSW), MOLISA, took the lead in promoting the WIND programme, referring to the successful experiences of the WIND training programme in Cantho. MOLISA formed a project steering committee to extend OSH protection to more farmers together with MOH, MOARD, the Farmers' Union and the Women's Union. The ILO, through the ILO/Japan Multilateral Programme, provided timely financial and technical assistance to this initiative of the government of Viet Nam.

The project named “OSH Capacity Building in Agriculture”, with funding support from the ILO/Japan Multilateral Programme, began in 2004 and ended in 2007. The project formulated active interaction mechanisms between national policy and

<sup>1</sup> Source: Directive No 20/2004 by the Prime Minister on the strengthening of steering and implementing occupational safety and health in agriculture.

grassroots workplace level actions (Figure 5-2) to improve OSH among Vietnamese farmers. Practical models and activities at the grassroots level in one province could be shared with many farmers in other provinces for their benefit through national OSH policy support. National OSH policy and programme needed to be practical and realistic to reach workplace levels and promote workable OSH measures through the local government infrastructure.

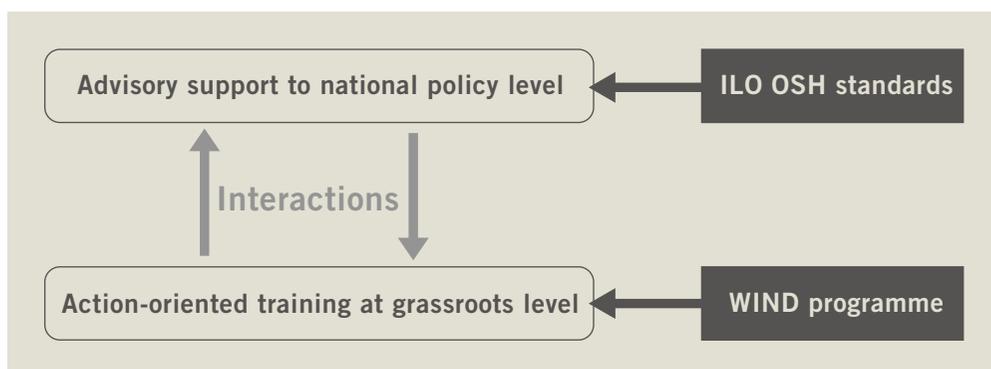


Figure 5-2 WIND aims to make a positive impact on national policy level from the grassroots level

## 5-2. Provincial support committees helping WIND farmer volunteers

An important challenge in the new project funded by the ILO/Japan Multilateral Programme was how to apply the WIND programme as a practical measure and establish a workable support mechanism at provincial and district levels to WIND farmer volunteers within the national OSH policy framework. The WIND farmer volunteer systems established in Cantho had already been functioning in several provinces and strengthened farmers' own improvement initiatives. We were confident of the appropriateness of the WIND training methods to train many WIND farmer volunteers and maintain their networks in different provinces and districts.

The project selected three provinces (Ha Nam, Nghe An and Hau Giang) and one city (Can Tho) as the initial project sites and established provincial support committees (PSCs) to ensure multi-agency cooperation to use all their channels to reach farmers at the grassroots level. As shown in figure 5-3, PSCs consisted of the five agencies concerned at provincial level. They were the Provincial Departments of Labour, Health, and Agriculture, and Provincial Farmers' Union and Women's Union.

These five agencies had different networks to reach farmers and unique experiences

to improve the quality of farmers' work and life. The Department of Labour has a mandate to protect all workers including farmers through labour inspection. The Department of Health has strong rural health centre networks to improve the health of farmers. The Department of Agriculture understands farmers' needs to apply for new agricultural production methods and safety and health risks associated with the new production methods. Provincial farmers' and women's unions have the strong networks among farmers and farmer families. Cooperation among these five agencies was expected to produce synergy and have a strong impact.

