

News and Events of the LIN Center for Community Development

Research Results: Access to Justice for Disadvantaged Groups Based on Interviews with 60 Not-for-Profit Organizations in HCMC

On Thursday morning, 24 November 2011, nearly 30 representatives from HCMC NPOs, international organizations, government agencies, legal associations, and representatives from JIFF participated in a dissemination workshop to present the findings of a LIN/SISD research on the role of not-



for-profit organizations in promoting access to justice for disadvantaged groups in HCMC. Thanks to Better Work for lending us their training room for this event.

The research is part one of a two part project named, "Building Capacity of Civil Society Organizations in HCMC", sponsored by the Justice Initiative Facilitation Fund (JIFF). Ms.Nguyen Thi Minh Chau, representing the Southern Institute for Sustainable Development (SISD), which is LIN's partner in this project, presented the findings, which identified gaps in legal knowledge of both beneficiaries and the NPOs supporting them.

Economic reasons, a lack of awareness about laws or procedures, fear and/or mistrust in institutions designed to promote access to justice were some of the key barriers NPOs said their beneficiaries face. Based on the research results, it became clear that many NPO staff do not know or do not understand clearly about the rights of their beneficiaries, let alone the processes and procedures to enforce those rights. Compounding the problem is a lack of meaningful contact

with legal and governmental institutions that are best placed to promote access to justice.

While organizations understand that helping their beneficiaries to access the justice system demands cooperation with government agencies, many organizations said that they were unable to do so because: they have no license (thus no voice); they do not know which agency can help them; or, based on a past experience, they found that the agencies were unwilling to cooperate with the NPO on behalf of its beneficiaries.

Guests at the workshop were divided into groups to discuss the results and to recommend strategies to address some of the challenges raised in the research. The recommendations will help the LIN Center to design the second phase of this project.

If you would like to learn more about the research, please visit the LIN website for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation at: [NPO RESOURCE](#).

LIN Center
(Translated by Ngo Tu Nghi, LIN volunteer)



**LIN Center would like to wish a very Happy Birthday to:
Ms. Ngo Quynh Nhu, Director and LIN Board Member
Ms. Tran Ngoc Tran, Chief Accountant and LIN Board Member
We truly appreciate your input and support to the LIN Center!**

Schouten Training for NPOs on “Assertiveness”



Over two days on the 3rd and 22nd of November 2011, 24 participants representing not-profit organizations (NPOs) partnered with LIN received a special training in assertiveness, led by Ms. Nghiem Lien Huong, from Schouten Vietnam. In an effort to support the not-for-profit community, Schouten Vietnam Company

collaborated with the LIN Center to organize two separate assertiveness training courses for staff from LIN’s partner organizations. Using an interactive teaching method, Ms. Huong encouraged participants to share their experiences including failures and successes in their past decision making.

Many difficult situations were thoroughly analyzed to help participants identify the most effective ways to make decisions. It is difficult to know when a decision is right or wrong and, a decision made will often depends on personal experiences. Through role-playing techniques, participants understood that, sometimes, making decisions is not easy. In particular, saying no can be quite difficult.

LIN and Schouten Company also have plans underway to offer employees of non-profit organizations a course in leadership skills in the near future. In the meantime, we would like to thank Schouten Vietnam Company for sharing their time and training expertise!

LIN Center
(Translated by Phan Minh Thu, LIN volunteer)

Training workshop on “Proposal Writing Skills: Budgeting, Monitoring and Evaluation”



On the morning of November 3, 2011, 30 NPO staff participated in a workshop on “Proposal writing skills: Budgeting, Monitoring & Evaluation,” which took place at Better Work’s training room, in District 3, HCMC.

This workshop is the second part of a two-part training on proposal writing, organized by the LIN

Center, in preparation for LIN’s Community Grant 2011. . Ms. Do Thi Nhu Tam, LIFE Center staff and also a LIN board member, made a presentation to assist participants in preparing a project budget . She detailed the process of budget planning from preparation to building a draft budget and a planning budget.

Ms. Tam emphasized the important components of budget planning such as: eligible, reasonable and allocated expenses, explaining how to ensure that a project budget is acceptable to a funder. Moreover, she stressed, a project budget must follow the donor’s regulations, if any.

After the break, Mr. Tran Cong Binh, UNICEF HCMC, introduced Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for a project. He started out by defining what the terms mean – M&E – and how they bring a project to life. Mr. Binh helped participants to identify indicators that can help evaluate a project and simultaneously meet the needs of a donor.

