

**EVALUATION OF NORWEGIAN MISSION ALLIANCE  
VIETNAM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**REPORT**

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## II ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BCC	Behavioral Change Communication
CD	Community Development
CECEM	Centre for Community Development
CPC	Commune People's Committee
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CwDs	Children with disabilities
DoET	Department of Education and Training
DPC	District People's Committee
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
FBB	Forening for Barnas Beste
GEA	Gender and Empowerment Assessment
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
IE	Inclusive Education
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
IEVL	Inclusive Education Vinh Long
ILFE	Inclusive Learning Friendly Environment
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MF	Micro Finance
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIESC	National Institute for Education Strategies and Curriculum
Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NMA	Norwegian Mission Alliance
NMAV	Norwegian Mission Alliance in Vietnam
PACCOM	People's Aid Coordinating Committee
PC	People's Committee
PPC	Provincial People's Committee
PMB	Project Management Board
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RC	Resource Center
TOT	Training of Trainers
UN	United Nations
VND	Vietnamese Dong

### III EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### Introduction

In 2010 the Norwegian Mission Alliance (NMA) commissioned an evaluation of its program in Vietnam. The program consists of the three components of Micro Finance (MF), Inclusive Education (IE) and Community Development (CD) in line with NMA's global priorities. The evaluation, however, does not include MF. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess results and document lessons learned in order to prepare the ground for the next program phase which starts in 2013. See Annex 8.1 for the complete Terms of Reference (ToR).

Currently NMA supports two IE projects and two CD projects in the Mekong delta. The IE project in Vinh Long, which started in 2005, just completed its second phase. In 2009 NMA started an IE project in Tien Giang province which is still in its first phase. In 2009 planning started for a CD project in Ben Tre province and another one in Tan Thanh commune, Tien Giang province. The total budget the past three years has fluctuated between 5-6 million NOK (900 000 – 1 million USD), the large majority coming from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad).

The overall goal of the country program is “to empower the poor and marginalized in Vietnam through poverty reduction and inclusion.”<sup>1</sup> The program objectives are:

- to empower rural poor communities and local authorities for sustainable poverty reduction (CD)
- to financially empower the poor and disadvantaged in the target areas (MF)
- to ensure the inclusive participation of children and youth with disabilities and their families in the society (IE)<sup>2</sup>

According to the plan, NMA targets poor and disadvantaged groups, in particular children, youth, women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. Within the selected provinces, the poorest communes and villages are selected.

#### Findings

A whole range of important **results have been achieved** by NMAV at both output and outcome levels despite short project life-spans of three of the projects. Activities have largely been implemented as planned but with some delays and postponements. A majority of the activities has involved training and capacity-building and it is therefore important to monitor whether and to which extent these activities will lead to outcomes and impacts. Some important outcomes have been observed in the case of Inclusive Education: increased number of children are attending early intervention and school; parents have changed behavior towards their disabled children; teachers have changed behavior in relation to teaching classes with disabled children. However, there is still stigma both at schools and in the communities towards disabled children and adults, and this needs to be focused on. Including more children, both disabled and not disabled, in peer group and life-skills activities is important. In Tan Thanh there have been outcomes in terms of applying new farming techniques and planning procedures. However, it is not clear that people have changed behavior related to use of latrines and waste-bins, and this needs to be monitored in the coming period. Another

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<sup>1</sup> The Norwegian Mission Alliance (2007) Program Strategy 2008-2012. HCMC: NMA, page 6

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, page 13

crucial question is whether the training and application of new farming techniques actually will lead to increased income? This needs to be monitored and reported on in the future. In Ben Tre participatory needs assessment and planning has been implemented. In relation to both CD projects, NMAV should focus on getting deeper into the participatory approach and making sure that all villagers are being empowered not just through participation in activities but also being involved in decision-making. Furthermore, focus should be on making sure that new farming, livelihood, environmental techniques and skills are being applied in practice.

**Long-term impact** of NMAV support could be observed in the establishment of Resource Centers for Inclusive Education in two provinces, a general increased awareness and knowledge among education personnel at the Resource Centers, and not the least, in schools where disabled children have learned literacy, numeracy and other skills. However, impact cannot be observed yet in the other three project areas.

Clearly, the four NMAV projects evaluated here are highly **relevant** to national, provincial and district Government policies. With regards to the CD projects, they are based on participatory needs assessments and hence reflect the needs of the villagers. However, to which extent the priorities of the people are reflected at village/hamlet level is less obvious, and should be a focus in the continuation of these projects. The IE projects have not been based on participatory needs assessments and planning processes in the same way and can therefore not be said to reflect the needs of local people as a result of a systematic bottom-up approach. However, as the projects have progressed and people have become familiar with them, they do nevertheless reflect the needs of parents and communities to a certain extent. It should also be pointed out that this is an activity initially driven more by human rights norms; namely the right to education for every child and countering discrimination against disabled children. In the future, though, NMAV should promote participatory planning and reporting in relation to the IE projects, that is including teachers, parents and children in planning and implementation, to the extent possible.

NMAV has working approaches and strategies that **promote sustainability**. Good and close partnership relations have been built across the board and efforts to promote local ownership are being made. The IE in Vinh Long is sustainable by all accounts, and the IE in Tien Giang being modeled on the Vinh Long project, shows good potential for becoming sustainable as well, although Government budgets for the IE will be smaller than NMAV has provided. In the case of the CD projects good partnership relations and participatory planning and implementation promotes local ownership.

NMAV has **progressed considerably on the three main strategies** of local participation and ownership; gender equality and including disabled children the past 5 years. NMAV has integrated participatory methodology into the project planning process and has come closer to the grassroots level. More focus needs to be put on prioritization of needs and decision-making, as well as ensuring that participatory methods are used in implementing, monitoring and reporting on activities. The NMA tool to promote gender awareness and assessment, the GEA, should be utilized with assistance from a gender expert who is familiar with the Vietnamese context. Disabled children are included, but to what extent? Total numbers of girls and boys in IE and early intervention are not readily available and focus should be on these data in order to closely and constantly monitor progress in this regard. Work to include more children in early intervention and primary schools should continue. Community awareness-raising, addressing stigmatization and involving all children, not only disabled, within a child rights framework should be in focus in the coming period.

NMAV has a solid and good basis for **project and financial management**, but needs to make sure that all office guidelines and routines are followed through consistently. Work needs to be done on distinguishing indicators on outputs and outcomes and plans should be made for impact assessment/evaluations. At the organizational level, NMAV's main strengths is competent and highly motivated staff members as well as good partner relationships. Work needs to be put into team-building and leadership to address the recent turbulence created by high staff turnover and corruption cases as well as ensuring that field-based staff are fully integrated in the NMAV team. Consolidation and stability – of the projects, the staff and management - should be main concerns in the next program period. Lessons learned and making a contingency plan for how to deal with corruption cases should be made for future reference.

**Synergies** between MF and CD has been observed but there could also be synergies between IE and CD; and perhaps between MF and IE. This should be explored in the coming period.

Compared with the main findings of the 2005 evaluation **NMAV has progressed** significantly. Bottom-up planning and participatory approaches, which were identified as main weaknesses, are now being applied, at least in the CD projects while the IE projects could improve more in this respect. Focus has moved from supporting large government infrastructure activities to small-scale community development, and from supporting government bodies at higher levels to supporting project management boards at commune and district level as well as community workers and target groups at community level. NMAV plays an important role in supporting and facilitating transfer of knowledge and technical expertise as well as building project management capacity. These important shifts have been made, but so far only the preparatory steps could be observed, except for the IE project in Vinh Long. The coming period thus needs to focus on consolidation and stability both in terms of NMAV organization and programming in order to ensure the planned outcomes and impacts. At the same time it is important for NMAV to remain flexible and open in a country like Vietnam which is characterized by extremely rapid changes taking place socially, economically and politically.

## **Recommendations**

A number of detailed and specific recommendations are made at the end of the report based on the assessments made by the Evaluation Team as well as recommendations channeled through from NMA staff, partners and target groups.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

In 2010 the Norwegian Mission Alliance (NMA) commissioned an evaluation of its program in Vietnam. The program consists of the three components of Micro Finance (MF), Inclusive Education (IE) and Community Development (CD) in line with NMA's global priorities. The evaluation, however, does not include MF. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess results and document lessons learned in order to prepare the ground for the next program phase which starts in 2013. See Annex 8.1 for the complete Terms of Reference (ToR).

NMA first started development cooperation in Vietnam in 1973 with a project to support families affected by leprosy in South Vietnam, but had to leave at the end of the war in 1975. In 1996 NMA was invited back to Vietnam and continued supporting communities affected by leprosy in the two provinces of Tien Giang in the Mekong delta and Gia Lai in the Central Highlands. Between 2002 and 2006 NMA expanded both geographically and thematically in the Mekong delta by starting CD projects in Tien Giang in 2002 and in Vinh Long province in 2003 as well as an IE project in Vinh Long in 2005. At the same time NMA phased out of Gia Lai province and ended the leprosy supported activities altogether as these were no longer needed.

Currently NMA supports two IE projects and two CD projects in the Mekong delta. The IE project in Vinh Long, which started in 2005, just completed its second phase. In 2009 NMA started an IE project in Tien Giang province which is still in its first phase. In 2009 planning started for a CD project in Ben Tre province and another one in Tan Thanh commune, Tien Giang province. The total budget the past three years has fluctuated between 5-6 million NOK (900 000 – 1 million USD), the large majority coming from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad).

The overall goal of the country program is “to empower the poor and marginalized in Vietnam through poverty reduction and inclusion.”<sup>3</sup> The program objectives are:

- to empower rural poor communities and local authorities for sustainable poverty reduction (CD)
- to financially empower the poor and disadvantaged in the target areas (MF)
- to ensure the inclusive participation of children and youth with disabilities and their families in the society (IE)<sup>4</sup>

According to the plan, NMA targets poor and disadvantaged groups, in particular children, youth, women, people with disabilities and ethnic minorities. Within the selected provinces, the poorest communes and villages are selected.

In 2005 an evaluation was done of the NMA program in Vietnam. The main findings were that the technical objectives had largely been achieved and that partnership relationships were good. The main weakness of the program was the lack of ‘bottom up’ planning and participatory approach at the local level. It was also found that there was little transfer of knowledge from NMA to national partners, and that the main activities had been supporting national government activities such as infrastructure and training of professional staff at higher

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<sup>3</sup> The Norwegian Mission Alliance (2007) Program Strategy 2008-2012. HCMC: NMA, page 6

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, page 13



government levels. Recommendations were focused on addressing these issues, namely working towards a more participatory planning and implementation, focusing on community development rather than supporting national infrastructure projects and on the role of NMA as value added.

## **1.2 Methodology**

Three main sources of data are utilized in this evaluation, namely project and program documents as well as other reference material, interviews with key informants and observations. Qualitative data from interviews with key informants and observations supplemented by quantitative data and information from project documents are the main data. According to the ToR the period of evaluation is 2005-2010, but the focus will be on the past two years as 3 of the 4 ongoing projects started in 2009 and most of the NMAV staff members have been replaced during the past two years.

A field visit was conducted between 17 and 29 January 2011 which included visits to all the project areas and meetings with all the main implementing partners and representatives of target groups as well as other key stakeholders in Tien Giang, Vinh Long and Ben Tre provinces. Two Resource Centers for IE were visited, one in Tien Giang and one in Vinh Long. Here key informants comprised Resource Center (RC) staff members, Department of Education and Training representatives, RC trainers/teachers, parents and children with disabilities. The Evaluation Team met girls and boys of different ages and different disabilities and observed them during training and in class. Two schools and two early intervention ‘sessions’ in Tien Giang and Vinh Long were visited where key informants were RC and primary school staff members, teachers, parents and children. Observations were made of training and teaching techniques, rooms, facilities and equipment as well as vocational training classes for youth with hearing/speech impairments. The Evaluation Team visited the three CD communes of Tan Thanh in Tien Giang province and Hoa Loi and My An as well as the district of Thanh Phu in Ben Tre. In Tan Thanh the key informants comprised of Project Management Board (PMB), female and male farmers, project ‘communicators’ and heads of hamlets. Furthermore, the Evaluation Team visited women and men in their households and observations were made of households, livelihood activities and infrastructure supported by NMA. In Ben Tre there were hardly any activities to observe yet as the work had largely concentrated on training and planning for implementation, and consequently the field visit was limited to meetings with the district and commune PMBs.

In addition, meetings were held in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) with PACCOM, the People’s Aid Coordinating Committee, which is the main national government counterpart of INGOs in Vietnam. Meetings were held with Save the Children, which has considerable experience implementing IE projects and with World Vision International which has valuable experience implementing CD projects, in order to compare and contrast with NMAV. The Evaluation Team also made observations of a gender training workshop held in the NMA office in HCMC and facilitated by the Head of the International Department at the Head Office in Oslo.

A total of 121 individuals were interviewed and in addition the evaluation team talked to around 20 children altogether in the early intervention activities and in schools.

On 28 January a one-day workshop was held to validate preliminary findings from the field work. There were 37 participants including NMA staff and representatives from implementing partners in all of the project areas. The purpose of the validation workshop was

to discuss preliminary findings made by the Evaluation Team with the informants. The workshop was opened by a comprehensive power-point presentation on preliminary findings by project area. Next, the participants were divided into groups according to project area and discussed questions which they presented in plenary. The Evaluation Team got useful corrections, clarifications, elaborations and comments.

### ***1.3 Outline of the report***

Chapter 2 of the report assesses the effectiveness of the NMA projects by reporting the most recent project results at output and outcome level. There are considerable additional results from discontinued projects in the past, but these will not be included as this is a forward-oriented evaluation. Furthermore, Chapter 2 considers the other main OECD-DAC evaluation criteria specified in the ToR, namely relevance, sustainability and to the extent possible efficiency.<sup>5</sup> Impact can only be assessed for the IE project in Vinh Long. Since Ben Tre has hardly started implementing activities the focus in this project will be on the planning process. The chapter summarizes by considering the conducive and constricting aspects in each of the projects.

In Chapter 3 the NMA program strategy and approach is considered with a specific focus on participation, gender equality and inclusion as specified by the ToR.

In Chapter 4 organization and management aspects of NMAV are considered including project and financial management, leadership, NMA and partner relationships and capacity.

## **2 PROJECT RESULTS**

### ***2.1 Inclusive Education***

The Vinh Long Inclusive Education Project was developed by NMAV in partnership with the Vinh Long Provincial Department of Education and Training (DoET), the project holder, and the Vinh Long Center for Inclusive Education Support and Development of Children with Disabilities (abbreviated to Resource Center - RC), the project implementing partner. The project was implemented over two phases with the 1<sup>st</sup> phase from September 2005 to July 2007 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase from August 2007 to end of 2010. In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase, the project was piloted in Mang Thit District and from 2008, expanded to Tra On, Vung Liem, Long Ho Districts and Vinh Long City.

From April 2009, NMAV started cooperating with Tien Giang Provincial DoET to implement the Inclusive Education project in Tien Giang Province and Cho Gao District was selected for the pilot. Similar to the Vinh Long IE project, the Tien Giang IE project has been implemented by the Tien Giang Center for Inclusive Education Support and Development of Children with Disabilities (Resource Center - RC).