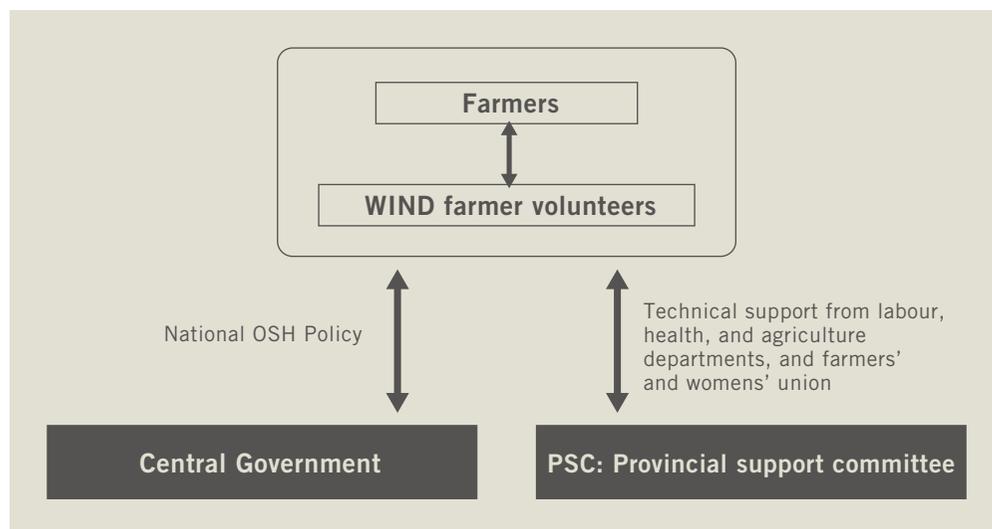


Figure 5-3. Supporting WIND farmer volunteer at provincial and national levels

The established PSCs played vital roles in training WIND farmer volunteers and supporting their mini WIND workshops (Figure 5-4). The main functions of PSCs were the following:

### 1) Training WIND farmer volunteers:

PSCs organized and carried out Training-of-Trainers (TOT) courses to train farmers to become WIND farmer volunteers. The participating farmers learned participatory training skills and simple, low-cost ideas in improving materials handling, work posture, machine and electrical safety, work environment, control of hazardous chemicals, and welfare facilities.

### 2) Assisting WIND farmer volunteers in conducting mini WIND training:

PSCs distributed training materials (good example photo sheets, checklists, planning sheets, etc.) to WIND farmer volunteers and advised them on how to organize the mini WIND training workshops effectively. WIND farmer volunteers carried out the mini WIND workshops by themselves without direct participation of PSC members.



Figure 5-4. Participatory training from provincial WIND trainers to WIND farmer volunteers

### 3) Organizing follow-up activities after mini WIND workshops:

PSCs organized three types of follow-up activities to support WIND farmer volunteers. Firstly, PSCs held regular follow-up meetings for WIND farmer volunteers together with farmers who had participated in the mini WIND training. In the follow-up meetings, the volunteers learned from each other examples of OSH improvements made by the trainer farmers in different target villages. This was an opportunity to increase their improvement ideas. These good examples were often added to their presentation materials in the following mini WIND workshops. In the follow-up meetings, the volunteers also exchanged their problems and constraints and learned solutions from the experiences of other WIND farmer volunteers.

Secondly, PSCs and WIND farmer volunteers directly visited trained farmers. The PSC members observed the improvements made by the trained farmers and learned the steps on how the farmers developed their ideas for improvements and materialized them. PSCs used the knowledge and experiences obtained from these direct visits to renew the training materials and programmes.

Thirdly, PSCs organized achievement workshops once a year in their provinces. The achievement workshop invited representatives of WIND farmer volunteers and trained farmers. This was a pleasant opportunity for farmers and volunteers to show their improvement results and exchange practical ideas for further improvements. PSCs provided awards for farmers who made excellent improvements.

### 4) Collecting improvements and reporting to the Bureau for SafeWork, MOLISA:

PSCs collected improvement examples, classified them, and counted the total number of improvements according to technical areas. The collection was made in cooperation



3. Farmer WIND volunteers train farmers



4. Farmers implement improvements

with WIND farmer volunteers. The consolidated improvement reports were sent to the Bureau for SafeWork (BSW), MOLISA. BSW analyzed the reported results for policy making to strengthen their support measures to farmers. Good examples newly developed by farmers were used to upgrade the WIND training materials.

### 5-3. Impact of the WIND farmer volunteer system with PSC support

The WIND farmer volunteer system developed in Cantho has gradually expanded into different provinces in Viet Nam within the framework of the MOLISA/ILO project, “Capacity building of OSH in agriculture”. The PSCs have played essential support roles in this development. As shown in figure 5-5, 480 WIND farmer volunteers were trained and 7,922 farmers participated in the mini WIND training. To 2007, more than 28,508 improvements were reported to MOLISA through PSCs from the participating WIND farmers. After the end of the project in 2007, the WIND farmer volunteer systems were integrated into the 1st National OSH Programme and have continued to grow (see Figure 5-4).

