

USAID/IRPP August 2011 monthly report

In the first week of August, Victor Narro from UCLA Labor Center, a legal advisory services specialist made his third trip to Vietnam for one week from 1st – 6th August to conduct a planning workshop for VCCI on legal advisory services for employers. After reviewing VCCI's efforts in educational outreach and legal advisory services for employers, the consultant presented to nearly 30 participants on the employers' organization legal advisory services in the U.S. Afterwards there were group discussions between the consultant and the participants on strategies for development of VCCI legal advisory services. Also in this trip, the consultant conducted a training workshop on further developing and strengthening the trade union legal advisory services for VGCL in which he gave examples of case management in legal advisory services in the U.S. He had worked on developing a framework for a proposed VGCL handbook on legal advisory services which he presented along methods to enhance performance and quality of trade union legal advisory services. He then facilitated the participants' discussion on the draft table of contents of a VGCL handbook and follow up plan of action for promotion of trade union legal advisory services. Before returning to the U.S., the consultant worked with the project office and its national consultant to finalize the content of a handbook for legal advisory centers and offices.

Also in August, a Project Management Unit (PMU) meeting was held to discuss the project outcomes and a possibility of project extension. Members of the PMU all expressed the high appreciation of the assessment report prepared by the project office, and made contributions to finalize the report. Prior to this meeting, there was a meeting between the project COP, USAID COTR, and ICD to go over what had to be completed for an approval of the project extension.

After writing up and finalizing a project assessment report and submitting to the project owner through the middle of August, by the end of the month, the project office met with ICD and Labor Inspectorate to discuss the project's upcoming activities, including the extension period, and detailed plan to carry out the pilot enterprise self-assessment process. In addition to the documents required by MoLISA for extension consideration, the project prepared the documentation required by USAID for a six-month extension.

During the two middle weeks of August, the project office worked with David Whitfield, Business Manager, Governance from DAI Home Office on a close down process for the current phase and preparation for the extension period of the project.

In this month, a workshop on PIRC establishment hosted by LWD and facilitated by the project was carried out as a continuation of the development of a National IR strategy and model. The project office also worked with VGCL on LAC and LAO work as a follow up to Victor Narro's work, including the identification of national consultant for production of materials.

In the last week of the month, the project's Deputy Chief of Party participated in two IR conferences focusing on CSR in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The project office worked throughout the month to prepare for a possible International Voluntary Visitors program (through the Public Affairs Office of the Department of State) focusing on labor education. Up to ten participants would go to the US in an IVV program designed by Kent Wong of the UCLA Labor Center, who was a consultant for the project.

The COP participated in the following meetings at USAID: met with USAID Vietnam Desk officer for a general briefing, participated in meeting with the Regional Legal Advisor on VAT issues, and attended a meeting on coordinating study tours with STAR+ project.

Upcoming activities in September

Follow up activities with the following counterparts will be carried out:

- VCCI: will follow up on the development of both legal services and an labor arbitration center and labor arbitration training program offered by Cornell University.
- VGCL: A signing ceremony of the pilot CBA to be organized in Binh Duong province (this was postponed from August) as well as follow up on LAC and LAO work, including identification of national consultant.
- LWD: follow up planning on PIRC development activities as well as planning for continuing IR strategy work and eventual in-depth survey
- Universities: follow up on the textbook project
- Labor Inspectorate: preparation for the implementation of the pilot assessment activity (to be implemented in September) and follow up on planning.
- Legal Department: finalization of the outstanding work
- Project extension: initial documents for USAID to be revised pending any need for clarifications.