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<sup>5</sup> As defined by Norad in Norad (2005) Development Cooperation Manual Oslo: Norad: page 46

### 2.1.1 Inclusive Education Strategy

According to the Program Strategy 2008-2012 on IE, the overall objective is to “contribute to NMA’s goal in development work which are empowerment, poverty reduction and inclusion.”<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the purpose is to ensure the participation of children and youth with disabilities and their families in the society. Project results are expected to be the following:

- awareness of community and families of children with disabilities on their needs and potential improved
- RC for IE in Vinh Long is established and its defined functions are well performed
- children with disabilities attend inclusive schools in all districts of the province
- children with disabilities receive support from community and friends
- capacity of stakeholders improved
- coordination mechanism among relevant sectors is enhanced
- job orientation and vocational training for youth with disabilities is developed<sup>7</sup>

### 2.1.2 Planning Process

In 2004/2005 NMAV organized 13 workshops with Vinh Long DoET and Vinh Long RC to discuss how to technically and financially transform the Vinh Long Special School into an RC to benefit children with disabilities. These included staff from DoET, the Special School and NMAV. As far as the Evaluation Team could determine, parents, teachers and children were not included in these planning meetings. The planning and consultation workshops were appreciated by local partners for being undertaken in a participatory manner and responsive to the national and international “Education for All” policy. NMAV Annual Report 2005 reported that all Project Management Board (PMB) members<sup>8</sup> participated in the project planning workshop and discussed the development direction for the Vinh Long RC during the pilot phase in Mang Thit<sup>9</sup>. During the planning of the 2008-2012 strategy, it was reported by NMAV staff that all project stakeholders actively participated, including officials from the DoET, principals and key teachers of some ‘core’ schools and RC. Again, the Evaluation Team found no evidence of participation by parents, community members, children in the actual planning workshops and meetings. However, it was reported<sup>10</sup> that during training sessions RC staff have gathered feedback from parents and members of the communities which they have included into plans. The project also established “Clubs of Parents who have Children with Disabilities” where parents have the opportunity to share experiences and discuss. Parent members of the Clubs received knowledge and information about bringing up and educating children with disabilities from the RC, and provided the RC with updated information on education progress and needs of the children.

In Tien Giang, the planning process was highly regarded by both the local implementing partner – Tien Giang RC, the DoET and the provincial authority represented by the Foreign Affairs Department and Tien Giang UFO (Union of Friendship Organization). Initially, the project only had annual plans; however, seeing the importance of having a longer-term plan

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<sup>6</sup> NMAV (2007) Project Document IE 2008-2012. HCMC: NMAV, Chapter 4.5.4

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, chapter 4.5.5 and 4.5.6

<sup>8</sup> “Project Management Board consists of representatives from different relevant governmental departments such as health, education, population, families and children, and representatives of authorities from the pilot district.” (source: Annual Report 2005 NMAV)

<sup>9</sup> Annual Report 2005 NMAV, Inclusive Education. Results, page 5

<sup>10</sup> comments from NMAV staff members

for the project implementation and financial planning, NMAV and its partners developed a 5-year plan for Tien Giang IE project from 2011 onwards.

### **2.1.3 Activities and Outputs Vinh Long IE Project**

During 2005-2010, the Vinh Long IE project had the following main results:

- *Expansion of the project sites*
  - Rapid expansion of the project from pilot district Mang Thit in 2005 to four districts and one municipality (Tra On, Vung Liem, Long Ho districts and Vinh Long City) of Vinh Long Province by 2010. This was possible due to increased awareness of the education officials and teaching staff in these districts of the importance of IE for children with disabilities.
- *Raising community awareness of the needs and abilities of children with disabilities and supporting community activities for children with disabilities and their families*
  - Awareness raising activities on IE for the community:
    - A total of 24 programs were broadcasted on TV, 110 technical training courses were organized for local authorities and educational staff of 4 districts and 1 city in Vinh Long Province.
    - 12 meetings with parents' associations at school.
    - 13 meetings organized in the community.
    - 11 workshops were organized on effective teaching for CwDs and sharing management experiences.
    - 669 parents and representatives of local authorities attended awareness raising activities on the importance of education and caring for disabled children.
    - Friendship circles among students were encouraged in all mainstream schools with IE.
  - A range of Information-Education-Communication activities were organized aiming at raising awareness of the community:
    - 79 representatives of disabled persons and 400 representatives from different schools/services in the provinces participated in the meeting on the International Disability Day.
    - Organized International Disability Day on 18 April.
    - The full moon festival for disabled children was broadcasted on local TV and radio stations.
    - A study trip to a model IE project in the North was organized.<sup>11</sup>
- *The Special School developed into a Resource Center for inclusive education supporting the capacity building of the staff in performing their responsibilities and operating the Center*
  - Upgrading facilities at the RC: A total of 6 classrooms were renovated, and equipment for physical exercises were purchased.
  - Teachers of RC are able to counsel and give support to teachers on how to teach difficult cases of CwDs without assistance from the external consultant.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> NMA (2010) Annual Report 2009. HCMC: NMAV

<sup>12</sup> *ibid*

- Technical support/advice has been given to RC with 2 international and domestic advisors. (1 international expert from Sweden comes twice a year; advice on government policies on disabled is given by a consultant from the Ministry of Education; Inclusive Learning Friendly Environment (ILFE) training for teachers and parents in 8 rural primary schools.)
  - A social worker unit has been trained which resulted in: 2 training sessions on social work skills for RC staff; 3 parents clubs established; 1 workshop on social work for RC; Community Support Group at grassroots level)
  - RC collaboration with DoET, pre-schools, primary schools to teach parents on how to care and train their children.
  - ILFE awareness raising training for teachers and parents in 8 rural primary schools.
- *Capacity building for district education officials and teachers.*
    - 1414 managers, teachers from schools of 4 districts and 1 city trained on IE.
    - 8 training courses for teachers and 2 for managers on new teaching methods.
  - *Improvement of school facilities and learning environment.*
    - 3 meetings held for needs assessment of school environment
    - Insurance bought for 500 children.
    - Action Plan made for upgrading of school environment
    - 3 workshops were held on school friendly learning environment
    - Libraries in 8 schools were equipped with books for students and teachers, 6 schools were supplied with computers, 2 schools were upgraded.
    - Capacity building of teachers included 3 training seminars by provincial DoET, workshops on education law in 8 schools
    - Application of learner-centered methods in teaching.
    - Dental care and health check-ups were provided for 313 student in 8 schools.
- *Capacity building on project management, monitoring and evaluation and other project activity related skills:* training on management was organized for management staff from the RC and DoET.
- *Vocational Training*

The Vinh Long RC has provided vocational training and career orientation for disabled youth. The RC had organized one tailoring training for two groups of youth, one hair dressing and manicure training for one group and one vehicle washing training for one group of youth. Some of these youth lived in the RC while being trained and received room and board. One group of youth had been supported by the RC to open a tailor shop and another to open a vehicle washing shop.<sup>13</sup> The hairdressing and manicure group has not opened a business as their skills are not yet according to customer demand.<sup>14</sup>

#### **2.1.4 Activities and Outputs Tien Giang IE Project**

Only commenced in July 2009 (20 months as of the evaluation date), the Tien Giang IE project has the following results<sup>15</sup>:

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with partner key informant.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with NMAV key informant.

<sup>15</sup> MNAV Annual Report 2009

- *From Special School to Resource Center supporting inclusive education; capacity building for RC staff and teachers:*
  - Enhanced the workforce of the RC and reorganized the RC to include departments of Administration, Social Work with Vocational Training Team, and Technical Training with Special Education Team.
  - Workshop for developing the RC organized:
    - The strategy of transforming special school into a center which was built and accepted by DoET
    - Organized training on planning for the transformation from Special School to RC.
    - 4 Special subject workshops for 97 participants organized.
    - 10 technical training courses (with different disabilities such as language, mental, low hearing, low vision, counseling skills....) for 213 teachers organized.
    - 01 workshop on early intervention instructed by an international expert.
  - Capacity building for RC staff and teachers
    - Two different specialized training sessions on IE and early intervention for 30 staff and teachers.
    - Training on counseling techniques and developing individual teaching plans.
    - 80-90 percent of the staff were trained on training techniques.
    - A study trip to Daklak and Qui Nhon was organized to observe a model IE and vocational training.
  - Upgrading of the facilities and equipment of the RC
    - Improved the meeting room and the 2 rooms for experts.
    - Provided some equipment for early intervention activities at the RC.
    - Specialized training on IE and early intervention for children with learning difficulties
- *Raising community awareness of the needs and abilities of children with disabilities; the responsibilities and supporting activities of the community.*
  - Awareness raising activities on IE for the community:
    - A total of 3 programs were broadcasted on TV, 18 technical training courses were organized for local authorities and educational staff of 7 districts and towns in Tien Giang Province.
    - 4 meetings with parents' associations at school
    - 4 meetings organized in the community
- *Capacity building of district education officials and teachers.*
- *Children attending early intervention training and inclusive education in preschools and primary schools.*
  - 5 important events (Vietnam Disabled Day, International Children Day, Day of All People bringing children to school, Inclusive Full Moon Festival, International Disabled Day) were organized.
- *Vocational Training*

- 10 disabled youth with hearing impairment were supported to get a job in private businesses in Tien Giang province.<sup>16</sup> One girl has opened her own business with an income of more than 4 million VND per month.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.1.5 Outcomes from Vinh Long and Tien Giang IE

Outcomes of the Vinh Long IE and Tien Giang IE projects are presented together, as follows.

#### *Disabled children enrolled in preschools and primary schools.*

- At the end of 2010 a total of 250 children attended early intervention and another 1097 children were enrolled in pre-school and primary school in Vinh Long.<sup>18</sup>

#### *Improve awareness of community on inclusive education*

- In Vinh Long, the principal of a primary school reported that children with disabilities had previously not been admitted to mainstream schools. They were supposed to go to the “special” schools. Over the years, with numerous awareness raising activities supported by the project, all principals accepted children with disabilities into their school and teachers accepted them into their class.<sup>19</sup>  
Some interviewed teachers reported that previously some parents did not want their child to sit next to the children with disabilities. However, these attitudes have changed somewhat due to training sessions organized for parents in the communities, in combination with the communication support by the Community Support Group, which consisted of representatives of the commune and hamlet authorities, village health workers, Women’s Union staff and parents.
- Parents have gained knowledge and skills on how to parent disabled children; they feel less burdened and have gained hope for their child from training and sharing with other parents.
- Some parents have changed behavior in relation to their child (they understand their child better, stopped hitting them, try to teach them things and to stimulate them). Some parents actively encourage other parents to bring their disabled children to the RC or schools.
- In Tien Giang parents reported that they have become more aware of the need for their children to be educated. Some parents believed that their disabled children were able to learn and develop. They also realized the need for their children to attend school regularly and despite being busy with their jobs all parents made great efforts to bring their children to school. Increased attention to child development was also manifested through the fact that some parents spent more time to speak with teachers about their child learning progress. An unexpected outcome for some parents was some free time for income generating activities while their children were at school, which resulted in better income for the family, in some cases.

#### *Capacity Building for Staff and Teachers of RC*

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<sup>16</sup> NMA Annual Report 2009

<sup>17</sup> Interview with NMA key informant.

<sup>18</sup> Similar figures for Tien Giang IE were not made available to the Evaluation Team.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with key informants.

- In Vinh Long, RC staff reported being skilled and confident in their technical and advisory skills, which was validated by teachers and parents.
- In Tien Giang, the awareness of both staff and teachers at the RC has increased significantly. The teachers reported to have basic knowledge and skills of IE and how to work with children of different types of disability, not just hearing and speaking impairment.
- RC staff in Tien Giang confidently reported that they also learned from the project, particularly from the NMAV staff on planning skills, event organization skills, among others. The RC management representative and the financial staff also learned how to maintain a transparent financial management system.
- Vietnamese trainers from NIESC provided advice to the project which led to updating according to what is going on in the field of IE at national and international levels. In addition, the international expert on IE, Ms. Irene Lopez from Sweden provided technical training for RC staff on early detection and intervention, specialized teaching methods focused on the resourcefulness of disabled children; advice; instructed teachers, rehabilitation workers, community workers and RC staff to work with children and their parents.

#### *Capacity building for teachers at mainstream schools*

- In Vinh Long and Tien Giang, teachers at the visited pre- and primary schools reported having acquired skills and knowledge on disabled children and how to teach them. After five years participating in the project, these teachers felt more confident to work with disabled children. They have received a lot of support and technical advice from the RC staff both in-person and via phone.
- 1 teacher at a communal school in Tien Giang got the Title of “Excellent Teacher in Inclusive Education” awarded by the Ministry of Education and Training.
- Disabled children attending primary school learned to read, write, do math problems, learned appropriate behavior.<sup>20</sup>

#### *Early Intervention*

- Though the project has been implemented only one year in Tien Giang, the early intervention activities were regarded quite successful by various respondents during the evaluation. Children in the 0-6 age-group were actually not among the target groups of the RC; however, realizing the importance of early intervention the RC proactively included this age-group despite their problem of staff shortage.
- In both Vinh Long and Tien Giang there has been a significant increase in awareness among parents on the fact that their disabled children are able to learn and develop. The parents now understand and realize the importance for their child to receive early intervention; and the need for regular attendance. The fact that they brought the children regularly twice a day to school testifies to this. Many of them had far distances to travel, for example 1, 5 hours per way.
- Disabled children attending early intervention showed improvement in communicating, walking, interacting with others. Some children have improved their behavior particularly those who would get angry easily or be too noisy. These improvements

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<sup>20</sup> This was reported by teachers and parents and observed in school classes.



were the results of great efforts made by the RC Early Intervention trainers, in case of Tien Giang, and the kindergarten teachers, in case of Vinh Long and not the least, the continued efforts done at home by the parents. The teachers said that without the support of the parents, these children would never have made such good progress. During the field visits, the evaluation team observed a number of parents who watched, learned and tried to follow what the teacher did with their child, so that they could replicate with their children at home.

#### *Children benefiting from IE*

- Total numbers of disabled children benefitting from IE and early intervention in Tien Giang were not made available to the Evaluation Team. This is key to monitoring progress and should be available at all times.
- It was reported by both the district education authorities, DoET, and the RC and school management staff that most of the girls and boys included in the project are from the poor and poorest families in their communities. However, a more in-depth study should be done to find out the socio-economic status of these children.
- In Vinh Long, children benefitting from IE have improved their education; they have learned to read, write, solve simple mathematic problems as well as acquiring social and life skills.
- Most of the children are happier and more active; they are less isolated and suffer less discrimination. Some have more self-confidence after they started school. Most of the parents reported that their child having more friends at school and at home.

#### *Promoting social work*

- The Social Work Department is one of the key functions of the RC.
- Both Vinh Long and Tien Giang RC reported having established a Social Work Team.

#### *Vocational training and job training/introduction for CwDs*

- 10 children with hearing difficulties were assisted to get jobs in a gold jewelry shop in 2009. Another child has opened her own sewing shop that brought back an income of more than 4 million VND per month in Tien Giang.
- In Vinh Long, the vocational training and career orientation for children and youth with disabilities have been quite successful in ensuring jobs afterwards. The RC contacted some private establishments for vocational training and apprenticeship where the children were sent. The children benefitting from the vocational training are those who have once been students of the special school (RC), and others. The RC had recently opened a Car/Motorbike washing service and tailoring service and the youth working here could thus earn an income of 1.5 million VND per month. There were also hair dressing, manicure and massage training classes but the children could not yet earn their living from these services because they needed further training.

#### *Collaboration and coordination*

- The Vinh Long RC has networked widely with many institutions and organizations throughout Vietnam, especially with the local DoET, preschools and primary schools.
- In both provinces, NMA-V received strong support and collaboration from both DoET and the RC. Between the DoET and the RC, there has been close cooperation in organizing capacity building activities for staff and teachers in the district and

mainstream school, social/outdoor activities for the children with disabilities as well as mobilizing additional material support for these children.

