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# USAID Vietnam Disability Support Program Quarterly Progress Report Quarter 1, FY 2013

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# **Disability Support Program**

## **FY 2013 Q1 PROGRESS REPORT**

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

BREC:	Blue Ribbon Employment Council
CDC:	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDM:	Camp Dresser McKee
CRS:	Catholic Relief Services
DAI:	Development Alternatives Inc.
DOET:	Department of Education and Training
DOFA:	Department of Foreign Affairs
DOH:	Department of Health
DOIT:	Department of Industry and Trade
DOLISA:	Department of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs
DPO:	Disabled People's Organization
DSC:	Disability Steering Committee
DSP:	Disability Support Program
F&A:	Finance and Administration
IR:	Intermediate Result
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MOU:	Memorandum of Understanding
NBS:	Newborn Screening
PWD:	People with Disabilities
TA:	Technical Assistance
VNAH:	Vietnam Assistance to the Handicapped
VPHA:	Vietnam Public Health Association

## **I. DSP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

DAI moved quickly to initiate start-up upon signing the cooperative agreement, finalizing the employment of COP Mark Rasmuson and signing the subagreement with our principal partner, VNAH. DAI's start-up coordinator, David Whitfield, arrived in Danang during the last week of October and began preparations on a myriad of start-up tasks, including identification of office space, beginning local staff recruitment, adapting the project's management information system, and so forth. Mark Rasmuson, the COP, arrived on November 4 in time to participate in a visit to Danang by the USAID Mission Director and GDO team to review plans on both the DSP project and the airport remediation project with the People's Committee and relevant Danang government departments. VNAH's Toan Bui (Deputy COP for the project) and Ca Van Tran (VNAH President) also participated in these meetings.

The project team developed its first-year work plan and monitoring and evaluation plan and submitted these deliverables to USAID for review and approval on December 15. These deliverables were completed with assistance from DAI's senior director Jerry Martin and senior M&E and research consultant, Dr. Thomas Kane, who worked with the team during their respective 10-day and 3-week TDYs. Recruitment and interviewing were initiated for six positions: the 3 IR team leaders, monitoring and evaluation specialist, finance and administration manager, and accountant/grants manager. All of these positions will be filled during the second quarter.

Work also began on two key preliminary actions required for project implementation to begin: registration by DAI as a company to work in Danang and approval by the Danang government (People's Committee) of our formal project proposal. Both of these are also expected to be completed in the second quarter.

After a thorough search, DAI identified appropriate office space, signed a preliminary lease agreement, and began procurement for building out the office space and equipping it appropriately for the project. We are fortunate to be building on VNAH's work in Danang over many years, and have been able to work out of their office while completing work on a new office.

### **Qualitative Impact**

The DSP team has held positive introductory planning meetings with all major local partners, including DOLISA, DOH, DOET, DOFA, Danang DPO, and others. It has also held meetings with several collaborating organizations, including FIDA, CRS, UNICEF, Irish AID, East Meets West Foundation, Hanoi School of Public Health, Vietnam Public Health Association, Vinareha, Aspen Institute, and others.

The team conducted initial discussions with provincial partners in Dong Nai and Binh Dinh. VNAH signed an MOU with Dong Nai partners for its privately funded disability program, which is expected to be a matching contribution and to facilitate start-up for the DSP.

DSP has also initiated planning with VPHA to conduct rapid assessments of the disability situation in Dong Nai and Binh Dinh provinces.

DSP submitted its first two major deliverables, the Year I Work Plan and the M&E plan, on December 15 to USAID for review and approval.

### **Quantitative Impact**

As implementation of program activities had not yet begun in Quarter I due to the focus on start-up efforts, DSP has no quantitative impact to report.

## **Project Administration**

USAID has requested that the project roll out implementation to Dong Nai and Binh Dinh provinces more rapidly than was originally envisioned, and to look for needs and opportunities to expand implementation in other provinces as well. As many officials in Danang have been expecting all of the resources to be spent in their province, approval of a scaled down proposal and implementation plan may be questioned and delayed. Work in other provinces will also require official MOU's and project approvals to be obtained, and these will be time consuming. DSP plans to utilize the agreement that VNAH has secured with Dong Nai partners under a non-USAID funded project for the rapid roll out of the DSP in this province while a formal MOU for DSP is being pursued.

