

Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse in Ho Chi Minh City Vietnam

1. Relevance of the intervention

Objective of the intervention

With the overall development objective of changing and increasing the knowledge, awareness, attitudes and practices of the needs and rights of the most disadvantaged and abused children in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), this project will address the issue of the prevention and protection against child abuse in its many and various forms. The target group consist of poor and disadvantaged children in Binh Chanh and district 8 of HCMC.

By promoting knowledge and awareness of the prevention and protection of the child the intervention addresses directly a number of UNs Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their underlying targets. The intervention will besides the two crosscutting goals, i.e. 16 and 17¹ focus on goal 3 'to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages'. The highest attainable standard of health is a fundamental right for everyone. It does also focus on goal 5 regarding 'Gender Equality' and on goal 10 regarding 'reduced inequalities' and thus in line with Vietnam National Action Plan on the SDGs.²

Contribution of the intervention towards strengthening organisational expressions in civil society that promote compliance with rights, equal access to resources and participation

More and more Vietnamese civil society organisations (CSOs) are emerging, responding to the country's needs through a variety of approaches, from independent research and policy advocacy to charity work. The nature of civil society in Vietnam remains a source of debate, including the view that there are no independent CSOs in Vietnam.

The Mass organisations receive financial support from the state and at times they function as part of the bureaucracy while at other times carrying out independent policy research and advocacy. This situation can blur the definition of what constitutes an NGO, but in the current context of civil society development in Vietnam, it is important to recognise meaningful civil society action and behaviour, even it comes from organisations associated with the state and in particular at the local and commune level they act more as CSO's.

As concluded in the CISU's Learning Visit Report from 2013, Vietnamese CSOs are not broad-based and their capacity to influence policy-makers is considered limited. Nevertheless, the same report hints to the fact that in some areas Vietnamese CSO's have been able to influence policies as long as they do not pose a threat to the Communist Party. A recent example is the case of a successful mobilisation around lesbian and gay marriages, which clearly in a Vietnamese context is perceived as a less controversial issue, and is certainly not challenging the role of the prevailing power structure.³

As the creation of a protection and prevention system in relation to the new children law that will serve to reach the goals of government strategies can hardly be considered a threat to the government or the party. There are reasons to believe that the civil society will be able to mediate and advocate needs and ideas from the target groups at the grassroots level to the duty-bearers on child protection and prevention of child abuses. However, this participatory approach in the process of policymaking is not a well-established practice in Vietnam where there is a strong tradition of top-down governance and communication. Neither is the participatory approach a well-established practice of Vietnamese CSO's themselves. Thus, the CSOs need to improve their capacities in this area in order to become a legitimate advocacy agent in the eyes of the grassroots as well as in the eyes of the duty-bearers.

¹ Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals

² Sustainable Goals, Vietnam Towards 2030, UN in Vietnam, 2016

³ Hastrup og Gjedde-Nielsen, Learning visit to Vietnam, CISU, 2013

The contribution of the intervention towards bringing about lasting improvements for the poor, marginalised and vulnerable target groups

The awareness and knowledge of the plight, challenges, barriers and problems of the underprivileged children created by the project activities when working with the various stakeholders (described below under target groups) is expected to have a lasting effect on the attitudes towards marginalized and vulnerable children. The knowledge conveyed to the stakeholders about ways to prevent and protect the children against the various hazards they face, likewise should contribute to bringing about a lasting improvement in their situation. Life skills training and information of ways to avoid drug abuse, sexual and labour abuse and recruitment to criminal activities directly to the disadvantaged children will provide protection for them for as long as they remain vulnerable minors. The direct assistance for schooling and health service may also providing lasting improvements for those benefitted.

Relevant aspects of the context in which the intervention is to take place

The impressive increase in socio-economic development during the past twenty years has put new pressures on the Vietnamese family. Rapid economic development and urbanisation have been accompanied by a widening gap between the rich and the poor, increasing the migration of people from rural areas to urban cities and across the borders to find work. This has resulted in increased unemployment, family break-ups, increased crime rates and the erosion of traditional values which has, in turn, contributed to an increased number of abandoned, neglected, abused and exploited children as well as youth crimes.