This training was made possible with support from the Global Fund for Community Foundations (GFCF) and is part of the preparation phase for LIN’s community grant 2011, which challenges NPOs to support migrant workers and their families in HCMC. Following the grant, the recipient of which will be decided on 18 December, LIN will organize another training on project reporting.

Upcoming Events

Award Ceremony for Winners of the Volunteer Stories Competition 2011 04 December 2011

With the 10 September launch of LIN's 2nd Volunteer Stories Competition: the Power of Sharing, the LIN Center received many excellent submissions (narratives, video clips and photos) from all over the country. To announce the winners of the competition and to recognize Volunteers on the day before International Volunteer Day (5 December), the LIN Center would like to invite organizations, individuals and volunteers who participated in the competition as well as LIN volunteers to attend the award ceremony for the "Volunteer Stories Competition 2011: the Power of Sharing."

Date and time: 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, 4 December 2011
Venue: we will inform to confirmed participants

Please contact volunteer@LINvn.org or tel [\(08\) 3824-6091](tel:0838246091).

In this event, LIN will stream the whole event through Skype. To login, please use the following username **LINcctn**. Please contact Ms. Thanh Truc at truc@LINvn.org to add your Skype account.

LIN NPO Advisory Group meeting 15 December 2011

- *Do you face difficulties working in HCMC as a NPO?*
- *Do you worry how to solve these difficulties? Or*
- *Are you finding the answers for the challenges of your organization?*

If your answers are YES for one of all these above questions, we would like to invite you to participate in our upcoming NPO Advisory Group meeting to address, "The advantages and disadvantages of NPOs operating activities in HCMC". The meeting is designed to offer a friendly and warm atmosphere for NPOs to share experiences with one another, over a morning coffee.

Date and time: 8 a.m. Thursday 15 December 2011
Venue: we will inform to confirmed participants.

Please contact us at npo@LINvn.org or tel [\(08\) 38246091](tel:0838246091).

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY: LIN's Community Grant 2011!

18 December 2011

The LIN Center is introducing an exciting new event on the HCMC social scene and we are looking for in-kind sponsors. LIN's Community Grant 2011, provides an opportunity for people living and working in HCMC to come learn about an important community issue and network with like-minded individuals while making a positive difference in their community. We challenged nonprofits to design programs to address the needs of migrant workers and their families in HCMC. We selected the top three proposals among those submitted. And, on 18 December, the top three will have a chance to present their projects to you in hopes of winning your vote. The main event will take place at the Hard Rock Café in Ho Chi Minh City.

LIN's objective is to generate donations from as many different individuals and organizations as possible. A grant from the Global Fund for Community Foundations will cover the cost to organize the event (venue, food, non-alcoholic drinks and logistics). GFCF also offered to match, one-for-one, the total amount raised for grantmaking to local nonprofits (up to VND 100 million).

We are looking for in-kind sponsors for this event and for the bi-monthly *Networking for a Cause* events that will continue to connect professionals with important community issues throughout 2012. We are open to any offers with regards to sponsorship or support for this initiative. If you are interested to learn more about sponsorship opportunities, please contact us today!

Contact: Dana R.H. Doan (EN) or Ms. Nguyen Thanh Truc Ly (VN)

Email: donor@LINvn.org

Phone: 090-8000-402 (Dana) or 0978-189-676 (Ly)

Thank you!

Donor's Corner

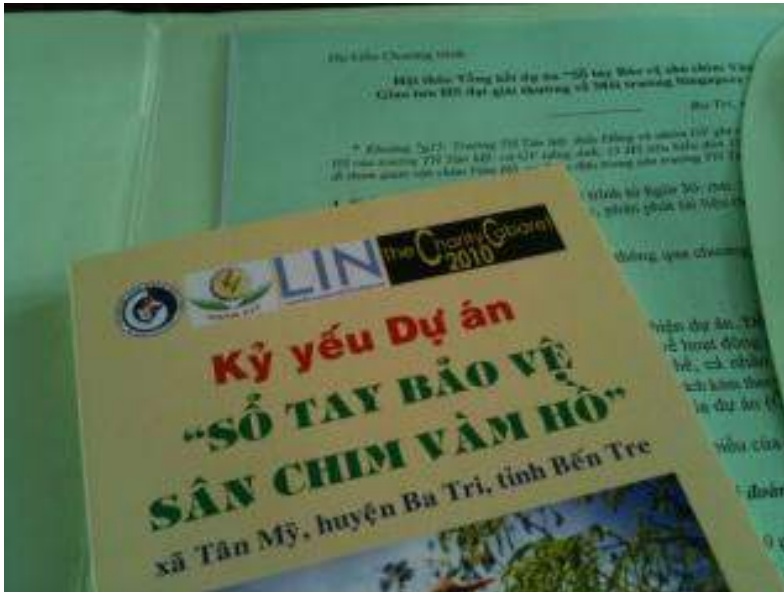
A. RMIT International University supported computer facilities (LCD monitors, mice and keyboards) for 21 local NPOs