### **2.1.6 Impact**

#### *A local team on IE for the provinces*

- Even though both Tien Giang and Vinh Long had experience working with children with disabilities, the Norad/NMAV project has helped the two provinces to build up a local team that works professionally in providing services on early intervention and inclusive education.

#### *Reduced stigma towards children with disabilities*

- The project has contributed to reduced stigma among the parents who have children with disabilities, the families and the neighbors.
- Children with disabilities have been included in classes and have acquired new classmates and some have new friends.

#### *Children with disabilities have the right to education and development*

- Each and every child interviewed in the evaluation had learned new skills and at least one new thing in their life since attending either early intervention or inclusive education.

#### *Commitment from provincial authorities and local partners to pursue IE*

- Guided by the national policy “Education for All” and the Law for People with Disabilities, the Vinh Long and Tien Giang authorities and local partners were well aware of the project overall objectives, the participatory approach – as opposed to welfare handout approach – consistently implemented throughout the project. The active participation and strong commitment of the project partners and local authorities in supporting the children with disabilities in Tien Giang and Vinh Long.

### **2.1.7 Efficiency**

It is not possible to assess the efficiency of the IE projects. However, the Evaluation Team would like to point out one aspect of efficiency which NMAV should focus on in the future. Most of the budget to IE including early intervention has gone to various kinds of capacity building: to training, meetings, study trips, rehabilitation of buildings, classrooms, rooms, some toys for trainers and children, other facilities and equipment. A lot of training has been and is being held, as listed above, but NMAV does not do systematic monitoring and reporting on the effect of all the training. Systematic training needs assessment needs to be applied as well as increased use of training of trainers. Indicators on the outcomes of training need to be developed to ensure systematic monitoring and reporting on the results. A study on the effectiveness and impact of the training activities may be considered.

### **2.1.8 Relevance**

The NMA supported IE projects are very well in line with national policy on including children with disabilities into the public school system. It was obvious<sup>21</sup> that Vinh Long and Tien Giang IE projects and their design facilitated by NMAV meets the needs of the local Government at commune, district and provincial levels. The representative of Tien Giang DoET stated that “the project was relevant and timely responded to the new national policy on IE<sup>22</sup>, as well as the province and district education development plans”. Vinh Long Provincial authority confirmed that IE has been one of the province development priorities and is the responsibility of DoET. Vinh Long province has become a model province for how to integrate children with disabilities into public schools.<sup>23</sup> However, there is no evidence in the project material that it responds to needs coming from villagers at the grassroots level. Therefore, in the future the IE projects in both provinces should seek to better lodge these activities within the communities at the grassroots level.

### **2.1.9 Sustainability**

Various aspects have been found in the project design and implementation to contribute to project sustainability. These include:

- The project was designed based on the national policy on IE, needs of the local authority partners to transform Special Schools to RCs.
- All implemented activities fall into the mission and functions of the education sector and the RC.
- The project emphasizes capacity building for all project stakeholders; particularly Training of Trainers (TOT) at the RCs for future training delivery.
- The project strongly encourages the participation of all stakeholders in the project implementation and monitoring.
- Mobilizing national experts to provide technical support to the local partners.

In the case of Vinh Long IE project, after 6 years of project implementation, the representative of Vinh Long RC management firmly stated “we are confident that we will be able to perform the RC functions on our own within the government budget”.<sup>24</sup> RC trainers from Vinh Long RC confidently deliver the training contents to teachers at mainstream schools. Institutionally, the RC management, administration and financial staff have enhanced their management, training design and delivery skills through their involvement in the project. The project utilization of national (Hanoi-based) IE experts and the international IE expert, has been a good opportunity for the RC to establish a good rapport and strong collaboration with these experts who are just a phone call/email or 2-hour flight away whenever the teachers need technical support. The training program and materials developed by the experts and used repeatedly by the teachers might be used to share with other to-be-trained teachers.

The Vinh Long RC management representative added, however, that the budget constraints might inevitably impact on the scope and frequency of some activities. For instance, activities like training might be organized at a smaller scale and at the district level to minimize costs. Awareness raising activities might be organized with smaller groups at the community level, or through the neighborhood monthly meetings.

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<sup>21</sup> From interviews with key informants on IE.

<sup>22</sup> Decree No. 23 issued by Ministry of Education and Training regarding inclusive education. Article 23 of Law for People with Disabilities effective January 2011 specifies the establishment of Resource Centers.

<sup>23</sup> According to key informants.

<sup>24</sup> Interview with key informant.

In the case of Tien Giang IE sustainability still needs to be built into the project. The RC has just taken up new roles and responsibilities less than 2 years ago. Both the RC management and staff were new to IE and working with children with different types of disabilities.

### **2.1.10 Summary of Conducive and Constraining Factors**

#### *For the Resource Centers*

- The Tien Giang RC was currently understaffed and the provision of IE technical support to teachers at schools remains limited due to some delays in implementation. In Vinh Long many more schools have now received children with disabilities due to increased awareness in the communities. This has posed a challenge for the RC as it only has 24 full-time teachers who have to perform different tasks at the RC. According to the regulations, the RC is allowed to have up to 40 staff within its complete structure.
- Most RC staff/trainers have been trained in specialized care and therapy of children with hearing disability. But they were still not so familiar with other types of disability or with IE, particularly in supporting teachers to modify their general lesson plan to include the disabled students.
- The teachers reported having to travel long distances and some times there is no place to rest (after lunch) or eat properly.
- Due to the differences between the NMA project allowance for partners on mission and the government allowance, RC staff travelling on their ordinary (project-unrelated) missions received different travel allowances which were generally lower than the allowances of NMAV.

#### *For the mainstream schools*

- The primary school in Cho Gao District, Tien Giang which the Evaluation Team visited, was one of the three "satellite" schools (trường điểm) which has a function of providing technical support for another seven to eight schools.
- Teachers hesitantly reported that teaching classes with one or two disabled children in the class led to a heavier work burden, especially related to making the individual teaching plans on a weekly, monthly, bi-annual, and annual basis. If they had more than one disabled child or multiple disabilities in the class, it increased the burden.
- The teachers with disabled children in their class expressed a need for more visits from RC staff for follow-up and technical advice, especially for making lesson plans and for teaching kids with more than one disability. They also expressed a need for refresher and advanced training.
- The teachers need special toys, equipment (like TV, laptops and material) in order to teach the disabled children in the most effective manner.
- The project budget for organizing parents' awareness raising and sharing workshops is too limited.
- Another challenge has been staff turn-over in the education sector. This resulted in losing well-trained people, time lost in training new staff and time for new staff to get familiar with the job.

- While the number of children with disabilities has been limited to two children per class according to the Ministry's guideline, there were four children in a class in some satellite schools in Vinh Long due to the shortage of trained teachers.
- Teachers in kindergartens in Vinh Long are not confident in identifying disabled children and which type of disability they have. Hence, it was difficult to develop an individual teaching plan for them.
- Parents and teachers have different attitudes towards childrearing methods, e.g. corporal punishment, which are not suitable with the IE approach.

#### *For families and communities*

- Not all parents were convinced that the mainstream school was best for their disabled child. At least two of the parents interviewed expressed a wish to send their children to a Special School in HCMC rather than continue. There needs to be more awareness raising activities in the communities in order to make sure that people understand the point and merits of the IE approach and methodology. There needs to be more awareness raising activities for the pilot district to have a common understanding in the communities on IE.
- The DoET and school managements reported that most of the disabled children belong to poor or poorest families in their communities. They struggle to find time to earn a living and at the same time take the child to school or RC twice a day (morning and afternoon) and follow up on their child at home.
- Stigma remains in the communities; there is a need to do more awareness-raising among community population on the issue of including disabled people. It was reported that children are still relatively isolated within their families and communities.<sup>25</sup>
- Children are still isolated to a certain extent, especially the older ones, for example a 12 year old who was in 2nd grade. Some parents felt their children were being pushed through the system.
- A number of children need physical therapy for rehabilitation requiring technical equipment which must come from the health sector. However, the collaboration between the health sector and the education sector has been reported to be a challenge to the RC early intervention team of which the capacity is already far stretched.
- Stigma related to disabled people is still a challenge in communities. NMAV should focus on working with communities to reduce stigma. This can be done by, among other things, peer education, dissemination of IEC materials for community awareness-raising, campaigns and activities and getting the whole community involved, not just those families and children affected by disability.

## **2.2 Community Development Strategy**

The overall goal of the NMA CD according to the 2008-2012 Project Document<sup>26</sup> is to contribute to sustainable poverty reduction in Vietnam. The project objectives are to empower poor communities and local authorities for sustainable poverty reduction. There are six sub-objectives:

- to empower people to take responsibility to develop their own lives and communities

<sup>25</sup> During interviews with key informants.

<sup>26</sup> NMA (2007) Project Document CD 2008-2012. Ho Chi Minh City: NMA

- to empower communities to develop sustainable livelihoods, and to give opportunities to build their own assets
- to empower communities to address vulnerability with regard to their health and environment, and increase opportunities to access available health services and policies
- to ensure the right to education for all children, including children with disabilities
- to improve local infrastructure in order to promote local economy and improve living conditions
- to build a support network of local authorities, social institutions, and organizations to assist and provide services/policies to communities and village management bodies<sup>27</sup>

Furthermore, priority will be given to the poor and marginalized groups, including children, women, people with disabilities and ethnic minority groups. The document specifies two main criteria for the selection of communes and communities, namely 1) high level of poverty and 2) significant presence of ethnic minorities. The three NMA supported CD communes are among the poorest in their respective provinces but none of them have ethnic minority populations. This criterion should be deleted from the strategy when it is next revised.

### **2.3 Community Development Tan Thanh**

As a result of discontinuing support to Chau Thanh district<sup>28</sup> in Tien Giang province in December 2008, NMA started the process of finding a new district/commune in Tien Giang in the first months of 2009. Upon consultations with province authorities, Tan Phu Dong district and Tan Thanh commune were selected and the final decision was made in April 2009 to start a CD project in Tan Thanh commune. The decision was based on the following reasons:

- Tan Thanh is the poorest commune in one of the poorest districts of the province, and it is a poor commune with difficult living conditions. It is an island 17 km long and 1 km wide with a population of ca. 5000 and 1150 households. The island is extremely vulnerable to flooding and storms.
- Children have difficulty in accessing education; there is one primary school which is far away for some children, and there is no secondary school on the island. Long distance and transportation for going to school are considered as main reasons for drop-out at secondary level.
- People do not have enough clean and fresh water. The water source is polluted by acid sulphate and saline intrusion.
- People have low incomes. After harvest they have time, but there are no jobs available on the island and they have no vocational training, and consequently they migrate to other areas for seasonal work. The main agricultural activities are aquaculture, especially shrimp-farming, coconut cultivation, tropical fruit cultivation (guava, sour-sop etc) and rice cultivation.<sup>29</sup>

In September 2009 NMA started implementing the CD project in Tan Thanh. It is fully funded by “Ole and Jorun’s Foundation” through NMA. The project holder is the Provincial People’s

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<sup>27</sup> *ibid*: 16

<sup>28</sup> NMA supported a CD project in Chau Thanh district for one year in 2008 but decided to pull out because the district was not among the poorest in the province and the PMB was not sufficiently committed according to the NMA Annual Report 2008.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with NMA key informants.

Committee (PPC) in Tien Giang. In cooperation with the provincial and commune authorities NMA decided to pilot implementation by the project management board (PMB) at the commune level. This had not been done before, but it was part of NMA's strategy to get closer to the grassroots and the target groups involving villagers more directly in planning and implementation of activities. As such, it represents a contrast to the CD being developed in Ben Tre where the project implementing partner is the PMB at the district level. In 2009 the project piloted in three villages and in 2010 expanded to another six villages.<sup>30</sup>

### **2.3.1 Planning Process**

The planning process in Tan Thanh started with a number of meetings for PRA (participatory rural appraisal) in the three pilot villages during the last months of 2009. After the PRA process a validation workshop was held followed by a planning workshop where a 5-year strategy was made and an Annual Plan for 2010-2011. The PRA was conducted by NMAV staff and the planning workshop was facilitated by consultants from CECEM.<sup>31</sup> Meetings were held separately with different target groups, such as women only, villagers only, sour-sop farmers, shrimp farmers, coconut farmers, and visits to the school. Participatory tools were utilized during these meetings including participatory wealth ranking, village mapping, crop calendar, water calendar, income calendar, history calendar, venn diagram, problem tree, which all informed the situation and provided a basis to determine needs.<sup>32</sup> Needs were determined in the areas of education, health, livelihood and environment, but due to limited funding only some of them could be started during the first year of implementation. The data available does not give a clear picture of how the prioritization of activities was done. Households were selected based on the Government's wealth ranking and included households with a so-called 'poor book' which are those determined to be the poorest in the commune by the Government.

An Action Plan for 2010 specifies each activity and corresponding budget amount and activities are grouped by project outcome.<sup>33</sup> No log-frame was made for 2009 and in 2010 some elements of the log-frame were integrated into the Annual Plan for 2010.

### **2.3.2 Activities and Outputs**

A few activities in the area of environment were implemented already in 2009. 190 water jars were provided for 190 households in 3 villages. The capacity of rain water storage of these households increased from 46 liters to 477 liters per person. 75 latrines were provided for poor households in 3 villages, which increased the number of households with latrines to 6.25 percent. 3 training sessions were organized for people in 3 villages on cleaning water and the use of sanitary latrines.<sup>34</sup>

Activities in 2010 were implemented in the areas of capacity building, education, livelihood and environment.<sup>35</sup>

#### *Capacity Building*

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<sup>30</sup> NMA powerpoint presentation.

<sup>31</sup> CECEM is a consultancy organization in Vietnam called Centre for Community Development

<sup>32</sup> Interview with key informant.

<sup>33</sup> NMA (2007) Program Strategy 2008-2012. Ho Chi Minh City: NMA, Annex B

<sup>34</sup> NMA (2010) Annual Report 2009. HCMC: NMA

<sup>35</sup> Activities and outputs were taken from NMA powerpoint presentation and provided during visit to Tan Thanh

In the area of capacity building training sessions were held on needs assessment and planning, monitoring and evaluation, team work, behavior change communication, results-based report writing, clean water and environmental sanitation. A total of 6 training courses were conducted for the PMB. The PMB also received advice and support on project management.

### *Education*

In the area of education the headmasters of the primary schools attended a training session on innovative teaching methodology by the Pedagogy University in HCMC. Three sessions on mobilizing children to attend school were held. Two training workshops were held for parents to raise their awareness on the importance of education. Sports teachers were supported to attend training on life skills. The planned first aid training was delayed and transferred to 2011. Furthermore, a mid-autumn festival was supported. A football instructor workshop and referee training were held in connection with establishing a football club consisting of 20 boys and 20 girls. Based on the government wealth ranking of the households in the commune, students in difficult conditions were selected and provided with uniforms and health insurance. Story books were given to the school library. A team of 20 students were supported to attend a football tournament in Hue and a group of students were supported to make an historical study trip to the Cu Chi tunnels.