The WIND farmer volunteer system with support from the PSCs has produced significant impacts on OSH developments in agriculture in Viet Nam and has introduced new, workable approaches to help farmers make positive changes in their work and lives. In addition to the changes to OSH and working conditions of farmers, the WIND training has had a positive impact on the attitude and way of thinking of many WIND trainers, who were local government officials or the staff of local agencies. The project analyzed these positive experiences and has identified the following impacts:



Figure 5-5. Expanding WIND farmer volunteer systems in Viet Nam  
- Achievements of the MOLISA/ILO project, 2005-2007

### 1) Focusing on visible improvements:

The farmer WIND volunteer system has proven effective for the practical dissemination of the WIND methods to more and more grassroots level farmers. Figure 5-6 to 5-9 are examples of improvements made by the participating farmers. The numbers of participating farmers and their improvements are still growing. In addition, the WIND training has positively influenced farmers who did not attend the training. Learning from their neighbouring WIND farmers, they have also implemented many low-cost improvements autonomously.



Figure 5-6. Improvement example made by farmers: Self-made hand trucks for carrying heavy materials



Figure 5-7. Safe storage of pesticides (left) and used bottles (right)

## 2) Farmer-centred approaches:

The volunteer system has positively changed the mindset of local government officials who became WIND trainers. In the past, they had assisted local farmers through regulatory or supervisory approaches. Following the introduction of the WIND farmer volunteer system, farmer-centred approaches were taken. They have played more advisory roles in a friendly manner and relying on farmers' own initiatives.

## 3) Follow-up and sustainability:

Follow-up activities after the WIND training to promote sustainability became routine for the WIND trainers involved and the WIND farmer volunteers. A common understanding was established that the WIND training itself is just a starter for long-lasting improvement actions and cooperation. The importance of networking efforts, regular follow-up contacts with each other, and step-wise improvements was shared as key ideas for sustainability.



Figure 5-8. Covering moving machine belts.



Figure 5-9. Multi-level rack for a convenient kitchen

#### 4) Good practice approaches:

WIND has promoted good practice approaches. In the past, some officials or OSH practitioners tended to look at and mention the weak points of farmers and photos of dangerous farms or accidents were shown without solutions in the OSH training and information dissemination. Good practice approaches shifted these mindsets to be more positive and action-oriented, focusing on existing good practices among farmers.

#### 5) Effective use of audio-visual aids:

WIND trainers used audio-visual tools effectively to explain the local improvement examples to participating farmers. They used digital cameras and photographed local good examples and improvements implemented by trained farmers. The WIND trainers developed clear-cut powerpoint presentation files showing these good example photos. Photo sheets were used for mini WIND workshops. The project provided each target province with a digital camera, a note computer, and a data projector. The WIND trainers fully applied them as powerful training devices.

#### 6) Inter-ministerial cooperation:

In the course of the development of the WIND farmer volunteer system, different ministries and agencies were able to work together for the same purpose. These opportunities strengthened their communication and cooperation. At a national policy level, representatives of the Ministries of Labour, Health and Agriculture

frequently gathered together to discuss and develop a joint national policy on OSH in agriculture and training programmes for farmers.

### **7) Mobilizing local government units:**

Inter-departmental/agency cooperation matured and became routine at the provincial level. The five agencies, consisting of the provincial departments of labour, health, and agriculture, farmers' union and women's union, worked closely to train and support WIND farmer volunteers. The representatives of the five agencies at provincial level jointly prepared the training workshops, visited the trained farmers, convened follow-up activities, and collected the improvements carried by the trained farmers. During the follow-up and achievement workshops at provincial and national levels, they assisted participating farmers to develop their presentations.

### **8) Empowering farmers to improve multiple aspects of their working lives:**

The WIND programme assisted participating farmers to make positive changes in their work and lives at their own initiative. These positive experiences increased their confidence that they could make changes themselves. Improvement actions in safety and health became an entry point to changes of many farmers. They looked at broader aspects of their working lives. Some of them started using new farming methods and producing new agriculture products to generate a better income while others improved family financial planning.



## 5-4. Integrating WIND programme into the First National OSH Programme of Viet Nam

Viet Nam launched the 1st National OSH Programme<sup>2</sup> in 2006 referring to ILO Promotional Framework for OSH Convention, 2006 (No. 187). The Prime Minister endorsed the National OSH Programme. The National Programme selected “Promoting prevention and control of occupational accidents and occupational diseases in agriculture and rural occupations” as one of the seven priority actions. The other six priority areas were: (1) Capacity building and improvement of the effectiveness of the State administration on labour protection; (2) Improvement of working conditions in enterprises with focus on minimizing occupational accidents in mining and quarrying, use of electricity and construction; (3) Improvement of the quality of labour protection performance in small and medium-sized enterprises; (4) Enhancement of prevention of occupational diseases; (5) Dissemination of information, education and training to enhance awareness of different levels, sectors, organizations and individuals to bring into play the roles of the public in labour protection activities; and (6) Capacity building in the study and application of OSH scientific and technological advances.