In early November 2011, RMIT donated 21 sets of computer monitors and keyboards to LIN for our office and for our local NPO partners. The first twenty NPOs that responded to the offer received the equipment including: SPI House, Thang Long Vocational School, Health Volunteer Group, Hoc Mon Social Center, Hoa Hong Shelter and more.

This was the third time RMIT donated computer facilities via LIN to our local partners. On behalf of the not-for-profit community, we would like to express our deep thanks to RMIT University. Thank you for your contributions to the local community.

B. Closing Ceremony, “Handbook to Protect Vam Ho Bird Yard” (a project in Ben Tre Province)



On 22 November 2011, the Young Creative Group and Ben Tre College hosted a ceremony to review the results of the project “Handbook to Protect Vam Ho Bird Yard”, which is located at Tan My village, Ba Tri District. At the closing ceremony, the YCG welcomed guests from the Netherlands, the United States, Belgium and Singapore.

The LIN Center attended the event on behalf of the Charity Cabaret Committee 2010, the main sponsor for the project. The project represented a new initiative to conserve the environment, address climate change issues and protect wildlife in Vam Ho Bird Yard.

Achivement of the project:

- Attract community attention to the Vam Ho Bird Yard;
- Initiate an effort to turn the Bird Yard into a bio-diversity sanctuary and ecotourism area;
- Mobilize people to protect Vam Ho bird yard by recording and disseminating information about the native bird's lifestyle;
- Mobilizing and connecting with the local people, enterprises and agencies - both local and international to help preserve the bird yard.

C. By Collaborating with Grantees Donors Can Improve Impact

According to a 2011 study on effective philanthropy* , donors that encourage NPOs to concentrate on project impact are adding value not only to themselves but also to their grantees because:

- Donors will be better able to assess the impact of their grant.
- Impact will be clearer as the reporting standard is improved
- Only by understanding when a project is a success/failure, will NPOs be able to improve their activities or design a new project that will attract future donors.
- Donors add value to their grants by building grantees' capacity to monitor and evaluate project implementation.

IDEA YOU CAN USE TODAY!

As the study's authors indicate, while there is no "one-size-fits-all" solution to providing M&E support to a grantee, donors can benefit themselves and their grantees by answering the following five questions prior to engagement:

- 1) What are your aims in providing support? (Define what you hope to achieve.)
- 2) What are the principles of your approach (e.g.: how involved you want to be)?
- 3) What barriers will you encounter? (Identify and try to minimize their impact)
- 4) How will you measure what your support achieves? Justify the resources expended, improve future support.
- 5) What package of support will you provide to create the greatest possible impact?

Supporting NPOs to focus on the impact of their work can help both donors and grantees to better understand the difference they are making and to build skills in monitoring and evaluation. With the aim to ensure that the donors' resources go as far as they can, this type of support offers an effective way to provide NPOs with much needed support, at a cost that donors can justify.

*Source: Hedley, Lumley and Pavey 2011, "*Helping grantees focus on impact - How funders provide monitoring and evaluation support*", New Philanthropy Capital, research paper, London, UK.

http://www.philanthropycapital.org/publications/improving_the_sector/grantmaking/helping_grantees_focus_on_impact.aspx

NPO Resources

How to say thank you to a donor

By: Hansjuerg Moser, LIN skilled volunteer

Expressing thanks to a donor is among the most important communication actions of an NPO. Why? Simply because if you agree that donors help make sure your activities happen and if you understand how difficult it can be to attract a new donor, then you surely agree: thanking your donors is a critical fundraising tool. This article considers the more effective ways to thank a donor:

Content & Message

Giving is typically triggered by a certain motivation, or a set of motivations of the donor (e.g. to make a direct difference, to engage in a personal issue, to help overcome an injustice, to feel better about oneself). The donation is only the visible, ostensible action. More important for the donor is the hope that his/her aims - and maybe hidden wishes – will come true.