### *Livelihood*

In the area of livelihood activities consisted in support for training and equipment. 30 farmers made a study trip to Dong Go Experimental Coconut Center in Ben Tre province where they learned about seedlings germination, sapling, extracting honey from the flower. 20 farmers went to Soc Trang province to learn more about shrimp farming and cooperative model of farming. A total of 4 training courses were held for farmers/villagers, one on cultivation of coconut, one on sour-sop trees and 2 courses on shrimp farming, which were attended by 60 women and 60 men. Trainers from a fruit cultivation institute in Tien Giang came to do training on sour-sop cultivation, trainers from the Institute in HCMC specialized in coconut cultivation came to do training on coconut cultivation, and specialists were hired to train on shrimp cultivation. A training course on tailoring for industrial sewing was attended by 17 participants. The training integrated some general topics, such as Role of Gender in Development and Law on Marriage and Family.

### *Environment*

In the area of environment, access to clean water increased for local people who received the water jars in 2009 and were connected to the clean water supply through the water line. In 2010 NMAV supported the second-stage water pipe line with 3400 meters of water-pipeline which increased the access of clean water use from the clean water supply station from 53 to more than 200 households. Villagers also learned how to make the cement water jar. The water jars increased the capacity for poor households to store rain-water for 4-6 months in the dry season. 225 households received chlorine for processing water and were taught how to use it. 40 waste-bins were built for 40 households which contain two parts for the decomposing of organic waste. Members of these households were trained on how to separate organic from inorganic waste and about recycling of organic waste. 3 groups of workers were trained in 2009 to build latrines and they built latrines in 6 households. In 6 villages IEC (Information, Education, Communication) groups were established and the activities of these groups have been documented. Awareness-raising training sessions were held on cleaning water, sanitation, environmental protection with different groups of villagers and mass organizations. Communication boards about environment and health issues were built in each village.



### 2.3.3 Outcomes

#### *Partnerships*

- A Project Management Board (PMB) has been established and is functioning. The main task of the PMB is to be the implementing partner of NMA which involves planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting on project activities. It consists of 5 members and each member gets 250 000 VND per month from the project. At the hamlet level a so-called ‘communicators’ have been nominated to be liaisons for each hamlet. The role of the Communicator is to be actively involved in awareness-raising on the different activities and be a link between the PMB and villagers. Each Communicator gets 200 000 VND per month from the project. Each hamlet consists of 200-300 households and according to key informants this is too many households for only one Communicator. At the village level there is a community development group in each village which consists of at least 6 members and their task is to communicate with the villagers about project issues.

#### *Livelihood*

- Farmers are using new techniques and equipment to some extent. For example, farmers used to plant the coconut plants too close, and after the training and study visit on coconut planting they have started planting them according to how they learned. During the study visit farmers learned and saw how to extract honey from the coconut tree flower, which they had not done before. The Evaluation Team tasted this honey which 5 few households now have started extracting. One bunch of coconut tree flower gives 2 liters of honey.
- After visiting Soc Trang and observing the farmers’ cooperative model, farmers in Tan Thanh decided to form a cooperative of shrimp farming to share experiences and to protect the shrimp against infection and thus have a better yield. In the cooperative they can also organize joint training.
- All of the training courses led to activities among the farmers who participated except for those who did the tailoring course. They formed a tailoring group and are ready to start production, but need sewing machines. One machine costs 6 million VND and NMA is prepared to support them with half of this amount through the MF component. They still need to raise the other half of the amount, which they plan to get from private donations.<sup>36</sup>

#### *Education*

- According to key informants results of the education activities are not so easy to observe so far. However, some anecdotal evidence illustrates that awareness may be changing and that people have learned something from the training. For example, when they learned how to raise children without corporal punishment one mother cried and exclaimed: “ I wish I had learned this 10 years ago; if I had known this I would not have hit my children”. Another example is of a teacher who discovered that one student had stolen some flowers in the garden of another student for a garden growing project. The teacher was very angry and said to the culprit: “if I had not just learned not to hit students in the training course I would hit you now”.<sup>37</sup> According to key informants the teachers are working on integrating life skills components into their pedagogy and curriculum.
- The football team consisting of girls and boys still exists and they have regular training. A good cooperation has been established between NMA and the

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<sup>36</sup> According to information from key informant interviews.

<sup>37</sup> Interview with key informants.

Norwegian Football Association (*Fotballforbundet*) based in Hue whereby the two Norwegian NGOs are exchanging competencies and networks, among other things.

- Parents awareness-raising training on the importance of attending school, incentives provided to the students (ie. health insurance, uniforms, improved libraries, outdoor activities etc.) combined with improved quality of teaching, has led to a reduced drop-out rate.<sup>38</sup>

#### *Environment*

- Farmers who got training and equipment to clean water are utilizing it, and those ca. 150 households which were connected to clean water supply through the water pipe line are using this water. However, not all households have been included in the training for water cleaning, toilet use, water jars, etc. It is important that all households and the whole community are included in these activities. There is still a need to raise people's awareness on how to dispose of waste, the importance of drinking clean water, how to clean the water, the importance of using latrines. And it is important to document the future outcomes of clean water use on villagers' health and sanitation.
- Latrines have been built in some households, but they are not being used by all family members: at least two of the families visited by the Evaluation Team still used the shrimp/fish pond as a toilet as well as the latrine. They believe that the latrine will fill up if used all the time by all family members. This finding is supported by similar experiences in Ben Tre province.<sup>39</sup> More awareness-raising is necessary so that people fully understand how the latrines function and how important it is that everyone uses them.
- Use of the new waste-bins and latrines should be closely monitored to determine whether people actually use them.

#### **2.3.4 Relevance**

The CD project in Tan Thanh is clearly in line with the national Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth strategy from 2002 and national policies on the environment and climate change. The education activities are in line with Vietnam's policies on education for all and quality education. With its focus on the grass-roots level participation it also supports the Government Directive 33 and Government Official Document 2215 on grassroots democracy.<sup>40</sup>

The participatory planning exercises and tools have included the villagers in Tan Thanh and the commune PMB and thus the activities reflect the needs of the people who are members of the target group. However, there are some indications that perhaps the prioritization exercise with the villagers has not been done thoroughly enough; or it needs further follow-up. For example, it was found that community health issues are not being addressed although there are many serious issues, such as a very high incidence of dengue fever last rainy season, illnesses in women's reproductive parts, mother-child health issue and malnutrition in children under 5. There are currently 359 women who have children under 5 in the commune. These issues should be followed up in the next annual planning exercise.

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<sup>38</sup> NMA powerpoint presentation.

<sup>39</sup> During a needs assessment by one of the Evaluation Team members on another consultancy.

<sup>40</sup> NMA (2010) Annual Report 2009. HCMC: NMA

### 2.3.5 Sustainability

It is too early to make any proper sustainability analysis, however it is possible to identify actions that have been taken to **promote** sustainability. Most of the members of the PMB are also members of the commune People's Committee and as such have tasks to perform both for the PC and the PMB. This has led to a heavy work-load and time pressure for the members. In addition they felt that they were not getting enough support from the district level.<sup>41</sup> The PMB needs to be strengthened by getting more people involved, more Communicators and more support from the district authorities.

NMA should have as much contact with the PMB and villagers as possible and attend the monthly PMB meetings.<sup>42</sup> The fact that the two project officers are locally based close to Tan Thanh commune increased their proximity and presence in the commune. They should systematically be talking to the different groups of people within the commune, men, women, youth, boys, girls, tailors, shrimp farmers, etc. to discuss the implementation process in order to get to know their situations, their needs and priorities.

### 2.3.6 Summary of Conducive and Constraining Factors

#### *Conducive Factors*

- Cooperation between the PMB and NMA is very good and based on trust.
- Communicators at hamlet level and community development groups at the village level ensures communication and information flows.
- Locally based NMA staff are close to partners and more present in commune.
- Activities are addressing needs of the community and match the socio-economic development objectives of the local authorities.
- Local ownership is promoted through participatory approach.
- Adoption of cooperative model of farming.
- Synergies with the MF – at the moment there are more than 100 clients of MF in Tan Thanh.
- Monitoring and reporting has so far gone smoothly.

#### *Constraining Factors*

- The PMB members have little time for the project implementation as they are also members of the PC.
- The PMB has no experience with development project implementation.
- One communicator to cover a whole hamlet is a heavy work-load.
- A major challenge from the NMA standpoint is a shortage of both NMA and PMB staff to follow up the implementation of project activities.
- Training often leads to the need for financial resources, such as the case of the trained tailors who need to buy sewing machines. It is important that this does not become an impediment to practicing what has been learned during training.
- Some activities could not be implemented including the following: a planned swimming course for school children because there was no swimming pool available; first aid training could not take place because no local trainers were found; IEC activities could not be implemented in 2010 because there was a

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<sup>41</sup> According to key informants during interviews.

<sup>42</sup> Interview with key informants.

conflict with the Church, which was supposed to organize these activities. These activities have been postponed to 2011.

- Needs assessment and the **prioritization by villagers** should be revisited. At the least, a health component should be included in a community development project.
- There are very few youth in the commune because there is no secondary school and few employment opportunities; families are vulnerable because they need human resources for livelihood activities.
- Environmental threats, such as rising sea-level and flooding of the island along with polluted water, are an overhanging risk.
- It has proven a challenge for the teachers to implement new teaching methods they have learned from the NMA training as it represents a new mind-set and also requires new equipment such as computers and LCD projector. However, they will try to raise the financial resources for this equipment from parents and other private donors.
- It was difficult to recruit local participants for training on water jar construction because the training lasted 2-3 months, during which time they did not have any other source of income. The project did not have a budget for any allowance for the participants, but NMA has now changed the policy on this issue and budgeted for an allowance so it is feasible for local people to participate in the future. In addition, recruiting water jar constructors to conduct training was a challenge. Water jar builders were reluctant to train others since they might be at risk of losing clients, in which case they would lose income.<sup>43</sup>

## **2.4 Community Development Ben Tre**

NMAV entered into an agreement with the District People's Committee (PC) of Thanh Phu as a key project partner, My An and Hoa Loi commune People's Committees as two implementing partners and relevant institutions including Health, Education, Environment. A district Project Management Board and two commune Project Management Boards have been established to coordinate and carry out the project activities. The PMB at district and commune levels consist of representatives of the People's Committee, Health Centre, Education and Training Office, Environment and Natural Resource Management Office, the Women's Union, Farmers' Union, and Youth Union. The district and commune PMBs are backstopped by the provincial Government including the External Affairs Office of the People's Committee and the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI).

### **2.4.1 Planning Process**

NMA held a kick-off meeting with Ben Tre authorities including the provincial People's Committee and the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) to develop partnership for project implementation. After agreement on the selection of project sites, NMA was referred to work with the district and commune authorities of the two selected communes, Hoa Loi and My An. DPI agreed with NMAV to start some activities even though the MoU was not signed.

#### *Need Assessment*

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<sup>43</sup> Interviews with NMAV key informants.

Initially NMA worked directly with the two commune partners to carry out a need assessment study in May 2010. NMA contracted an external consultant, a Vietnamese NGO called Life Centre, to conduct the needs assessment. The consultant was responsible for study design, data collection, analysis and report writing with support from commune project partner staffs and NMA project staff. Participatory methods were employed to get communities involved in the project. The district partner staff were not involved since the Project Management Board (PMB) had not yet been formed.

The study findings were validated in a presentation workshop held in May 2010. About 60 participants including district/ commune PMB members and interviewed households and school children attended the workshop. The results were presented at the workshop and the participants discussed and gave feedbacks and comments on the study results.

### *Project planning*

A five-day workshop was organized in July 2010 in the district center to develop the project plan. There were a total of 50 participants who are district and commune PMB members. The workshop was facilitated by an external consultant and NMAV project management staff. Based on the needs assessment findings, the participants worked in small groups to identify and analyze main problems and community's needs. Subsequently, a five-year project plan was discussed and developed. The project plan was presented in a logical framework including goal, objectives, outputs/activities and indicators. Eventually an annual activity plan including budget was developed for each commune. The annual activity plan is implemented, and then reviewed annually by NMA and PMBs. NMA approves the annual budget for implementing the plan.

The **long-term objective** stated in the project document is to reduce the proportion of poor households in My An and Hoa Loi Communes. "The specific objectives include (1) Increase income per capita of the poor; (2) Improve the quality of teaching for teachers and studying for students in primary and lower secondary schools; (3) Decrease the proportion of malnutrition among under-5-year children; (4) Decrease the proportion of gynecological diseases among women aged between 15 and 49 years."<sup>44</sup>

### *Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation*

NMA and its local partners organized a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) workshop that aimed to develop an M&E plan for the project. In this workshop, NMA and its local partners determined and agreed upon a monitoring and evaluation system regarding indicators means of verification, monitoring tools, reporting format and frequency, among other things.

The Evaluation Team found that NMA and its local partners have adopted the principles of the Project Management Cycle.<sup>45</sup> Participatory approaches were consistently used for problem identification and project planning. NMA ensured that the implementing partners at all levels to be actively involved in project planning. Local partners have been given flexibility in determining project activities appropriate to the local contexts. Thus, the project plan has basically reflected the community needs.

The district PMB is supposed to be responsible for financial management, monitoring and reporting on the project progress to NMA. However, there seems to be no written agreement

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<sup>44</sup> NMA project document for Ben Tre – CD Thanh Phu

<sup>45</sup> Interview with key informants.

or statement where roles and responsibilities of the district and commune PMBs are clearly defined and distinguished. It is important that the respective roles and tasks of the district and commune PMBs are clearly stated and agreed upon.

The focus group discussions with PMBs showed us a difference in the level of understanding about the project. This also reflected the level of involvement of local stakeholders in the project. Few district PMB members were able to name any of the needs identified in the planning workshop. Only one person was able to list some community needs identified in the planning workshop. The Evaluation Team found that the commune PMB members were more engaged than the district PMB members, probably reflecting the fact that the commune PMBs were more directly involved in the project planning and implementation.

#### **2.4.2 Activities and Outputs**

Despite the fact that the project has only very recently started, NMA has made good progress in implementing some project activities, as described in the following.

##### *Education*

This component aims to improve the quality of education in the targeted communes. The following activities were implemented:

A training course on parenting skills was organized in December 2010 and 20 parents participated. The training aimed to improve parents' knowledge and skills on how to educate and take care of their children in their family when children are at home

In order ensure equal access to health care among school children, 20 school children who are from 'nearly' poor families were supported to get health insurance. Efforts were made to increase outdoor activities to strengthen learning abilities. The project supported a study visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels for 145 school children and 54 teachers. In addition, a workshop on football club establishment for school children was organized. This activity is expected to bring in-school and out-of-school children together and increase their motivation for school attendance and studying.

At the time of the evaluation some activities related to school sponsorship were initially conducted such as interviewing and taking photos of school children. Other activities included holding the visit of national standard schools, supplying books to the school library, organizing training on life skills and listening skills for teachers, conducting a small survey to find out which life skills are suitable for students, among several others.

##### *Health and Environment*

A training course on behavioral change communication (BCC) was conducted for 25 village health workers who are expected to carry out IEC activities on health, water and sanitation. A training course on water supply was conducted for 30 households. This training aimed at providing villagers with knowledge of clean water and water treatment techniques to improve the quality of water. In addition, 40 poor households were provided with water jars for storing clean water.

According to the commune PMB members,<sup>46</sup> the training on water supply was useful for households. People found the training necessary for increasing awareness of local people about health and clean water use. People especially felt that learning about different techniques of water treatment was useful. This is a real need of local people because the quality of water in this area is poor. However, commune leaders said that it was very difficult to change people' behavior since water treatment equipment and materials are currently not available in the community. Moreover, all households need this training, not only the poorest.

The Evaluation Team also received feedback from the commune PMBs<sup>47</sup> that some water and sanitation activities proposed by them were not yet included in the project. For instance, local people do not have sufficient access to clean water. They are using polluted water from the river and canal. As in Tan Thanh, fish ponds are, for example, commonly used as latrines which leads to a polluted water source. Hence, building water supply schemes, water treatment and hygienic latrines are urgent needs of the communities.