USAID has also requested DSP to try to increase the percentage of the project's funding going to direct assistance to people with disabilities, as well as subgrants and system strengthening. This is a complicated topic that will require additional discussion, as it has implications for other components in the project budget, and USAID and DSP have agreed to revisit the issue again in mid-year.

## **Next Quarter's Work Plan**

Major activities planned for next quarter include:

- Rapid assessments in Dong Nai and Binh Dinh initiated.
- DAI registration as Representative Office in Danang completed.
- Project fully staffed.
- Team moves into new office.
- TA from DAI to install IT network and financial management system
- MOU proposal submitted to Danang DSC and approved.
- MOUs drafted for Dong Nai and Binh Dinh
- TA from DAI to train finance staff and develop templates for subgrants and other funding agreements.
- Subgrant agreement developed with Danang DPO
- CDC visit to develop recommendations for work plan on NBS, birth defects and cancer surveillance, and pre-pregnancy counseling.
- Planning for official project launch on April 18 initiated.
- Direct assistance initiated in Danang and/or Dong Nai
- TA to Dong Nai for School to Work Transition Program

## II. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (Qualitative Impact)

### Main activities and accomplishments during the quarter

- Start-up/mobilization in Danang began the last week of October with the arrival of Dave Whitfield from DAI HQ, who began work on DAI registration in Danang, office space procurement, staff recruitment, temporary administrative support, establishment of the project management information system, research of an office bank account, etc.
- DAI signed its subagreement with VNAH.
- COP Mark Rasmuson arrived in Danang on November 4.
- Mark Rasmuson (COP), Toan Bui (DCOP), and Ca Tran (VNAH President) participated in meetings in Danang November 6-8 with USAID Director, GDO team, and AO team from Bangkok including briefing with the Danang People's Committee Vice-Chairman; orientation meetings at CDM; a lunch meeting with BREC; and a visit to a clinic where VNAH has assisted the refurbishing of a rehab clinic.
- The DSP team also had a formal meeting with the USAID AO team to review the DSP cooperative agreement. It was agreed that December 15 would be the revised date for submission of the Year 1 work plan.
- Jerry Martin from DAI HQ arrived in Danang on November 8 to support project start-up and work plan development.
- Martin, Rasmuson, Bui, and Tran traveled to Hanoi the week of November 12 for meetings with USAID (Mission Director and GDO team), UNICEF, Irish Aid, Hanoi School of Public Health, and Vietnam Public Health Association (VPHA). They were also briefed by VNAH social work team.
- Tran visited Bien Hoa/Dong Nai and Phu Cat/Binh Dinh, and VNAH signed MOU with Dong Nai authorities to initiate work there that will pave the way for DSP involvement.
- DSP advertised in local newspaper and on-line (Vietnamworks) for Technical Team Leaders, M&E Manager, F&A Manager, and Accountant/Grants Manager positions.
- Rasmuson and Bui interviewed candidates for Team Leader and M&E positions.
- Rasmuson and Bui had introductory meetings with DOFA, DOLISA, DOET, and DOH.
- Drafting begun on MOU proposal for DSC/DOLISA.
- Rasmuson had introductory meeting with Danang Disabled People's Organization.
- Tom Kane arrived on November 24 for 3-week TDY to work with the DSP on its work plan M&E plan.
- We identified and signed a lease agreement for an office space on December 6.
- Draft work plan submitted to USAID on December 10.
- Bui made follow up visits to Dong Nai and Binh Ding during the weeks of December 3 and December 10 to advance plans for work there.
- Rasmuson and Kane met Charles Bailey, who was visiting Danang, and received a briefing on Aspen Institute's activities.
- Rasmuson, Kane, and Bui visited Hanoi the week of December 10 to review draft work plan and indicators with USAID.
- Rasmuson and Kane had follow-up meeting with VPHA and initiated planning with them for rapid assessments in Bien Hoa and Phu Cat. They also met with representatives with Vinareha.
- Work plan and M&E plan submitted to USAID on December 15.
- Contract for office build-out signed on December 21.