The consolidated government cooperation mechanisms between OSH-related ministries and agencies played a vital role in reviewing and analyzing the existing OSH situation in Viet Nam to create its strategic and practical national OSH policy. They jointly collected existing OSH information from different sources by using various channels and reviewed and analyzed them. The information collected and analyzed was comprehensive covering occupational injury and disease statistics, laws and regulations, inspection, training, research, information and campaign activities. This joint effort produced the first national OSH profile in Viet Nam. The profile described the current OSH situation in Viet Nam in detail and provided useful information to further develop OSH in this country.



OSH in agricultural and rural sectors was highlighted because of the background activities and achievements in OSH in agriculture through the development of the WIND farmer volunteer systems. The National OSH Programme confirmed the collaborative implementation structure between the Ministries of Agriculture,

<sup>2</sup> Source: Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam; National Programme on Labour Protection, Occupational Safety and Occupational Health up to 2010.



Labour and Farmers' Union and secured the necessary national budget for implementation.

The WIND farmer volunteer systems have been growing within the framework of the National OSH Programme by using the national budget and government infrastructure. As of 2009, 140 WIND farmer volunteers are working in 27 provinces. In total, 10,722 farmers have participated in the mini WIND training. PSCs counted 42,969 improvements implemented by the trained farmers.

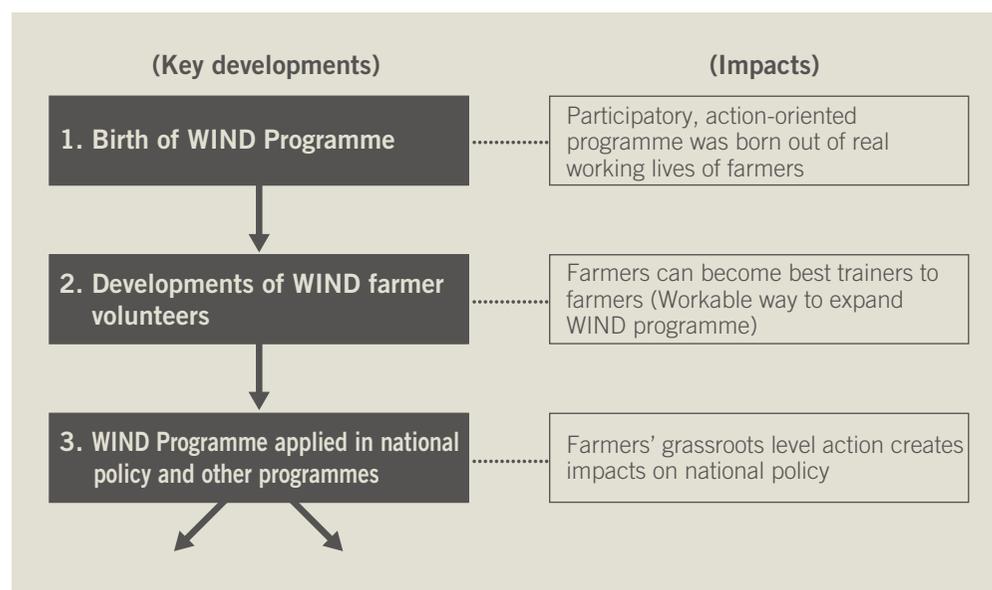


Figure 5-10. Three key developments of WIND Programme

## 5-5. Conclusions

The WIND programme, which started as a small pilot activity in 1994 in the Mekong Delta, continued to grow and was finally adopted in the consolidated national OSH policy of Viet Nam to progressively cover all farmers (Figure 5-10). WIND farmer volunteer systems originally developed in Cantho were accepted and functioned well in many new provinces. Provincial Support Committees (PSCs) consisting of Provincial Departments of Labour, Health, and Agriculture, and Farmers' Union and Women's Union provided consolidated support to many WIND farmer volunteers for their sustainable action. This inter-agency cooperation was the key to the success of the WIND programme at the provincial level. Participatory approaches adopted in WIND empowered participating farmers to make changes in broad aspects of their working lives. Many WIND trainers, most of whom were local government officials, also learned measures to support farmers positively through the WIND training.