#### *Livelihood*

To date, 10 percent of the households had been trained on technical science which they applied in their own business/production. Two training courses on rice cultivation and shrimp farming techniques were provided to 67 farmers. The training aimed to improve their knowledge and skills based on their current farming activities.

The participants of the district PMB commented that training on agricultural technology and science supported by NMA was similar to the training program conducted by district Government agencies. The district PMB would like to continue to build demonstration plots to practically apply what had been learned in the training, but did not have the time or money yet.

Post-training follow-up is required to ensure that the trainees apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills in their own businesses or production and that they are given technical support when necessary.

### **2.4.3 Outcome**

It is too early to have any outcomes in Ben Tre, however, it is important to follow up on all the various training workshops that have been held to make sure the skills and knowledge participants have learned is put into practice.

### **2.4.4 Relevance**

The project is generally aligned with the national Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy, which states that poverty reduction targets are: “(i) Reduce the percentage of poor households; (ii) Ensure the provision of basic infrastructure facilities to poor people, poor communities and poor communes; (iii) Job creation; (iv) Universalizing Education and Improving the Quality of Education; (v) Reduce the Birth Rate, the Child Mortality Rate and the Child Malnutrition Rate.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Interview with key informants.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid*

<sup>48</sup> Government of Vietnam (2003) Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS). (Approved by the Prime Minister at Document No. 2685/VPCP-QHQT, date 21th May 2002; and at Document No. 1649/CP-QHQT, dated 26th November, 2003).

The Evaluation Team found that the project activities stated in project documentation were relevant to the local needs of targeted beneficiaries in Ben Tre. The project activities were initiated by local stakeholders. Most commune/ village leaders were involved in the needs assessment study. Most leaders at district, commune, and village levels participated in the project planning workshop where which they were able to take part in discussions, problem analysis and making decisions about the selection of activities to address their community problems. However, due to limited resources and timeframe, some activities proposed by commune partners have not yet been included in the annual plan.

Community participation in this project ensured that the poor households were included in the project planning and activities so far, ie. the training. Village meetings combined with using wealth ranking exercises as a tool consistently were conducted to select the project beneficiaries. The project staff also ensured that villagers representing the poor, wealthy and middle-income families attended the meetings for beneficiary selection. However, the Evaluation Team found that the participation of community members (especially women, the poor and vulnerable groups) in planning process remained low.<sup>49</sup> There is no specific structure or mechanism for participation of the target groups in **project planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation** in place. So far most project activities were decided by local leaders.

#### **2.4.5 Sustainability**

Since the CD Project in Ben Tre has still very new, it is too early to assess sustainability. The training that has been held will sustain if the knowledge and skills learned are turned into practice. During the project, local stakeholders and beneficiaries have been provided with on-site training and exposure visits. These will help to strengthen their capacity. The skills, knowledge and know-how techniques acquired from trainings supported by the CD project is planned to be passed both horizontally<sup>50</sup> and vertically<sup>51</sup>. District PMB members confirmed that by learning from the NMA CD project and/or other NGO supported projects, they would be able to carry out similar activities in the future with local resources from the state budget.

#### **2.4.6 Summary of Conducive and Constraining Factors**

##### *Conducive Factors*

- The current project management structure allows NMAV project staff to work in close liaison with both district and commune PMBs.
- NMAV and local partners have established a good working relationship and cooperation.
- NMAV has a plan to establish a Forum of NGOs in Ben Tre which will meet a couple times per year to foster collaboration and cooperation.<sup>52</sup>
- Plans for MF clients in the two communes in Ben Tre should lead to synergies with the CD components.
- The needs assessments were done thoroughly by consultants in both communes, but in the future NMAV should seek to do the needs assessments.

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<sup>49</sup> Interviews with key informants.

<sup>50</sup> amongst and within the peers and colleagues

<sup>51</sup> each 'higher' level will train the more local level units

<sup>52</sup> Interview with key informant.



### *Constraining Factors*

- Few district PMB members knew what the needs of the two communes were. It is important that they know the communes well which they will be monitoring and reporting on.
- The district PMB confirmed that they had not quite gotten on board and taken ownership of the project fully. There were two main reasons for this:
  - Staff changes in local governmental bodies led to changes of district PMB members.
  - NMA project staff have been working more directly at the commune level and not as much at the district level. It is important that the district PMB starts travelling to the two communes and get involved in the monitoring and reporting of the project activities after roles and responsibilities between the district and commune levels have been clarified.
- Some PMB members had very limited time available to spend on the project.
- No clear line of communication between NMA and the district and commune PMBs has been established. No regular meetings have been scheduled yet.
- My An commune PMB reported that since school management staff is not represented on the PMB, they have encountered a difficulty with collecting data from ETO for writing the monthly project report.
- Hoa Loi PMB, particularly the Commune Health Station (CHS) was more confident about carrying out the project activities since they had previous experience implementing similar projects and with international partners. My An PMB did not have this kind of experience and therefore needs more technical support from NMAV. Hence NMAV should give priority to My An PMB at this early stage of the project.

## **3 PROGRAM STRATEGY**

According to the 5-year plan of NMA in Vietnam, NMAVs development strategy is based on the following:

- a holistic development approach
- integrated development approach
- community empowerment approach
- asset based for community development (ABCD)
- networking and advocacy for responsive participatory governance<sup>53</sup>

The principles of people's participation, gender equality and inclusion of disabled children cross-cuts these five different approaches. The holistic approach emphasizes working in many different partnerships in order to address both material and spiritual needs of the target groups. The integrated development approach emphasizes the multi-discipline approach to planning and implementation, and that a whole range of different activities in different sectors are necessary to promote poverty reduction and inclusion. The community empowerment approach focuses on people's participation where empowerment is addressed along the three dimensions of capacity development, improvement of socio-economic situation, and removing discrimination against ethnic minorities, women, and disabled children. The asset based for

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<sup>53</sup> *ibid*, page 14-16

community development puts the focus on the assets – or resources – that people already have in terms of life skills, livelihood skills, organizing and managing their lives, and building on these resources. According to NMAV advocacy and networking are essential elements for sustainable development and poverty reduction. “NMAV also advocates for the rights of children with disabilities and gender equality in all three programs.”<sup>54</sup>

The 2005 evaluation found that although NMAV had the same strategy back then of people’s participation at the grassroots level, there was no evidence that this actually happened.<sup>55</sup> As a response NMAV has been focusing on working at the lowest level with a focus on grassroots participation and avoiding large-scale infrastructure projects. NMAV has progressed significantly in this area of work in the past five years, as will be illustrated below. Five years ago gender and inclusion was not specifically focused on, so no comparison can be made over time in that respect.

### **3.1 Local Participation and Empowerment**

Community participation and empowerment is in line with the national legal framework for participation stated in Decree 29 and 79.<sup>56</sup> These Decrees aim to support and increase direct citizen participation in local governance, known as ‘Grassroots Democracy’ (Dân chủ cơ sở). These decrees attempt to provide new mechanisms for citizens’ voices to be heard by allowing them to exercise the right to be informed of government activities that affect them, to discuss and contribute to the formulation of certain policies, to participate in local development activities, and to supervise certain government activities. These rights are summed up in the well-known Vietnamese phrase: “People know, people discuss, people do, and people supervise” (dân biết, dân bàn, dân làm, dân kiểm tra).

According to key informants in the CD projects, both male and female villagers have participated in project planning processes where a number of participatory tools have been applied.<sup>57</sup> The Evaluation Team also observed how people have been actively involved in implementing activities. A lot of training and awareness-raising activities involving villagers have taken place, as planned. Communicators, hamlet leaders, members of the communities, are also actively involved in awareness-raising among the community members and implementation of activities. However, as noted above, it was not possible for the Evaluation Team to determine to which extent villagers (not village leaders) have been able to participate in decision-making regarding the prioritization of activities, in the wealth ranking and selection of beneficiaries.

The Evaluation Team could find no evidence that teachers/parents/children were involved in the planning of the IE project activities. Granted; there is much less scope for participatory planning in IE than in the CD as the main activity is disabled children attending primary school. However, parents and children as well as teachers should nevertheless be involved in the planning process to the extent possible. They should be consulted about relevant issues related to their children attending school, and their suggestions for improvements. Teachers

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<sup>54</sup> *ibid*, page 16

<sup>55</sup> Krokeide, Nils Atle et.al. (2005) Norwegian Mission Alliance Vietnam Evaluation 2005. Norway: Jethro Consult

<sup>56</sup> Government of Vietnam (GOV), 1998. Decree No. 29/1998/ND-CP dated 15 May 1998, Regulations on the Exercise of Democracy in Communes; Decree No. 79/2003/ND-CP dated July 7, 2003, Promulgating the Regulation on the Exercise of Democracy in Communes

<sup>57</sup> Interview with key informants

should also be consulted when making an annual or multi-annual plan. Regarding Early Intervention, there are issues such as the toys, tools, rooms, treatment and training for the children and there are issues related to the number of days and hours they come to the RC. All relevant issues should be consulted with parents and RC trainers.

To sum up, when comparing with the 2005 Evaluation NMA has made significant progress in relation to participation at the grassroots level, bottom-up planning and applying a participatory approach. NMA has progressed from doing the planning itself together with local authorities, to involving people at the village and hamlet level in needs assessment and in implementation of the CD projects. However, there is scope for improving on the level of involvement of local people, especially related to decision-making processes during planning and implementation. When it comes to the IE projects, the RCs seem to do all the planning and implementation in collaboration with the schools, and only consult parents, children and communities to a very limited extent. There is little evidence of a participatory approach except for the fact that disabled children themselves are included into schools. Two lines of improvements could be made regarding participatory approach. One would be to work with the RCs and schools to involve parents and teachers more in the planning of the IE activities; and the other would be to make a separate study in order to determine exactly the level of grassroots participation in planning, implementation and monitoring in the CD projects.

Local contribution is a key to promoting local ownership. The local contribution in terms of human, material and financial resources in each of the projects is not visible in any of the documentation. It was reported that the ratio is on average 30 percent local contribution and 70 percent NMA funding.<sup>58</sup> In the future, the local contribution should be accounted for and made visible in reports, though not necessarily brought into budgets as this may complicate already good accounting and financial reporting systems.

### **3.2 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women**

There is already a relatively good level of awareness on gender issues in NMAV. NMA has recently reported to the Head Office on what has been done to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in its Vietnam program. The following steps have been taken<sup>59</sup>:

- women have been encouraged to participate in various events
- gender awareness-raising seminars and workshops have been held at the community level
- women get access to credit through the NMA microfinance projects
- although micro-credit has been primarily for women, men also benefit
- through awareness-raising and training in communities parents have been encouraged to send girls to school and to prevent them from dropping out
- girls have been targeted in the Football for All campaign
- NMA has promoted equal participation in workshops
- NMA is seeking to get a gender balance among the staff members, but there is still an imbalance in terms of seniority, ie. the senior positions are held by men
- NMA has equal salaries and benefits for women and men in the organization
- NMA has targeted women deliberately in project activities

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with key informant.

<sup>59</sup> As reported at NMA gender workshop in HCMC on 28 January 2011 and the NMAV Annual Report 2009.

- NMA is encouraging women to participate in the PMBs, become leaders of PMBs, join the Village Development Groups and Cooperatives
- NMA has realized that it is mostly women who are involved in the IE, as parents and teachers and is trying to get fathers more involved
- A 3-day gender workshop was held in 2009 in Tien Giang. The Norwegian Embassy in Hanoi donated the Ibsen play “A Doll’s House” which all of the participants saw and discussed, among other things.
- NMAV actively makes efforts at meetings and workshops to give attention to women and encourage them to speak up.

The observations of the Evaluation Team confirm that women are active as members of PMBs and are also represented among other partners. In Tan Thanh Communicators were women and women were active as farmers and producers. They clearly benefit from the projects. There were women members of all of the PMBs although they were a minority and men tended to be heads of the boards with a few exceptions. When it comes to the IE, it is a bit more complicated picture. As mentioned above, teachers, trainers and parents involved are mainly women and men need to get more involved. However, the RC directors, vice-directors head-masters in primary schools tend to be men although staff members of the RCs are more mixed.

On 28 and 29 January 2011 a gender workshop was held in HCMC by a representative from the Head Office in Oslo to introduce the Gender and Empowerment Assessment (GEA) tool which NMA is now applying globally. It builds on common features of existing gender analysis tools, such as basic and strategic needs as well as information needs. The GEA tool has 14 questions which should be asked in relation to basic, strategic and information needs. Although the GEA can be applied as is to the NMA program in Vietnam it would be advisable to hire a gender expert on Vietnam who is updated on the situation in Vietnam related to gender equality and cultural aspects of gender roles and relationships. The gender expert could facilitate the GEA exercise to do a thorough gender analysis and support NMAV staff members in following up activities, such as developing gender mainstreaming indicators and monitoring gender equality.

Gender mainstreaming indicators should be developed, not only in terms of gender disaggregated data, but in terms of identifying the different strategic, practical and information needs of women and men, girls and boys, and addressing these accordingly. Thus NMAV may be able to address a number of additional concerns within the CD that have reportedly not been included: “NMAV has not gone into (or has left to other organizations more equipped to do that job) the obvious problems of trafficking, domestic violence, women’s limited access to land and property, less paid jobs.”<sup>60</sup>

### **3.3 Inclusion of Disabled Children**

A total of 250 girls and boys have been included in the early intervention activities and 1097 have been included in primary schools in Vinh Long province.<sup>61</sup> This itself is evidence of inclusion of disabled children. In discussions with children, parents and teachers, clearly the children are benefitting in terms of learning a number of things including literacy, numeracy and appropriate behavior in class. However, it is not clear to the Evaluation Team to which

<sup>60</sup> NMAV (2010) Annual Report 2009. HCMC: NMAV. Page 18

<sup>61</sup> The numbers for Tien Giang province were not available to the Evaluation Team.

extent they are fully integrated into their classes. It was observed that some of them were active in their classes and some were not.<sup>62</sup> Most of them had developed friendships with students in their classes or other classes, but some had not. Reports from parents were mixed regarding the level of integration. Some parents were very happy with their children's progress in school and social integration, while others would prefer to send their children to special classes for disabled children in HCMC, although they could not afford to. According to the testimonies of parents and teachers, some of the children integrate well with the other students while others do not do as well. Stigmatization of the children reportedly improves over time; however it remains a challenge. The same was reported by key informants about their home communities; stigmatization and harassment of disabled children and people remains an issue although the situation has improved. MNA should therefore focus more on awareness-raising in the community to remove stigma and harassment of disabled. This can be done by involving children without disabilities in peer group and IEC activities. In general, more efforts should be put into including more children and community members into the IE projects so that the IE projects benefits more children in total, both with and without disabilities.

Furthermore, the NMA program would benefit from situating this work on inclusion of disabled children within the framework of child rights. Vietnam was the first country to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), is proud of this and has come a long way in implementing the CRC. Article 23 of the CRC states in its first paragraph that "States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child's active participation in the community."<sup>63</sup> In order to create more synergies between the three main components of the NMA program the CRC could be applied not only related to the IE component, but also to the CD component. This would involve awareness-raising and training regarding disabilities among children on the one hand, and a more general awareness-raising about child rights in the areas of health, education, protection and participation. Vietnam has integrated the CRC into the Government system by, among other things, creating "Communes and Wards Fit for Children".<sup>64</sup> NMA and partners could explore linking with this system and thus integrate not only a gender mainstreaming approach, but a child/youth mainstreaming approach to the Program.