Saying thank you to a donor in an effective way means that you give thanks for the *results* your NPO achieves with his donation. “Thank you for your money” is nice, but “your donation made it possible to send ten kids to school” is better. And, even better still, would be a note that shared an outcome, for example, “the Nguyen family never expected that their daughter Van could finish high school but, thanks to your donation, she is now studying to become a nurse.”

Instead of the amount or other form of a donation, instead of the activity, the specific results are often the most meaningful to a donor. And, if possible, it is good to provide an outlook about future activities and future needs, thus motivating a donor to stay involved. A donor is more likely to donate again if you thank him/her properly, helping the donor to see the impact of their support, and if you provide opportunities for future engagement.

Form & Design

The donor’s commitment is always personal; so your giving thanks should be the same. It is important to be authentic, specific and concise. It is also important to address the donor’s aims and motives, thus avoiding generalities and meaningless expressions. To the extent possible, avoid templates and standardized texts.

Here are some ideas about possible forms of saying thank you:

- Personalized letters:

The classical form is the letter. Use the donor’s correct and full name in the address and in the content. Have the letter signed by two representatives with their full name, job title and signatures. *Avoid using a printed or copied version of a thank-you letter.*

Hand written or hard copy letters are more meaningful than email, which is considered mass media to some donors.

Other ideas include:

- Use a meeting or event to honor donors officially
- Organize a donor jubilee
- Organize a meeting between donors and the beneficiaries of your programs
- Publish a portrait of your donors in a special column of your website
- Create a donor's club or community using a social media platform such as facebook.

Giving thanks in this way may take time and care, but you should consider it an investment in the future. It is far less time consuming to thank and retain an existing donor, and to get that donor to give more, than it is to cultivate a new donor.

International Volunteer Group Supports Graphic and Print Design for NPOs

The "little green project" is a collective of multimedia designers working together to support non-governmental organizations (NGOs) all around the world as independent volunteers, since the Summer of 2011.

The main objective of the project is to take advantage of the skills and experiences of its members to assist NGOs in many aspects of design. The project initially supports graphic and print design. All products created by the "little green project" will be provided to NGOs free-of-charge.

If your organization would like to ask for help with graphic and print designs, please contact the "Little Green Project" directly via email at: contact.littlegreenproject@gmail.com or via the LIN Center at: Volunteer@LINvn.org.

For more information about this group, please visit their website: <http://littlegreenproject.net/>

NPO Staff Education Opportunity!

The World's First Virtual Masters Degree in Disability Policy

The new Master's of International Affairs in Comparative and International Disability Policy (CIDP) is the world's first all-online Master's program on disability studies and public policy. At the forefront of technological innovation, the program's cyber-infrastructure cuts across geographic boundaries, allowing faculty to teach and students to be taught entirely online. Anyone from around the world can apply for the CIDP Master's program.

The CIDP Master's degree, offered by the School of International Service at American University, is the centerpiece program of the Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) for the ASEAN region, which is led by the Center for Research on Collaboratories and Technology Enhanced Learning Communities (COTELCO), a joint research center at American University and Syracuse University.

Curriculum

The program is designed to be completed in one year, with students taking classes during fall, spring, and summer semesters. Coursework includes classes in policy analysis, disability and social policy, international relations theory and disability rights, and research methodologies. Areas of concentration include: Disabilities Studies; International Affairs/ Development; Government Politics and Power; Communication, Culture, Technology and Disability; and Management and Leadership.

Fellowships

The Nippon Foundation will award up to fifteen full fellowships per year to CIDP students. From the pool of qualified applicants for the fellowships, preference will be given to applicants who are residents of an ASEAN country and have a documented disability. For more information on fellowship eligibility and requirements, please visit: <http://aseanidpp.org/fellowships>.

Admissions

Applicants to the CIDP program are admitted on a competitive basis based upon a holistic review of their credentials. In addition to the online application, interested students will be expected to supply relevant test scores, transcripts from all institutions previously attended, a statement of purpose, resume, and two letters of recommendation. Visit the SIS website for more information and to begin your application.

Learn More

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