- Bui met in Hanoi with the Department of Special Education of Hanoi Teacher's Training University to explore collaboration.
- Bui and Rasmuson met in Danang with the Psychology Department of the Teacher's Training College in Danang to explore their interest in supporting a certificate-granting social work program in Danang.
- Rasmuson participated in the opening of CRS vocational education program at Dong A University.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Registration and approval processes are complex and time-consuming and are likely to cause some delays in implementation of project activities.
- It is unclear but expected that the project will need to develop MOUs with Dong Nai and Binh Dinh Provinces, as well as Danang. The process may be facilitated by VNAH's prior work (and recently approved MOU in Bien Hoa), but, again, delays in implementation may occur.
- DSP will need to establish a large number of subgrants and other funding agreements with Vietnamese organizations, both government and NGOs. All agreements with GVN organizations require approval from the AO. The process of developing and receiving approval for these is expected to be time-consuming and challenging for the project's small finance and grants team.

### **III. PROGRAM PROGRESS (Quantitative Impact)**

DSP has no quantitative impact to report yet, as the first quarter of project activity was devoted to mobilization and start-up. The project's M&E plan was submitted on December 15 and outlines the indicators DSP will use to measure impact as implementation proceeds.

## **IV. MONITORING**

Dr. Thomas Kane, the project's senior M&E and research advisor, worked with the team in late November and early December, to develop the DSP M&E plan, which was submitted to USAID on December 15. The Project team is in the process of reviewing the plan and finalizing indicators.

## **V. NEXT QUARTER'S WORK PLAN**

### **Main activities and accomplishments expected in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (January – March 2013)**

- Rapid assessments in Dong Nai and Binh Dinh initiated.
- DAI registration as Representative Office in Danang completed.
- Project fully staffed.
- Team moves into new office.
- TA from DAI to install IT network and financial management system
- MOU proposal submitted to Danang DSC and approved.
- MOUs drafted for Dong Nai and Binh Dinh
- TA from DAI to train finance staff and develop templates for subgrants and other funding agreements.
- Subgrant agreement developed with Danang DPO
- CDC visit to develop recommendations for work plan on NBS, birth defects and cancer surveillance, and pre-pregnancy counseling.
- Planning for official project launch on April 18 initiated.
- Direct assistance initiated in Danang and/or Dong Nai
- TA to Dong Nai for School to Work Transition Program

## **VII. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

### **Constraints and Critical Issues**

USAID has requested DSP to try to increase the percentage of the project's funding going to direct assistance of people with disabilities, as well as subgrants and system strengthening. This is a complicated topic that will require additional discussion, as it has implications for other components in the project budget, and USAID and DSP have agreed to revisit the issue again in mid-year.

### **Personnel**

The project will need to review its current staffing pattern during the next quarter to see if changes may be needed. With implementation expanded and accelerated in Dong Nai and Binh Dinh, a small staff is likely to be needed in each place. With the large number of subgrants and other funding agreements planned, DSP may also need to augment its small F&A team.

### **Changes in the Project**

USAID has requested the project to roll out implementation to Dong Nai and Binh Dinh provinces more rapidly than was originally envisioned, and to look for needs and opportunities to expand implementation in other provinces as well. As many officials in Danang have been expecting all of the resources to be spent in their province, approval of a scaled down proposal and implementation plan may be questioned and delayed. Work in other provinces will also require official MOU's and project approvals to be obtained, and these will be time consuming.

## **Contract Modifications and Amendments**

No contract modifications were made during the quarter.

## Annex I: Schedule of Future Events

(This is a chronological list of significant events planned in the coming quarter that will contribute to accomplishment of the project's indicators, such as trainings, opening ceremonies, conferences, etc. This is not a place to list the project administration activities; i.e., hiring of staff.)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Mid-January	Danang	Submission of MOU
Late February	Danang	Signing of MOU
March	Danang	Approval of project
March	Dong Nai and Binh Dinh	Submission of MOUs
March	Dong Nai	Meeting on Disability Action Plan
March	Danang	Subgrant issued to Danang DPO

## **Attachment I: List of Deliverable Products**

DSP produced and submitted to USAID two main deliverables: Year I Work Plan and Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. These two documents are attached.