## **4 PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Organization and Management**

The NMAV organization is a flat structure with the Country Director at the top with two senior project posts, one Program Coordinator and one Senior Project Officer. The rest of the organization including 1 Advisor, 5 Project Officers, 2 Project Assistants and 4 administration support staff (accountant, administrator, cook and driver) are at the same level. The total number of 15 divide into 7 men and 8 women, while the three most senior including the Director are all men. The reporting lines from the project officers and project assistants go through the two senior officers to the Country Director and to the Area Director for Asia at the Head Office in Oslo. The Administration Officer and Senior Accountant both report directly to

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<sup>62</sup> According to observations and interviews with parents, teachers and children.

<sup>63</sup> United Nations (1989) The Convention on the Rights of the Child. New York: UN

<sup>64</sup> UNICEF website: [www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media\\_39292.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/media_39292.html)

the Country Director. According to the Director there is a plan to form a senior management group consisting of the Director, the senior coordinator and three senior program officers which would be two more than today. As the three most senior staff of NMA are all male, there should be an attempt to get a better gender balance in the (planned) senior management group. According to the information provided to the Evaluation Team, this is a concern also shared by the Director and project staff.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to the country office there is an Internal Advisory Committee which consists of five external members. The leader of the Advisory Committee is a Norwegian member of the NMA Steering Committee and the other four members are two men and two women who are Vietnamese nationals with relevant competence for the NMAV program. The Advisory Committee meets twice a year and its purpose is on the one hand, to support the Country Director and staff in Vietnam and on the other hand, to function as an additional link between the Head Office and the country program. After several years of trying to find a good form and function, the Advisory Committee now consists of competent members with relevant expertise who function well together, according to key informants.<sup>66</sup>

The NMA project staff have regular staff meetings every 2 weeks and internal technical meetings regularly. In addition there are thematic workshops, such as the recent gender workshop. Whenever the Advisory Committee meets, the members meet with project staff members and they have workshops on different themes, such as sustainability or log-frame planning.

In 2008 NMAV started a new practice of employing locally based project staff. A total of 5 project staff currently have their bases either in the provincial capital or in the district or commune. 3 staff members are based in Tan Phu Dong district, Tien Giang for following up on Tan Thanh CD, 1 project staff member is based in Vinh Long city for following up on IE and 1 staff member in Tien Giang province for IE. The purpose was to “facilitate better community participation and increase the knowledge about the local community”.<sup>67</sup> According to NMAV, the contact with the local communities has increased and improved. Clearly, there are advantages to locally based staff.<sup>68</sup> Project staff are more often in contact with local authorities, with beneficiary groups and households, and thus develop a closer relationship with them. Contact with the implementing PMB is more frequent, on a daily or weekly basis in Tan Thanh commune, but with the target groups and households more sporadic. According to reports<sup>69</sup> locally based staff understand the context and situation better and know how things function at the local level; they function as a link between the partners and the NMA office in HCMC; partners can discuss details of plans and implementation; and partners can get on-the-job-training or advice when locally based staff are around.

The Evaluation Team did not find any evidence to suggest that the local authorities perceived the locally based staff presence as negative, to the contrary. If anything, they expressed a wish for NMA to come more often and support them in the work. This was particularly the case of Ben Tre where they were in the initial phase of the project and there is no locally based staff. One disadvantage of this arrangement, in the opinion of the Evaluation Team though, is that NMA as a team becomes more fragmented and that the project officers based in the field are

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<sup>65</sup> Interview with NMA key informants

<sup>66</sup> Interviews with key informants

<sup>67</sup> Terms of Reference, page 4

<sup>68</sup> Based on interviews with NMA staff, PMB staff, other partners and provincial authorities.

<sup>69</sup> Regarding advantages of locally based staff during interviews with key informants.

challenged to work independently and somewhat isolated at times. If problems or difficulties occur, it demands more of them. It is therefore important that 1) the senior management based in HCMC visit and contact the field-based staff frequently and that 2) the field-based staff attend all staff meetings and all other NMAV events without exception. As part of the team-building efforts (see discussion below) focus should be on ensuring that field-based staff are fully integrated in the NMAV team.

## **4.2 Leadership**

The NMAV Country Directors are international staff members. NMA has a policy of hiring both husband and wife, one as the Country Director and the other in another capacity. There has been a high turnover of Country Directors in recent years; in the last 6 years there have been 6 Country Directors. Various reasons account for the high turnover rate, as reported in the interviews. One common problem is that most of the Norwegian nationals who fill this post are in permanent jobs back home and there are limitations to how long they can take unpaid leave of absence if they want to keep their jobs in Norway. Other reasons are personal or due to family reasons. The frequent change of Country Directors has affected the continuity and relation-building with staff members and partners, according to both NMAV and partner staff members.<sup>70</sup> However, the Evaluation Team found that it was not so much changing the person as the different management styles and different concepts and approaches to programming and partnership that leads to disruption and lack of continuity. For the partners it was the disruption in relationship building that was the main disadvantage. During the shifts of Directors the past 6 years, some office regulations and routines were neglected or not strictly followed.<sup>71</sup> NMAV has the necessary regulations and routines for good project management and financial control but some recent Directors have not enforced them as vigorously as others.<sup>72</sup>

Norwegian nationals appointed to be directors get a two-week course at the Head Office in Oslo as preparation before they leave Norway. The purpose of this course is for the new staff members to get acquainted with the Head Office, with the NMA global program and strategy and with the personnel policy and regulations. There is an optional one-month course in development studies which some of the incumbents have taken at the national School of Mission and Theology.<sup>73</sup> However, it is not mandatory. In order to address this issue of differing management styles and approaches, NMA Head Office may consider developing an internal management training course consisting of different modules which country directors would go through at different points in their career with NMA. This would ensure more consistency in management style and programming approach for the local staff in NMAs country offices.

Another aspect which has compounded the disruption caused by rapid director turnover, is a relatively high rate of project staff turnover. According to key informants, during the 2005-2011 period there has also been a rapid and high turnover of project staff. There have been two periods when nearly all project staff left together with the Director.<sup>74</sup> This situation is actually

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<sup>70</sup> Interview with key informants.

<sup>71</sup> Examples are: making situation analyses, making monitoring and evaluation plans as part of project annual plans, making complete logframes for annual plans, filling out checklist for the Partner Quarterly Financial Statements, project officers involvement in financial control.

<sup>72</sup> *ibid*

<sup>73</sup> *Misjonshøgskolen i Stavanger*

<sup>74</sup> Interviews with key informants

not new in NMAV. The 2005 Evaluation pointed out that in 2004 “all previous staff both expatriates and national Vietnamese employees left NMAV in 2004. They either left voluntarily or were asked to leave. ... The fact that NMAV experienced a total renewal of the staff in 2004 must without much doubt have caused a continuity gap within the organization.”<sup>75</sup> In sum, for about 10 years there has been an unusually high turnover of both Country Directors and staff members in NMAV.

During the same period of time NMAV had relatively many projects which started and stopped<sup>76</sup>, which adds to the situation of disruption and uncertainty. It is therefore important to try to create an organizational culture of stability and continuity. The management in NMAV and those responsible at the Head Office and the Advisory Committee all realize this and are working to improve this situation.<sup>77</sup> Strengthening both the senior management team, as mentioned above, and having a strong and well-functioning Advisory Committee is therefore crucial for the future of the NMAV organization and management. Focus should be on creating an office environment and culture of continuity and stability which can tolerate well the relatively frequent changes of international Directors and turnover of project staff. This means, among other things, vigorously applying the NMA regulations and following the established routines the NMAV has established, and it means focusing on team building.

### **4.3 Project and Financial Management**

#### **4.3.1 Plans**

Within the frames of the country program strategy for the Vietnam program<sup>78</sup> NMA identifies new project areas in cooperation with PACCOM in HCMC and then with the provincial authorities. The provincial authorities inform NMA which districts and communes are among the poorest and which development actors (INGOs, UN, bilateral) support projects in which locations. NMA then proceeds to discuss with district and commune authorities. Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) are signed with the provincial People’s Committee (PPC) and then Annual Agreements are signed with district and/or commune People’s Committees. In the case of Tan Thanh commune there is only a contract with the commune People’s Committee. Next, Project Management Boards (PMBs) for CDs are established at district and commune level (in Tan Thanh only at the commune level). In the case of IE, the RC functions as the implementing partner. After a series of needs assessments (in the case of CD) and planning exercises have been undertaken, annual project documents are made with detailed activity and budget plans. The Annual Activity Plans contain the project goal, outcome indicators, expected results and timeframe. In addition NMAV makes an Annual Application to Norad following the Norad established format (template).<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Krokeide, Nils Atle et.al. (2007) Norwegian Mission Alliance Vietnam Evaluation 2005. Norway: Jethro Consult. Pp: 7-8

<sup>76</sup> For example, three pilot micro-credit leprosy projects started in 2003 and stopped in 2005; a school building/upgrading project in Tien Gian started in 2004 and stopped in 2005; a HIV/AIDS project started and stopped in 2006, the An Phuc commune water supply project was started end 2004 and stopped in 2006, the CD in Chau Thanh district started and stopped in 2008; the Tra On CD started in 2007 and stopped in 2009.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with key informants

<sup>78</sup> During the period of evaluation there have been two country program strategies, one covering the period 2004-2007 and one covering the period 2008-2012.

<sup>79</sup> NMA annual plans from 2005, 2006 and 2008; Norad application, Cooperation Agreements and Annual Agreements.



During the past 5 years the plans have taken different shapes and forms. The recent ones contain sufficient information, as assessed by the Evaluation Team, but they do not systematically distinguish between output and outcome indicators. NMAV needs to work on developing indicators for outputs and outcomes and make that distinction in the plans. This could be a topic for a thematic workshop hold a workshop.

#### **4.3.2 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)**

Monitoring is done by NMA project staff, by the PMB at the commune level and by the district level staff (except for in the case of Tan Thanh CD). M&E plans are supposed to be made routinely as part of the annual plans but the past few years M&E plans have only been made sporadically.<sup>80</sup> Plans should also be made for external evaluations, mid-term reviews, internal or external thematic studies/evaluations. NMA should, as part of the M&E plan, include numbers and frequency of visits with the different target groups. For the CD this should include not only the groups of people involved in the various livelihood activities, but groups of women, men, youth and children in the whole commune. Children and youth should be further divided into girls and boys. Lists of issues (by indicators) should be made to guide the discussions with the target groups.

#### **4.3.3 Project and Program Reporting**

NMA makes annual reports which are based on the Norad reporting formats. The Annual Report for 2009 was 28 pages long and contained a wealth of useful information under each of the question headings. Although the reports need to respond to the Norad questions, they should also report on the plans, that is reporting on outputs and outcomes using the indicators developed for this purpose. None of the reports make a distinction between the outputs and outcomes in the reporting of results (ref. comment made above about the plans). In order to have reports that help to see the progress made over the years, the reports need to report on outputs and outcomes; and impact studies or analyses should be made with regular intervals.

#### **4.3.4 Financial Reporting**

Financial reporting takes place to and from NMAV; from NMAV to the Head Office in Oslo 5 times a year according to the Head Office financial guidelines<sup>81</sup>, and from partners to NMAV according to partner reporting requirements.<sup>82</sup> Partners only do income and expenditure statements and do not have to use accounting software. March 1 is the deadline for the annual financial report to the Head Office and then there are reports in May, August (the budget revision), September and December/January. Partners send financial reports once per month and usually they are on time, with some exceptions. However, at the year-end partners are usually late, which makes it hard to finish the report to the Head Office. The financial reports from partners are found to be accurate regarding the amount, but not always regarding the nature of the expense.<sup>83</sup> This is something that NMAV could improve by accountant and project officer visiting implementing partners more often. The NMAV Accountant visits partners and project area regularly. For example, in 2010 she visited IE in Tien Giang twice,

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<sup>80</sup> Interviews with key informant and document study of NMAV plans.

<sup>81</sup> NMA (year?) Finance, Accounting and Reporting Guidelines for Field Operations. Oslo: NMA and NMA(2003) Field Management Handbook. Oslo: NMA

<sup>82</sup> NMAV (year?) NMA-V Financial Requirement to Parnters. HCMC: NMAV

<sup>83</sup> Interview with key informant.

CD in Tan Thanh twice, IE in Vinh Long once, CD in Ben Tre once, while the CD in Vinh Long not yet. One of the important things to do during these visits is to check original documents, such as the vouchers and bank statements, as NMA only gets copies of these documents from partners. Financial reports and cash reports are in original while the vouchers and bank statements are copies. The Accountant also follows the Project Activity Plan (Action Plan) and the Project Budget Plan. In addition NMAV has developed a checklist<sup>84</sup> for partners' monthly financial statement, which is supposed to be kept in the project file.

#### **4.3.5 Fund Transfers and Financial Control**

Funds are transferred from Oslo 6 times per year, twice in January and once in February, April, August and October. The funds are usually on time from Oslo and NMAV transfers funds to partners quarterly and always on time.<sup>85</sup> There were no problems reported regarding the funds transfers within NMAV and between NMAV and partners.<sup>86</sup> However, there is a problem related to the program cycle which affects financial control negatively. As most of the project activities happen concentrated at the end of the year, it is hard to follow financial control routines vigorously throughout the year.<sup>87</sup> The reason is that planning usually starts at the very end of the year, continues until Tet and Tet holiday usually takes all of February, which means that implementation of many of the activities does not start until well out in the fiscal year. A few project activities, such as IE in Tien Giang, are implemented throughout the year, but the others are concentrated in the autumn and end of the year. This makes it difficult for the Senior Accountant to check and double-check all activities against vouchers and activity plans in collaboration with project staff. Consequently, there needs to be a shift in the program cycle whereby planning starts much earlier, ideally in July/August the year before, so that annual activity plans are made and agreements signed with partners during the autumn and hence activities can start January 1.

#### **4.3.6 Project Documentation**

According to the NMA internal standards and routines each project should have the following documentation:<sup>88</sup>

- memorandum of understanding
- project appraisal
- project document
- annual agreement and plan of action
- financial report
- field trip report
- transfer of funds
- correspondence
- contracts
- other

#### **4.3.7 Corruption**

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<sup>84</sup> Checklist for Partner Monthly Financial Statement. Financed with Support from NMA.

<sup>85</sup> According to key informants.

<sup>86</sup> Interview with key informants.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid*

<sup>88</sup> Ref. index divider outline for project files.

Despite a good organizational foundation and good project and financial management routines, NMA has recently experienced a couple of cases of corruption. One case was related to mismanagement and misappropriation of funds in one project area (Tra On). After a long period of investigation and internal discussions how to deal with the problem, NMA ended up phasing out of the project area rather abruptly and dismissing three project staff as a result. When NMAV suspected corruption, it was reported to the Head Office in Oslo. The Head Office immediately reported it to NMA's umbrella organization, BN (*Bistandsnemda*), which is the direct partner of Norad, and the General Secretary of NMA left for Vietnam. Next, a series of measures were taken, including the hiring of an auditor to make a thorough investigation into NMAV's financial matters.<sup>89</sup> The other case involved a staff member who misused NMA trust and resources, and after getting several chances to rectify the mistakes, was dismissed. This shows that NMAV takes corruption incidences seriously and deals with it when it happens. But inevitably such cases, especially those the first one mentioned, had serious repercussions on the NMAV staff as it took a lot of time and effort to solve and it divided the staff in two regarding how to respond. As a follow-up NMAV did a general lessons learned exercise which resulted in a list of 15 points,<sup>90</sup> which are general points but do not address corruption as such.