Children are often on the frontline of vast changes. In 2010 the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs⁴ (MOLISA) reported more than 4.3 million children were living in 'special circumstances', which is nearly 18 per cent of all Vietnamese girls and boys. It includes a huge number of children with disabilities, around 300.000 children living and affected with HIV/AIDS, 125.000 abandoned children and orphans without care of their biological parents, around 28.000 children working in hazardous conditions, more than 20.000 street children, 1800 abused children and more than 20.000 children living in institutions. According to the Ministry of Public Security⁵ in 2011 there were around 13.000 juveniles in conflict with the law. It should be noted that there is a lack of comprehensive data monitoring system and reliable data on many child protection issues, incl. data on child prostitution, child trafficking or maltreatment which are significant, without the exact number being determined.

In 2012, the poverty rate was 4.3 per cent for urban areas, while it was 14.1 per cent for rural areas. A national household living standard survey estimated the child poverty rate was 29.6 per cent, equivalent to 7.6 million children, of those 22.6 per cent for Kinh children and 60.3 per cent for ethnic minority groups.⁶

These problems are intensified by the absence of a strong and effective child protection system, incl. the lack of professional social work and protection services with the capacity to respond adequately to the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable children for prevention, support and protection. In addition, coordination amongst related protection service providers or the necessary 'continuum of services' is missing. The existing services for prevention, early identification, intervention, referral to rehabilitative and specialised services and follow-ups are either not in place or fragmented and unregulated. At a sub-national level, e.g. HCMC, where the needs of poor families and children are particular high, social work and protection services are provided by volunteers and untrained workers undertaking complex tasks without the necessary skills.

⁴ MOLISA, 2010: Children's Indicators in Vietnam

⁵ Ministry of Public Security, Criminal Investigation Police Department (2012): Report on the situation of juveniles in conflict with the law and crimes against children in 2011.

⁶ General Statistics Office, 2012: Result of the Living Standard Survey 2012

Vietnam's justice system is still very rigid and lacks adequate capacity and established programmes to address the rights of child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation, as well as children in conflict with the law and their needs for protection.

Existing national planning services

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Vietnam was the first Asian country and second in the world to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Government of Vietnam has made great efforts in completing a legal policy, incorporating international law's regulations into the legal system and applying these policies to protect children's rights. Strategic programmes and policies to promote children's rights to access health care and education have proved considerable progress. National programmes on child protection from 2010-2020 have been put in place to protect the rights of the child.⁷ However as in many developing countries there seems to be a gap between the legislation and the policy on the ground.

Coordination

There remain challenges that constrain the exercise of the Rights of the Child including the lack of effective mechanism for law enforcement, the inadequate public awareness of child rights as well as practical implementation on the ground. Moreover, as earlier mentioned, there is a weak coordination amongst child protection service providers.

The main reason for this weakness is due to the devolution of the powers from national to provincial, district and commune level in the implementation of child rights. Currently, most of the staff for child rights at the provincial level lack professional knowledge and skills. There is no full-time staff responsible for children's issues at commune level.

Social work has only begun to be recognised as a profession in Vietnam. Social services for vulnerable groups of children are provided largely by voluntary efforts and non-profit organisations, rather than trained and paid professionals.

There is a need to provide technical expertise for strengthening child protection and prevention structures and improving the human resource capacities of social welfare workers. Special efforts should be made to support the development of the social work profession, including defining professional standards, roles, functions and tasks of social workers in various sectors such as education, health justice and social welfare.

Data Collection and Monitoring

There is an inconsistency in data collection. Although data on children are collected, it is dispersed between different line ministries, making it hard to obtain a coherent picture of child rights in the country.

The coordination between Government, INGOs, local NGOs and UNICEF on the collection of children's data, especially information relating to child abuse, migrant children, children affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, children with disabilities, children's rights to education, children in conflict with the law and on child labourers is still weak. There are questions on the reliability and consistency of the data, and limitation on data information sharing and disclosure to the public and also a need for a more clear definition of certain child-related concepts as for example child abuse in order to provide adequate data. The involvement of political, social and professional agencies and civil societies, INGOs and LNGOs in monitoring is still limited. There is no clear mechanism for them to be more active and this is often viewed with some scepticism from the government.

