

**USAID/Vietnam Competitiveness Initiative, Phase II (USAID/VNCI)**  
**Monthly Report for January 2013**

**Project 30/ APCA**

- *Master Plan on Simplification of citizen-related APs and Electronic Database of Residents:* APCA used VNCI's comments to revise a new draft of the Master Plan for Simplification of Citizen-related Administrative Procedures and National Database of Residents. The comments focused on giving the draft a clear structure and made a stronger case for the adoption of the Master Plan. In relation to this activity, VNCI reviewed the translated version of a book about Austrian E-government, which was requested by APCA. The book in Vietnamese will be used as an important reference for the simplification of administrative procedures using ICT in Vietnam.
- *VNCI close-down:* VNCI met with APCA leaders on January 16, 2013 to prepare for the VNCI II close-down. The two sides agreed on some activities to be carried out before the end of VNCI, including the end of project workshop on regulatory and administrative procedure reform and transfer of the national database of administrative procedures.
- *ACAPR restructuring:* VNCI helped APCA solicit the membership of the new ACAPR following the restructuring ACAPR. In general, all 27 entities invited are willing to join the new ACAPR. ACAPR's Secretariat has also been using VNCI's support to draft a new ACAPR' charter and the 2013 work plan. VNCI also assisted the Secretariat in drafting a Prime Ministerial decision on the establishment of a new Advisory Council on Administrative Procedure Reform (ACAPR) following the transfer of APCA's and ACAPR's chairmanship to MOJ.
- *Communication:* The VNCI communication team helped APCA refine an online quarterly newsletter targeting government agencies and the private sector. It will be launched after APCA receives a permit to upgrade its website to a general news portal under MOJ.

**PERQ/RIA**

- *Revision of the Law on Enterprise:* VNCI supported and attended a January 10, 2013 meeting of the group responsible for undertaking an impact assessment of a revised Law on Enterprise. VNCI and the group discussed the issue of business registration and drafted an outline of the impact assessment report to be presented to the Secretariat of the Drafting Committee for the revision of the Law on Enterprise.
- *RIA training:* VNCI organized the third and final RIA training workshop for the National Academy of Politics and Public Administration on January 3-4, 2013. Attendants included lecturers, researchers and administrators. They showed a lot of enthusiasm and appreciation for the course which they said was useful and practical.
- *Replication of PERQ:* VNCI undertook preparations for a February 1, 2013 RIA training workshop for the Institute for Legal Sciences (ILS). The workshop introduced the ILS with RIA methodology and VNCI shared its experience in organizing RIA training activities under PERQ. The goal was to replicate PERQ activities to maximize the impact of RIA on the legal development process in Vietnam.

## **PCI**

- *PCI 2012 report:* The PCI team completed the first draft of the PCI 2012 report with five chapters covering the rankings and analyses on the impact of PCI on provincial governance reform, investors' response to business environment shocks, corruption in public procurement and labor relations in FDI enterprises.
- *Improving local governance and competitiveness:* The PCI team held a meeting with the Director and Vice Director of Cao Bang DPI on January 28, 2013 to discuss reform activities to improve Cao Bang's business environment and methods to support local investors. Cao Bang, who ranked last on the PCI 2011 chart, is determined to improve its position in the national ranking. This meeting was a follow-up to the PCI 2011 diagnostic workshop, held in May 2012 and chaired by the Vice Chairman of Cao Bang People's Committee. At the workshop an open, action-oriented dialogue was held between the relevant line departments and local businesses. Many of the proposed reform steps were carried out by the province, who believes that it has resulted in the improvement of its local business environment.
- *PCI 2011 diagnostic workshop:* The PCI team traveled to Gia Lai province for a diagnostic workshop on January 22, 2013. The workshop, which was funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), was designed to support Agriculture, Farmers and Rural areas in establishing a policy and an institutional framework within the province.
- *PCI outreach:*
  - VNCCI received an interview request from InfoTV, a national television channel focusing on economic, financial and securities market news for broadcasting on its "Investment Review" program. The program titled "Enhancing provincial competitiveness and improving business environment in a difficult period" is planned to be aired in early February 2013.
  - The PCI team participated in and provided comments in a January 11, 2013 VCCI organized round-table discussion on the findings of a study on the capacity of business associations in Vietnam. The objective of the workshop was to validate survey results conducted by VCCI on 80 business associations in Vietnam in 2012 and to solicit expert opinions on how to improve capacity.
  - The PCI team also helped arrange a meeting between the founder of the Vietnam Supply Chain Community and VCCI to facilitate the development of supply chain good practices in Vietnam and discuss learning opportunities for supply chain professionals in Vietnam.

## **PPP/Infrastructure**

### **PPP Project Support**

- *E-Government Procurement project:* As part of a capacity building exercise, VNCCI supported the PMU and PPP Office in reviewing and refining the financial model of this project. VNCCI has also prepared a project information memorandum and is providing comments on all related bidding documents.
- *Dong Nai Inter-Port Highway project:* The international consultant who is hired to develop a project proposal for Dong Nai ASA is expected to arrive in Vietnam in February after Tet.

- *Soc Trang's Water Treatment Plant expansion*: VNCI consultant presented a project assessment and recommendation to the PPA/PPP Office. The preparation of a project proposal is currently underway.
- *Nghi Son WWTP*: The US\$ 9.1 billion Nghi Son Oil Refinery contract was signed on January 27, 2013. As a result, the Government of Vietnam will restart exploring the potential for the Nghi Son WWTP as a PPP pilot project. This is a very good signal for Thanh Hoa People's Committee after long drawn out negotiations.

### **Institutional Support**

- *Study mission to Canada*: A co-sponsor (CanCham) has been brought on to the project and the list of delegates has been finalized. The delegation will include 12 GoV officials, including four vice ministers from MPI, MOF, MOT, MOC, and 2 VNCI staff. A request for technical approval has been received from USAID and an authorization to travel has been submitted to USAID.
- *PPP policy workshop*: On January 21 in Ho Chi Minh City, VNCI supported the PPA/PPP Office in organizing and presenting the 2<sup>nd</sup> PPP workshop to introduce the draft PDF guidelines, to discuss revisions of the Decision 71 and to present methods in undertaking PPP project identification.
- *PPP training*: VNCI PPP specialist, Mr. Ned White, delivered a 3-day PPP training workshop in Hanoi on January 21-24, 2013. The attendants include implementing authorities (provinces and line ministries) and the PPP Office. Mr. Ned White also worked on a recommendation report on medium-term PPP capacity building for the PPP Office.
- *Vietnam Infrastructure Financing Fund (VNIF)*: VNCI team has completed the Vietnam Infrastructure Financing Fund (VNIF) report and is waiting for feedback/comments from the MoF.
- *Project identification guidelines*: The Guidelines for Project Identification and Prioritization was revised by Zach Kaplan and sent to the PPA/PPP office.
- *PPP outreach*: VNCI Project Director, Scott Jazynka, participated as a panelist in two sessions of the Lower Mekong Initiatives Conference on January 14-15, 2013. The first session was on PPP's in the region and the second on Aviation PPPs.

### **VNCI Retreat**

- VNCI had a retreat from January 28-30, 2013 in Nha Trang to discuss remaining activities (final report and workshops), preparing for VNCI close-down and sharing lessons learned during the implementation of VNCI. VNCI staff also explored life after VNCI and discussed methods for identifying work opportunities.