Since then NMAV has taken one important measure to reduce the risk of corruption by getting an agreement from partners and authorities that the External Auditor, which does one audit report per year, can do 2 unannounced spot-checks in the field per year. This means that they will do a surprise visit to implementing partners a couple of times a year. Other measures which could be taken, is to spread the implementation of activities better throughout the whole year, as mentioned above. Thus the project officers will be able to follow up on the financial reporting more thoroughly and there will be more time for the accountant to work with project officers to check and control the accounting and reports of the implementing partners. This will hopefully prevent similar incidences to the corruption case in Tra On in the future. NMAV should also consider to do a lessons learned exercise focusing exclusively on making an action plan on how to proceed in the case of assumed or suspected corruption and what measures to take when it has been confirmed. If there is a next time, is the best solution always to quit?, is a question that should be answered, among others.

#### **4.4 Staff Capacity**

One main finding of the Evaluation Team is that the NMAV staff is highly motivated and dedicated to their work. There is a good tone and ambience in the office, as observed and reported;<sup>91</sup> despite the recent turbulence related to the corruption cases and turnover of staff. Most of the current staff are quite new to the organization. One of the senior staff members has been there 7 years; the rest have been there between 5 months and 2,5 years. The average age is around 35 years.<sup>92</sup> The project staff all have university degrees and most of them have relevant prior working experience as teachers, social workers or work with INGOs or international aid organizations. Most of them also have relevant university training, such as social work, education, environment/biology, international relations, accounting. This is an improvement since the 2005 Evaluation which reported that most of the staff had limited working experience and limited relevant educational background. In sum, NMAV has since

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<sup>89</sup> Email from NMA.

<sup>90</sup> "Some learned to be kept in mind when NMAV enters Ben Tre, continue in CD Tan Thanh, IE and MF, may proceed in other areas" one-page report dated 14 June 2010

<sup>91</sup> Interview with key informants.

<sup>92</sup> According to list over staff with birth dates, professional titles and starting date in NMAV

2005 made progress in appointing new project staff with more relevant educational and professional backgrounds.

Still; it is generally speaking a relatively young and inexperienced group of project staff and it is therefore important for NMAV to focus on capacity-building of staff members. Staff will increase their competence by working with external experts and members of the Advisory Committee. Furthermore, staff can increase their capacity by collaborating or liaising more with other INGOs - which has been done in the past<sup>93</sup> - in order to learn and exchange experiences with them. Participation in NGOs forums is important for project staff to participate in, both in HCMC and Hanoi. Project staff could also do cross-project visits to learn from each other and inspire creativity. Most importantly, staff will increase their capacity through frequent and regular contact with the target group members: the different groups of farmers, the women, the men, youth, the parents of disabled children, the teachers of disabled children, girls and boys disabled or not, and so on.

#### **4.5 Role and Added Value of NMAV**

Throughout the field visits the Evaluation Team noted that NMAV has been playing multiple roles in both Tien Giang and Vinh Long projects. NMA's first role, as immediately mentioned by all partners, has been to channel funding support from the donor to the local partners. It is also clear from the interviews that NMAV is not primarily considered as a technical advisor; but rather as the facilitator of technical expertise by identifying and mobilizing local and international experts to provide technical support to the local partners. However, several recognized the valuable technical expertise of NMAV staff members, especially related to the training and advisory services on project and financial management. NMAV is also appreciated for enabling and facilitating study trips both domestic and abroad, and for all the training which they organize. NMAV also enables and facilitates international contacts within the NMA global organization as well as the larger international development network.

NMAV was considered<sup>94</sup> as more efficient and effective compared to many other INGOs in the same localities due to the presence of the locally-based staff. This has, among other things, been demonstrated by the fact that the locally-based staff attended most of the project activities implemented at the community level, and can promptly and timely discuss and address project issues whenever they arise. The staff as a whole is appreciated for being present at every event which is organized in the case of IE and regularly in the case of the CDs ready to assist and advise with any kind of issue.

NMAV keeps the focus on community awareness and participation and promotes participatory approaches to planning and implementation which perhaps is the most important value-added of NMAV.

#### **4.6 Partner Capacity**

One of the great advantages of development cooperation in Vietnam is the strong state structure and the relatively high level of capacity among government partners. The capacity of

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<sup>93</sup> NMAV (2009) Annual Report 2008. HCMC: NMAV

<sup>94</sup> interviews with representatives of partners and stakeholders

NMAV's implementing partners is considered by the Evaluation Team as generally good judging by the discussions and observations made during the field trips. The partners had a good grip on the activities they were implementing and the work of the PMBs as well as the challenges they were facing. According to NMAV<sup>95</sup> partners also have sufficient capacity to do accounting and financial reports. Most members of the PMBs belong to commune, district or provincial People's Committees or other government bodies and hence many of them are familiar with project/program implementation. Most have undergone a lot of different training facilitated by NMAV on different aspects related to project management. However, some implementing partners expressed that they were inexperienced in project management and needed more follow-up by NMAV and more training. All of the partners need continued follow-up training on how to make plans, develop different types of indicators, how to do monitoring of implementation, report on outputs and outcomes, among other things.

One overarching concern of NMA in Vietnam are the serious environmental challenges in the project areas and the capacity of partners to address these.<sup>96</sup> Partners were acutely aware of the risks related to storms, rain and rising sea-levels as well as the polluted and saline-intruded water. When asked how NMAV could contribute to the capacity-building in this area they referred to the ongoing national programs which are addressing these issues. NMAV should consequently, proactively support implementing partners to participate in national environment/climate-change programs and activities which are relevant for their communities. At the same time it is important to ensure that the villagers are well-informed about these issues and that they also get involved at their level.

#### **4.7 Level of Partnership Cooperation**

The Evaluation Team found that NMAV has developed a profound partnership with local partners. The NMAV working approach is highly regarded by the provincial authorities and the local partners for its participatory approach responsive to local needs, attentive listening and openness to discussions and local feedback, transparency, and support in daily work. However, NMAV has also recently had bad experiences with partnership cooperation, as pointed out above in relation to the corruption case in Tra On which damaged partner relations. Another limitation of partnership cooperation is the limited time and resources the PMB and RC staff members have for the project implementation as they have their other jobs and responsibilities to attend to. It is nevertheless crucial to continue to work on partnership relationships in a country like Vietnam where this is key to achieving results.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

A whole range of important **results have been achieved** by NMAV at both output and outcome levels despite short project life-spans of three of the projects. Activities have largely been implemented as planned but with some delays and postponements. A majority of the activities has involved training and capacity-building and it is therefore important to monitor whether and to which extent these activities will lead to outcomes and impacts. Some important outcomes have been observed in the case of Inclusive Education: increased number

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<sup>95</sup> Interviews with key informants

<sup>96</sup> Ref. ToR of Evaluation, page 3.

of children are attending early intervention and school; parents have changed behavior towards their disabled children; teachers have changed behavior in relation to teaching classes with disabled children. However, there is still stigma both at schools and in the communities towards disabled children and adults, and this needs to be focused on. Including more children, both disabled and not disabled, in peer group and life-skills activities is important. In Tan Thanh there have been outcomes in terms of applying new farming techniques and planning procedures. However, it is not clear that people have changed behavior related to the latrines and the use of the new waste-bins, and this needs to be monitored in the coming period. Another crucial question is whether the training and application of new farming techniques actually will lead to increased income? This needs to be monitored and reported on in the future. In Ben Tre participatory needs assessment and planning has been implemented. In relation to both CD projects, NMAV should focus on getting deeper into the participatory approach and making sure that all villagers are being empowered not just through participation in activities but also being involved in decision-making. Furthermore, focus should be on making sure that new farming, livelihood, environmental techniques and skills are being applied in practice.

**Long-term impact** of NMAV support could be observed in the establishment of Resource Centers for Inclusive Education in two provinces, a general increased awareness and knowledge among education personnel at the Resource Centers, and not the least, in schools where disabled children have learned literacy, numeracy and other skills. However, impact cannot be observed yet in the other three project areas.

Clearly, the 4 NMAV projects evaluated here are highly **relevant** to national, provincial and district Government policies. With regards to the CD projects, they are based on participatory needs assessments and hence reflect the needs of the villagers. However, to which extent the priorities of the people at village/hamlet level is less certain, and should be a focus in the continuation of these projects. The IE projects have not been based on participatory needs assessments and planning processes in the same way and can therefore not be said to reflect the needs of local people as a result of a systematic bottom-up approach. However, as the projects have progressed and people have become familiar with them, they do nevertheless reflect the needs of parents and communities to a certain extent. It should also be pointed out that this is an activity initially driven more by human rights norms; namely the right to education for every child and countering discrimination against disabled children. In the future, though, NMAV should promote participatory planning and reporting in relation to the IE projects, that is including teachers, parents and children in planning and implementation, to the extent possible.

NMAV has working approaches and strategies that **promote sustainability**. Good and close partnership relations have been built across the board and efforts to promote local ownership are being made. The IE in Vinh Long is sustainable by all accounts, and the IE in Tien Giang being modeled on the Vinh Long project, shows good potential for becoming sustainable as well, although Government budgets for the IE will be smaller than NMAV has provided. In the case of the CD projects good partnership relations and participatory planning and implementation promotes local ownership. The partnership with the Norwegian Football Federation is a different type of partnership NMA should pursue also with other (I)NGOs to be able share experiences and competencies.

NMAV has **progressed considerably on the three main strategies** of local participation and ownership; gender equality and including disabled children the past 5 years. NMAV has

integrated participatory methodology into the project planning process and has come closer to the grassroots level. More focus needs to be put on prioritization of needs, as well as ensuring that participatory methods are used in implementing, monitoring and reporting on activities. The NMA tool to promote gender awareness and assessment, the GEA, should be utilized with assistance from a gender expert who is familiar with the Vietnamese context. Disabled children are included, but to what extent? Total numbers of girls and boys in IE and early intervention are not readily available and focus should be on these data in order to closely and constantly monitor progress in this regard. Work to include more children in early intervention and primary schools should continue. Community awareness-raising, addressing stigmatization and involving all children, not only disabled, within a child rights framework should be in focus in the coming period.

NMAV has a solid and good basis for **project and financial management**; but needs to make sure that all guidelines and routines are followed through consistently. Work needs to be done on distinguishing indicators on outputs and outcomes and plans should be made for impact assessment/evaluations. At the organizational level, NMAV's main strengths is competent and highly motivated staff members as well as good partner relationships. Work needs to be put into team-building and leadership to address the recent turbulence created by high staff turnover and corruption cases as well as ensuring that field-based staff are fully integrated in the NMAV team. Consolidation and stability – of the projects, the staff and management - should be main concerns in the next program period. Lessons learned and making a contingency plan for how to deal with corruption cases should be made for future reference.

**Synergies** between MF and CD has been observed but there could also be synergies between IE and CD; and perhaps between MF and IE. This should be explored in the coming period.

Compared with the main findings of the 2005 evaluation **NMAV has progressed** significantly. Bottom-up planning and participatory approaches, which were identified as main weaknesses, are now being applied, at least in the CD projects while the IE projects could improve more in this respect. Focus has moved from supporting large government infrastructure activities to small-scale community development, and from supporting government bodies at higher levels to supporting project management boards at commune and district level as well as community workers and target groups at community level. NMAV plays an important role in supporting and facilitating transfer of knowledge and technical expertise as well as building project management capacity. These important shifts have been made, but so far only the preparatory steps could be observed, except for the IE project in Vinh Long. The coming period thus needs to focus on consolidation and stability both in terms of NMAV organization and programming in order to ensure the planned outcomes and impacts. At the same time it is important for NMAV to remain flexible and open in a country like Vietnam which is characterized by extremely rapid changes taking place socially, economically and politically.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the assessments made by the Evaluation Team as well as recommendations channeled through from NMA staff, partners and target groups.

### 6.1 Program Results

#### *IE Vinh Long and Tien Giang*

- RC staff/trainers need refresher and advanced training on working with children with other types of disability than hearing impairments.
- Teachers at primary schools need further support for making individual teaching plans for disabled students
- There is a need for more IE awareness raising workshops for parents organized both at school and in the community
- Teachers should receive refresher training.
- Parents should be included in experience sharing workshops.
- Professional assessment/screening of children for identifying types of disability is necessary for individual needs assessment and personal plan development.
- Involve teachers, parents, children in annual planning process as much as possible.
- Involve children and parents at community level in addressing problem of stigma of disabled people.
- If possible, provide more long-term funding for IE in Tien Giang.
- NMA should develop phase-out plans for support to the RCs.

#### *Ben Tre CD*

- It is imperative for the next year that clear lines of communication between NMA and the district and commune PMBs are established.
- The roles and responsibilities of each PMB member should be clearly stated.
- Ensure that the NMA activities are integrated into the annual socio-economic plan of the commune and district.
- NMA project staff should consider the abilities of each commune partners so that they can decide how much they should be directly involved.
- Ensure that district PMB gets actively involved in implementation and takes the lead (vis-à-vis NMA).
- For next year, consider including other needs prioritized by villagers, such as household and environmental sanitation.
- Focus should be, among other things, on whether livelihood activities lead to increased household income.

#### *Tan Thanh CD*

- Project staff members should spend more time in the community.
- NMAV should explore with the PMB how to deal with the problem of the PMB's limited time for the project activities.
- NMAV project staff should attend the PMB monthly meetings.
- Some PMB staff need to learn more about project management and participatory community development.



- More awareness-raising in the communities is necessary to ensure that people fully understand the point of the activities, such as latrine waste-bin use.
- The use of latrines, waste-bins, water-jars and newly learned farming/livelihood techniques should be monitored and reported on.
- Continue working on the participatory planning and implementation with a focus on involving villagers in decision-making.
- Include community health as a component.
- Explore with the community the challenges related to secondary education and the seasonal migration of youth.
- Support members in the PMB to participate in national initiatives related to the environmental challenges, and explore ways of increasing awareness of climate change issues at the grassroots level.
- Focus should be, among other things, on whether livelihood activities lead to increased household income.

## **6.2 Program Strategy**

### *Local Participation and Empowerment*

- Work with RCs and schools to involve parents and teachers in the planning of the IE activities
- Include both children with and without disabilities in activities at the community level to address stigmatization through peer group work, IEC, life skills training.
- Make a study in order to determine exactly the level of grassroots participation and empowerment in the CD projects.
- Make visible the local contribution in NMAV documentation.

### *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women*

- Apply the NMA GEA tool to make a thorough gender analysis.
- Follow up on gender analysis in terms of developing gender mainstreaming indicators and monitoring empowerment of women and gender equality.
- If possible, hire gender expert on Vietnam to assist in this work.

### *Inclusion of Disabled Children*

- Include more disabled children.
- More efforts should be put into including more children and community members in the IE projects to work on changing attitudes and behavior towards disabled people and children in particular.
- Relate the work on disabled children to the framework of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).
- Consider linking NMAV projects with the national CRC initiative “Communes and Wards Fit for Children”.

## **6.2.1 Program Management**

### *Organization and Management:*

- The planned senior management group should be gender balanced.

- NMAV should ensure that locally based staff are fully integrated into the NMAV team.
- NMAV should take measures to create an organizational environment and culture of stability and continuity; and focus on consolidation of projects, staff and management.
- Team building is especially important in this respect.
- NMA at Head Office level should consider to focus more on leadership training and development.

