This questionnaire can be downloaded from the IFOAM website at:
http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/pgs.html

INTRODUCTION

There are now many Participatory Guarantee Programs serving thousands of small farmers around the world. While there is enormous diversity in how these programs have implemented the various functions of a PGS, the key characteristics (including inclusivity and participation of stakeholders at all levels of operation, transparency and peer appraisals of farms) just to name a few, have proven to be consistent around the world.

This is not an attempt (or even a proposal) to harmonize the way PGS programs are run internationally. The great strength of PGS is that the mechanisms are regionally appropriate and under the full control of the local stakeholders.

The purpose of this voluntary questionnaire is to provide PGS programs around the world with a “Self-Evaluation” tool to see how they are meeting the key PGS characteristics. It is also hoped that, very much in the spirit of PGS transparency, we share our answers with each other. In this way, we will end up both with a comprehensive list of Participatory Guarantee Systems as well as notes on operational procedures that we can use to strengthen the global PGS movement.

The order of these questions generally tries to follow the order of the “PGS Concept Document” which formed the basis of these questions. That document can be found on the www.ifoam.org and Ecovida websites.

Though only one final submission should be made for each PGS program, your group may find it educational to have as many stakeholders as possible answer the questions including farmers, consumers, facilitating NGOs as well as national or regional level coordinating staff.

The results from any groups that wish to share their self-evaluations will be maintained and kept updated online at the www.ifoam.org website.

HOW IT WORKS

The questions are phrased so that “YES” answers align with the characteristics of PGS. That being said, not all questions require YES answers. Based on the “PGS Concept Document” and observations of PGS groups around the world, some questions do align with KEY CHARACTERISTICS of a PGS. For those questions, it seems more important that all PGS are able to answer those questions affirmatively. To make them easier to identify, those questions are marked as “IMPORTANT CHARACTERISTIC”.

The IFOAM PGS Task Force hopes that this self-evaluation document will inspire PGS groups to learn from and share with each other, as well as to educate other groups new to PGS about the many ways that PGS groups around the world have implemented core PGS values in ways that are culturally appropriate to their region.
PGS NAME and CONTACT INFORMATION

Name of the PGS: Vietnam PGS
Contact Person: Truong Minh Hoang Year program launched: 2009
Country(ies) Being Served: Vietnam
Region(s) Being Served: Northern Vietnam (but expansion being considered)
Number of producers involved in the SGP: 260
Number of producers currently certified by the SGP: 171
Address: ADDA Office, R.605-606, Narenca building, No.85 Nguyen Chi Thanh street, Dong Da district, Hanoi, Vietnam
Phone: +84-4 37623533 Website: www.vietnamorganic.vn Email: vietnamorganic@gmail.com

SHARED VISION AND AGREED UPON NORMS

1) Is our program based on generally recognized organic principles?
   ☒ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

2) Is it based on a national, regional or international Organic standard (International examples include the IFOAM IBS and Codex. National standards include USDA Organic, JAS, Indian NPOP, regional standards include the EU regulation, the East Africa Organic Product Standard), or on national private standard?
   ☒ Yes ☐ No

   Please elaborate especially where it goes beyond organic:

3) Did all our stakeholders have an influence in the choice and adoption of our Organic Norms?
   ☒ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

   Please list key stakeholders:
   Farmer groups, traders (private sector), consumers, Farmers' Union, local NGOs, scientists

4) Are our norms easily available and accessible to all stakeholders or other interested parties?
   ☒ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

   Please elaborate on how people can access them:
   Through the website and by contacting the ADDA office.
5) Do we have mechanisms in place to ensure farmers fully understand what they are agreeing to (Examples may include short summary of the standards, regular trainings, regular meetings or place they can contact for more information about practices or allowable materials)?

☑ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

6) Are Social Justice Principles including gender equality and fair wage embraced by our PGS?

☐ Yes  ☒ No

*Please elaborate:*

Not yet. We are considering that point

**PROCEDURES TO VERIFY PRODUCERS’ COMPLIANCE AND UNDERSTANDING**

7) Is information created and maintained for each farm?

☑ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

*Please elaborate the type (paper application, video, etc.):*

Paper application

8) Does this information include specific questions about farm operations to ensure procedures on the farm are in accordance with our accepted organic standards?

☑ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

9) Do our producers take a pledge, declaration, oath, or promise that they will follow the standards (written, verbally stated or documented in some culturally appropriate way)?

