The U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group: Make Agent Orange History
Track Two diplomacy and the case of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group

Module and Simulation Description

The instructional module is based on the case of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group on Agent Orange/Dioxin and will blend reading and discussion on Track Two and Multi-track diplomacy with role-play simulating the Dialogue Group’s first meeting. The module is divided into four lessons:

Lesson A is an introduction of Multi-track diplomacy, particularly focusing on Track Two or citizen-to-citizen diplomacy.

Lesson B provides a framework for better understanding Track Two diplomacy by introducing the case of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group on Agent Orange.

Lesson C is dedicated to simulating the first meeting of the U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group and gives participants a chance to immerse themselves in the case to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced in coordinating and convening Track Two talks. Participants will also explore some of the important elements that must be considered in order to lay groundwork for effective and productive dialogue.

Lesson D is for debriefing and discussion of the simulation experience as well as the outcome of the actual U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group’s initial meetings and recent accomplishments.

The reading and multimedia material provided with this module, discussion, skills exercises, and simulation will provide an understanding of how diplomacy techniques like citizen-to-citizen dialogue are used to resolve complex and often culturally sensitive problems where direct interactions between governments or organizations cannot be effective.

Preparation Material

Articles on Track Two diplomacy are included to provide an overview of the Track Two process. Communication exercises allow for participants to practice skills used in meeting facilitation. Biographical information on the various members of the initial Dialogue Group is provided, along with links to multi-media and print information about the Agent Orange legacy and the process of convening the first U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group. The information will prepare participants to represent the point of view of one of the original members—within the context of a simulated first meeting—so they can look critically through the delegate’s lens at the design process for convening the group and the challenges presented in engaging in diplomatic dialogue. Finally, additional resources are listed as recommended reading for those who wish to delve further into the case and issues surrounding the Agent Orange legacy.

Recommended discussion will focus on process and address critical elements of the first meeting including:

• who was selected for the Dialogue Group and why;
• what considerations might have been given to the selection process;

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• what considerations must be given to the “first” meeting; and
• who gets to talk first and why details like that are important.

Participants will also explore how to engage the group in building trust, framing issues, and developing convening "procedures" or "group conditions" that they could all agree to in order to begin to address the issues. It will be an invigorating exercise in critical thinking about Track Two diplomacy.

The Lesson Plan begins on page 3.
Lesson Plan

Preparation Material: All lesson material can be found at http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html.

Instructor material
Lesson Plan

Student handouts
- Syllabus
- Bibliography (see “References” tab in binder)
- Course reader (It is optional for instructors to provide course readers. All reading material is provided in PDF form and can be provided to a print shop if a course reader is preferred.)

Lesson A: Track Two Diplomacy

Objectives: To identify and distinguish between different diplomacy styles (Track One, Track Two, and Multi-track), and recognize and appreciate diversity and varying perspectives.

Reading assigned one week ahead as preparation for this lesson: (All material can be downloaded from: http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html)


Multi-media assigned one week ahead as preparation for this lesson:


Informative Web sites on Agent Orange Provided Courtesy of the Aspen Institute:
Make Agent Orange History: http://makeagentorangehistory.org/

The Aspen Institute: http://www.aspeninstitute.org/policy-work/agent-orange
Agent Orange Record—A continuing legacy of the Vietnam War:  
http://www.agentorangerecord.org/

The Culture Network: http://onevietnam.org/

Life is Beautiful—A campaign to raise awareness and funds for people with disabilities in Vietnam: http://www.lifeisbeautiful.vn/

Viet Fellows—A project of Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy: http://www.vietfellows.org

Vietnam Reporting Project—A project of the Renaissance Journalism Center:  
http://vietnamreportingproject.org/

Lesson material:

Instructor material
Track Two Diplomacy Discussion Guide (can be used by instructor as a discussion guide or handed out to students as a review sheet).

Skills exercise(s):

Skills Exercise 1 (handout): Three Similarities and One Difference – 30 min.

Lesson B: U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group

Objectives: To observe the application of Track Two diplomacy using the U.S.-Vietnam dialogue on Agent Orange as a case study, and practice reframing and active listening skills.

Prepare for simulation by assigning biographies, and reviewing instructions and proposed meeting agenda.

Reading assigned as preparation for this lesson: (All material can be downloaded from: http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).


Review biographies


Read pages 3 - 18

Suggested listening as preparation for this lesson: (Access at http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).


Other resources for consideration (not provided with module):


Lesson material:

Instructor material
Process Discussion Guide
Sign-up sheet for simulation

Student handouts
Lesson B Process Worksheet

For simulation preparation:
Delegate Biographies
Simulation Instructions
Proposed Meeting Agenda

Skills exercise(s):

Skills Exercise 3: The Island – 40 min.
Lesson C: Simulation

Objective: Simulate the first U.S. Vietnam Dialogue Group meeting representing the points of view of one of the original members. Exploratory discussion will address basic considerations of meeting procedures and protocols for long-term engagement.

Reading assigned as preparation for this lesson: (All material can be downloaded from: http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).


Suggested material for preparation for simulation: (Except for video segment, all material can be downloaded from http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).

Vietnam Reporting Project fellow Thuy Vu: [Video segments].
http://vietnamreportingproject.org/

Aspen Institute Fact Sheets on U.S.-Vietnam Dialogue Group


Ford Foundation. (2007, June 20). Joint Humanitarian Group is Launched to Build Support to Overcome Agent Orange Legacies. [Format for press release]


Lesson material:
Instructor material
Simulation Objectives and Proposed Agenda (Discussion Guide)
Lesson D: Discussion and Summary

Note: A portion of this time may also be used to continue discussion.

Objectives: Wrap up simulation if more time is necessary. Debrief simulation. Discuss outcome of actual Dialogue Group and assess basic understanding of the Track Two process.

Reading assigned as preparation for this lesson: (All material can be downloaded from: http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).


Other suggested reading in preparation for this lesson: (All material can be downloaded from: http://www.peaceinstitute.hawaii.edu/agent-orange-module/lesson-resources.html).


Lesson material:

Instructor material

Reflection Paper assignment