#### *Project and Financial Management*

- NMAV plans and reports should consistently and clearly distinguish between outputs and outcomes.
- NMAV plans should include M&E external evaluations, mid-term reviews, internal/external thematic studies.
- NMAV should systematically report on the objectives and indicators in the plans.
- NMAV should adjust the program cycle so that planning starts halfway through the year, plans and agreements are finalized in the autumn and all activities can start on January 1.
- NMAV should make phase-out plans for all projects with contingency plans in case of shortfall of funding.
- NMAV senior management should ensure that office routines and regulations are strictly followed.
- NMAV should consider making a contingency plan for corruption cases.
- NMAV Senior Accountant should visit implementing partners together with the responsible project staff members more often.

#### *Staff and Partner Capacity*

- Strengthen the capacity of NMAV project staff members by continuing to work closely with Advisory Committee members, working with external technical experts and by visiting with target groups frequently and regularly.
- NMAV should deepen its focus on the participatory approaches to planning and implementation.
- NMAV should continue supporting the capacity building of partners, but start to document the results of capacity building systematically.
- NMAV should introduce training needs assessment and Training of Trainers (TOT).
- NMAV should proactively support implementing partners to participate in national environment/climate-change capacity building activities.

## **7 ANNEX**

### **7.1 Terms of Reference**

# **Terms of reference Evaluation of Vietnam Development project 2005-2010**

## **Introduction**

The community development work (CD) and the Inclusive education (IE) work supported by the Norwegian Mission Alliance in Vietnam (NMAV) were last evaluated in 2005. The current program period ends 31<sup>st</sup> of December of 2012 and the 2011 evaluation will give important feedback in order to improve the results and impact of NMAV supported activities. The evaluation results will form a basis for deciding future support to CD and IE after 2012.

## **Background**

In Vietnam, NMA operates through its office located in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). The organisation is registered as an International NGO (INGO) in Vietnam. In 2005, NMA-V received a formal Project Office license to operate development projects in Vietnam from the People's Aid Coordination Committee (PACCOM). The approval of the Project Office license in 2005 strengthened NMA- V's status and eased cooperation with all government partners

## **History of NMA in Vietnam**

The Norwegian Mission Alliance (NMA) worked in South Vietnam during 1973-1975, supporting families affected by leprosy. NMA had to leave the country by the end of the war in 1975.

In 1992, NMA began discussing the possibility of coming back to Vietnam with potential local partners. In 1995, a survey supported by NORAD was made. The team members recommended that NMA return to Vietnam to continue their earlier support of people affected by leprosy.

In 1996, NMA signed an agreement with the National Institute of Dermatology-Venereology to support the National Leprosy Elimination Program in Tien Giang province, about 70 km south of HCMC. The same year, NMA signed an agreement with the Hospital of Dermatology-Venereology in HCMC. During the late 1990s NMA-V worked in the Central highlands, in Gia Lai province. However, due to political unrest, NMA-V had to leave the province. All of these projects mainly targeted people affected by leprosy.

From 2002 – 2006 NMA-V widened the scope of their work in the Mekong River Delta. The effort in Tien Giang province was strengthened by an added focus on micro credit and community development. In 2003, NMA-V started cooperation with Vinh Long

province, focusing on community development and creation of clean water systems. An inclusive education project was started in the province in 2005.

In September 2005, NMA-V's entire project portfolio was evaluated by a team led by an external Norwegian team leader. It concluded that the project had achieved most of its targets. Furthermore, recommended that the organization should review its strategy and seek to find a better match between community needs on one hand and organizational competence and capacity on the other. The evaluation recommended that NMA-V closed the programmes where the organization has limited professional experience and built on the experiences of community development in which the organization had a broad and long experience.

Based on these recommendations, NMA-V carried out a participatory process in order to define visions and strategies for a new project period 2008-2012. The process involved research, consultations with partners and internal participatory planning processes. Several other development projects were visited during the research period, both in Vietnam and in the region. The new strategy focused on community development and aimed at improving the earlier components in several ways. One was the focus on community *driven* development, the focus on *empowerment* of local groups and the promotion of local grassroots democracy. Another was geographical concentration and an integrated/holistic, people-centred approach within the project area. The strategy focused NMAV's work to the three areas defined in the overall goal as: *Empowerment, Poverty Reduction and Inclusion*.

NORAD granted 2007 as an extension year and in 2008 BN approved a new five-year plan for the period 2008 to 2012. In 2008 NMAV also received funding for community development and Inclusive education from a private foundation called "Torunn og Oles stiftelse". This funding has also a 5 year term and ends in 2012.

### **Short programme information**

The overall goal for the programme in Vietnam is NMA-V goal is to empower the poor and marginalized in Vietnam through poverty reduction and inclusion. In order to reach this goal, NMAV uses a participative approach both internally, with the partners and with the target group.

NMAV support community development, inclusive education and microfinance in Vietnam. The evaluation will only cover community development and inclusive education.

#### **Target groups:**

Children with disabilities, their families, teachers, local communities and Resource centers in Vinh Long and Tien Giang. Poor and marginalized groups in Tien Giang, Vinh Long and Ben Tre provinces.

#### **Partners are:**

Department of Education and Training, Vinh Long and Tien Giang provinces  
Peoples Committee Tra On district, Vinh Long province  
Peoples Committee Tan Thanh commune, Tan Phu Dong district, Tien Giang province  
Peoples Committee Thanh Phu district, Ben Tre Province  
Department of Investment and planning, Ben Tre province

## **Scope for the evaluation**

The use of participative methods is an integral part of the overall goal of NMAV. In order to strengthen the goal achievement further, it is expected that the evaluation team will use participative methods in their investigations. The evaluation report should be based on the contributions and reflections of NMAV's staff, target groups and partners.

The evaluation team will both assess the community development projects and the inclusive education projects.

### **Overarching objective for the evaluation:**

Assess results and document lessons learnt in order to prepare the ground for a new period of work.

Give clear recommendations on future areas of work, project organization, project objectives and components, strategies and approaches.

### **Specific objectives for the evaluation**

Some of the experiences the last years have been:

- Several stops and goes in the community development programme. NMAV have experienced cooperation problems with the local authorities and have had to close down projects in some areas and start up in others. During the last years the community development project in Tra On, Vinh Long province and Chau Thanh, Tien Giang province was closed down. NMAV has started community development in Tan Thanh commune, Tien Giang province and in Thanh Phu district, Ben Tre province. A summary of lessons learnt is attached to this ToR. *We expect the evaluation to contribute to a higher understanding of success factors when it comes to community development.*
- Increasing importance of environmental issues. The global warming and environmental changes are great challenges to Vietnam in general and to the provinces in the south specifically. Some reports state that the whole region will be uninhabited in about 2070, due to the fact that the whole region will be covered by water. The Mekong delta lies only averagely 1 meter above sea level and within 60 years, the water level may raise 2 meters more. This will affect Vietnam in general and the southern provinces in particular. Today the target group face problems like lack of fresh water for irrigation and drinking and longer than normal periods of saltwater permeation which influence their shrimp and coconut harvest. *We would like the evaluation team to give specific recommendations regarding how NMAV could strengthen the capacity of partners and target group to face the environmental challenges.*
- NMAV works with two resource centres for including disabled children into normal schools. One in Vinh Long and another in Tien Giang. The resource centers are responsible for transferring knowledge and skills concerning the care and education of children with disabilities, not only in school but also at home and in the community. These resource centers are also responsible for counseling, training, technical assistance, resource distribution, and vocational training for disabled children. The resource center in Vinh Long covers 5 of 8 districts and the city of Vinh Long; the Tien Giang resource center started in 2009 and is still in a building up phase. *The main issues that we want the evaluation team to look into*

*are how the resource centers fulfill their role, how sustainable the Resource centers are, if the project has contributed to a more inclusive local society and if NMAV has brought added value into the partnership*

- NMAV employed locally based project staff in 2008. This was done in order to facilitate better community participation and increase the knowledge about the local community. NMAV's experience is that the contact with the local community has improved and there is a greater openness and trust. At the same time we have wondered if our closer link to the local community has been perceived as a threat to the local authorities and maybe been one of the factors leading to cooperation difficulties. We also believe that the relationship is improving when they understand NMA-V better. *We would like the evaluation team to look into the practice of locally based personnel and evaluate the pros and cons of such a practice.*

In addition to answering these questions, the evaluation team will:

- Assess the technical and administrative capacity of NMAV and of the implementing partners;
- Assess the level of cooperation between NMAV, province, district, commune and village levels related transfer of knowledge, ownership and added value.
- Evaluate the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the projects vis a vis the need of the target group and local/regional development plans;
- Evaluate the projects management system and use of financial funding.
- Assess project strategy and results with special attention to local participation and ownership, empowerment of women and inclusion of disabled children;
- Evaluate potential risk and unintended consequences for future goal achievement
- If possible, document any impacts that the projects have had
- Assess the degree of sustainability of the different projects
- Identify areas of possible interventions for community development and inclusive education in the future.

## **Methodology**

The following aspects will be evaluated: Planning, execution and participation

The evaluation method will be participative, and will include project beneficiaries, people at village level and people from the different organizational levels. It is also expected for the team members to study all relevant documents prior to the evaluation. The evaluation team is expected to make their own judgements about the balance between qualitative and quantitative data.

## **Team**

General criteria should be:

- Credibility – they should be accepted and respected by central parties.
- Professionalism – the team should have a combination of relevant special expertise, professional evaluation competence and knowledge of the country/culture.
- Independence – consultants must not have special relations to the project subject to evaluation.
- Suitability – consultants must have capacity and will to understand and communicate their findings and conclusions with persons from other cultures.
- Gender balance – all teams should consist of both men and women.

**Economic framework**

The total estimate for the evaluation is NOK 250 000

**Timeframe**

The fieldwork of the evaluation will be done in January 2011. Draft report will be handed by end February 2011 and final report by end March 2011.

**Expected products and follow-up:**

Before end payment a written report in English and in accordance with terms of reference, will be handed in. The report will include an executive summary of no longer than three (3) pages, a report of maximum 30 pages in addition to recommendations and conclusions. In addition the evaluation team will arrange a debriefing session in order to share preliminary findings with NMAV and its partners.

## **7.2 *Field Visit Agenda***

### **Program for the evaluation team 2011**

#### **Evaluators:**

- 1. Leader of the evaluation: Kate Halvorsen**
- 2. Nguyen Nguyen Nhu Trang – Life Center**

**Time frame: 17-28/01/2011**



Date	Hrs	Program	Location	Responsible
<b>Monday 17.01.</b>	09.15. 10.00	Arrival Kate Halvorsen Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> morning Interviews with NMA staff	<b>Airport</b>	Hue, Per Christian
	12.00	Lunch with NMA-V staff	<b>NMA-V office</b>	All
	13.00	Meeting and interviews with NMA-V staff	<b>NMA-V office</b>	All
	19.00	Dinner		Per Christian
<b>Tuesday 18.01.</b>	07.00	Departure Resource Center Tien Giang	Tien Giang, Guest House	Oanh, Truc
	09.00	Meeting with staff from Resource Center Tien Giang	Tien Giang	Oanh, Truc
	11.30	Lunch with partners	Riverside Hotel	Lan, Oanh, Truc,
	13.00	Meeting with TUFO and DOET	TUFO office Tien Giang	Lan, Oanh, Truc,
	14.30	Visit families and target group Inclusive Education	Tien Giang	Oanh, Truc
	19.00	Dinner	Restaurant	Oanh, Truc,
<b>Wednesday 19.01.</b>	06.00.	Breakfast	Tien Giang	Lan
	07.00.	Departure Tan Thanh		
	09.00	Meeting with Project Management Board Tan Thanh.	Tan Thanh	Hiep, Khanh,
	10.30	Project visit Water component (visit the families that has received support from Enviroment component)	Tan Thanh	Hiep, Khanh
	11.30	Lunch with partners	Tan Thanh	Hiep, Khanh
	13.00	Project visits Education component: interview some teachers and group discussions with students in school. Group discussion with the Club Management Board Livelihood component: Group discussion	Tan Thanh	Hiep, Khanh
	18.00	Return to Mytho		
<b>Thursday 20.01.</b>	06.00	Breakfast	Tien Giang	
	07.00	Departure to Vinh Long	Resource Center Vinh Long	Oanh, Truc,
	09.30	Meeting with staff from Resource Center	Vinh Long	Oanh, Truc,
	11.30	Lunch with partners	Vinh Long	Oanh, Truc,
	13.00.	Visit schools: Interview teachers and students	Vinh Long	
	16.00	Meeting with VUFO	Vinh Long	Oanh, Truc,
	19.00	Dinner		
	<b>Friday 21.01.</b>	08.00.	Breakfast	Vinh Long
	09.00	Visit families, school and children	Trung Ngai school, Vinh Long	Oanh, Truc,
	11.30	Lunch		
	13.00.	Departure Tien Giang		
	15.00.	Meeting with Peoples Comitee	Tien Giang	Lan,
	17.00	Departure to Ho Chi Minh City		
<b>Saturday</b>		Own time	Ho Chi Minh City	

<b>22.01</b>				
<b>Sunday 23.01.</b>	15.00	Departure Ben Tre	Spring Hotel	Phuong, Dung
	19.00	Dinner	Ben Tre/Ham Luong hotell	
<b>Monday 24.01</b>	07.00	Breakfast	Ben Tre	
	08.00	Meeting with partners, PMB district level	Peoples Comitee Thanh Phu	Dung, Phuong,
	10.00	Meeting with partners My An Commune	My An Commune	Dung, Phuong,
	11.30	Lunch with partners	My An Commune	
	13.00	Meeting with partners Hoa Loi Commune	Hoa Loi Commune	Dung, Phuong,
	15.00	Departure to Ho Chi Minh City		
	19.00	Arrive Ho Chi Minh City	Spring Hotel	
<b>Tuesday 25.01</b>	07.00	Breakfast		
	09.00	Meeting with representatives from PACCOM HCMC	PACCOM office	
	11.30	Lunch with partners	Restaurant HCMC	
	13.00	Evaluation Team prepares presentation for Workshop 27.01	Office NMA-V	
	18.00	Own time		
<b>Wednesday 26.01</b>	07.00	Breakfast	Spring Hotel	
	08.00	Departure to NMA-V office	NMA-V office	
	09.00	Interviews with NMA-V staff	NMA-V office	
	12.00	Lunch		
	14.00	Meeting with Save the Children	Save office	
	15.30	Meeting with World Vision	WVI office	
<b>Thursday 27.01</b>	06.00	Breakfast	Spring Hotel	
	08.30	Validation Workshop with NMA-V and partners		All
	11.30	Lunch with partners		
	13.00	Workshop with NMA-V and partners		All
	18.00	n time		
<b>Friday 28.01</b>	07.00	Brakfast meeting with Tone Lindheim, NMA		
	08.30	Interviews with NMA-V staff		
	10.30	Observation of NMA Gender Workshop		
	12.30	Lunch		
	17.00	Departure to airport	Spring Hotel	

### 7.3 References

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- NMA (2010) *Application 2011*. NMA Application to Norad for NMAV. Oslo: 2010
- NMAV (2009) *Annual Agreement between Vinh Long Department of Education and Training and the Norwegian Mission Alliance for the Year 2009* HCMC: NMAV
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- Save the Children Vietnam – various project/program brochures.
- The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (2006) *National Program for the Promotion of Foreign Non-Governmental Organization Assistance 2006-2010*. Hanoi: Government of Vietnam

World Vision Vietnam (2010) *Annual Review 2009* Hanoi: World Vision Vietnam

Various handouts, notes, lists from NMAV.

[www.misjonsalliansen.no](http://www.misjonsalliansen.no)

[www.unicef.org/infobycountry/vietnam](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/vietnam)