☑ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

*Please Elaborate:*

Written pledge

10) Are annual on-site reviews/inspections carried out for every farm in our PGS?

☑ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

11) Do producers take part in the annual on-site review/inspection process?
12) As a policy, can consumers or other stakeholders visit the producers (Open Gate Policy)?

- Yes
- No

**DOCUENTED MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

13) Is the following information maintained by our PGS:

   a) General Information about each farm / operation
      - Yes
      - No

   b) Producer’s Pledge (or record if Verbal Pledge)
      - Yes
      - No

   c) Record of onsite review/inspection
      - Yes
      - No

   d) Record of attendance at local meetings
      - Yes
      - No

   e) Record of certification for each farm / operation
      - Yes
      - No

   f) Is this information accessible to members of the public?
      - Yes
      - No

*Please elaborate:

Most information (pledge, farm management plan, inspection reports and minutes of local meetings) is kept at the Local group level. It is available to all interested but not in a general way, e.g., through the PGS website.

14) Have efforts been made to minimize paperwork necessary to certification

- Yes
- No

15) Are the steps to certification process publicly available to all stakeholders?

- Yes
- No
16) Can stakeholders easily find out who is certified?
   ☑ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

HORIZONTALITY

17) Is decision and policy making about PGS procedures made by either producers or regularly elected producer representatives?
   ☑ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

18) Are there mechanisms in place to regularly review and improve PGS procedures and policies?
   ☑ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

19) Are our PGS Procedures appropriate to the cultural context in which they are used (for example verbal pledges and video documentation in areas of low literacy)?
   ☑ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

20) Are producers the primary decision makers about which producers are to be certified? (as opposed to a third party or separate organizational group)?
   ☑ Yes ☐ No (Important Characteristic)

Please Elaborate:
But the decisions are made by the Local group where also other stakeholders are represented.

21) If it’s a national program, is there room for local and regional variations to the rules and operational procedures of the PGS as long as main functional points are maintained? (For example, maybe the on-site inspection can be changed or added to as long as they stick to agreed basic standards)
   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☑ Not applicable

Please elaborate, give examples:
Vietnam Government has not supported anything for PGS

CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT IN THE PGS

22) Do consumers have the option of being active members of the PGS Group?
23) Are consumers able to be included in the Regional and National decision making bodies
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No

24) Are consumers able to be included in the Certification Process?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No

25) Is our PGS program endorsed by any consumer group? This could include environmental organizations, health advocacy organizations, etc
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No

**SYSTEMS FOR MANAGING NON-COMPLIANCE**

26) Are there prescribed consequences for non-compliance?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No *(Important Characteristic)*

27) Is there a system for managing non-compliance?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No *(Important Characteristic)*

28) Are producers in the PGS involved in the system for managing non-compliance?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No *(Important Characteristic)*

**MECHANISMS FOR SUPPORTING PRODUCERS**

29) Is there a system for producers to participate in trainings or sharing meetings with other local member-producers of the PGS?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No *(Important Characteristic)*

30) Does our organization offer agricultural technical advisory (or economic or social) services to producers?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No

31) Does the PGS program have mechanisms in place to avoid conflict of interest?
   ☑ Yes   ☐ No *(Important Characteristic)*
Please explain:
*At all major decision making levels different stakeholders are represented.*

**SEALS AND LABELS**

32) Is there a seal or logo available for our farmers to use?
   - ☒ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

33) Does the PGS own or control the seal?
   - ☒ Yes  ☐ No

34) Does each producer receive an individual certificate or some proof of their certification status?
   - ☒ Yes  ☐ No  *(Important Characteristic)*

**Optional: Additional Questions on Sustainability of the Program**

35) How is our PGS program funded now? Can the program be entirely self-funded in the future?
   ADDA has supported for PGS till the end of August, 2012 due to the completion of the project of Organic Agriculture Development. Most of member running PGS program are volunteer without any payment. For the main operations of PGS including printing, annual meeting, inspection and so on, we can call for the contribution from companies as well as a part from producers.

36) If producers pay a fee to be certified, do they feel it is a fair fee? What fee is charged?
   Fee of 100,000 Vietnam Dong (5.0 US$) is being considered and farmers stated this is a fair amount. However, we are now considering to change the fee to be more suitable with the situation that we don't have the financial aid from ADDA and the cost increasing.

37) Do producers and other stakeholders participate in the operation of the PGS to keep costs and overhead down? In what ways do they participate?
   Producers participate in inspection, certification and technical support. Other stakeholders participate in certification, technical support and general management of the PGS.