The New Children Law, 2016

⁷ Save the Children, 2014: Child Rights Situation, Vietnam Country Office

The new law has been valid since June 2016. The law states that a child is a human being below the age of 16.⁸ The Action Plan from 2016-2020⁹ seems to be valid through the New Children Law 2016, which will take effect on June 2017.¹⁰

The scope of the law provides for children's rights and responsibilities; rules and methods of ensuring children's rights; duties of agencies, organisations, education facilities and individuals to exercise children's rights and responsibilities. It has also created a firm legal foundation to improve the efficiency of preventing, controlling, detecting and handling child abuse. The law provides regulations ensuring various children's entitlements, such as the right to privacy, the right to live with parents, the right to be adopted and the right to be protected from abuse including violence, sexual harassment, labour exploitation, abandonment and kidnapping.

Compared to the current Child Protection, Care and Education Law enacted in 2004, the new law contains many new provisions, focusing on children's rights and duties, children's participation in their own matters, measures for child protection, alternative care and prohibited acts. The law maintains the legal age of children at under 16. The law defines 14 categories of disadvantaged children, including five new ones in the context of international integration and period of socio-economic development. However the law does not reflect any gender issues and/or if there are any similarities or differences either being a disadvantaged girl or boy.

The concept of 'Street Children' does no longer exist in the new law, instead it talks about 'Disadvantaged Children' including the following groups: a) double orphans, b) abandoned children, c) homeless children, d) children with disabilities, e) Children affected by HIV/AIDS, f) children that have committed illegal acts, g) children who are drug addicts, h) children who must give up their studies to earn their living and fail to complete the universalization of secondary education, i) children who suffered seriously physical and mental harm due to violence, j) exploited children, k) sexually abused children, l) trafficked children, m) children with fatal diseases, n) immigrant and refugee children.

The law interprets some of the terms as follows:

Child protection refers to the implementation of appropriate measures for ensuring safe and healthy life for children, the prevention and response to child abuse and the support for disadvantaged children.

Child abuse refers to any act that results in harm to the body, emotion, psychology, human dignity of such child through violence against the child, child exploitation, sexual abuse, neglect and abandonment, and other forms of causing harm to the child

Disadvantaged children refer to those who are unable to exercise their rights to life, protection, nurture and education and need a special assistance and intervention of the Government, families and society so that they can live safely and fall in line with their families and the community

Violence against the child refers to the act of maltreating, persecuting or beating a child; taking physical abuse or causing harm to the child's health

⁸ National Assembly, Law No: 102/2016/QH13: Children Law, Hanoi, 2016

⁹ The Prime Minister, Decision approving the Child Protection Programme, 2016-2020, Hanoi December 2015

¹⁰ Decree no.56/2017, Detailing a number of articles of the law on children, Hanoi, May, 2017

Child exploitation refers to the act of forcing a child to work against the law on labour, perform or produce pornographic products, organising or supporting for tourist activities for the purpose of child abuse; offering, adopting or supplying the child for prostitution and other acts of using the child for profiteering purpose,

Child sexual abuse refers to the act of using violence, threatening to use violence, forcing, persuading or seducing a child to engage in sexual acts. The child sexual abuse includes rape, aggravated rape, sexual intercourse or molestation with children and use of children for prostitution or pornography in any way.

Implementation of the new law

Since the new Law was approved by the National Congress of Vietnam, the HCMC People's Committee (HCMC PC) has given an authoritative order that all government agencies at all level in HCMC should conduct the publicising of the new Law in the communities of HCMC. Each competent governmental agency be assigned, based on its own relevant function and responsibilities, to elaborate implementing and supervising plans and send reports to HCMC PC. HCMC Law Publicising Council and all districts have worked together, elaborating plans and programs on extensively publicising and implementing the new Law among various target groups and areas under their own management such as HCMC Department of Education and Training, Police, Justice, Youth Union, Women's Union and local authorities. Based on their feedback there have been a lot of positive moves: the majority of leaders and staff members participating in training/discussion sessions on the new Law. Especially HCMC Department of Education and Training has given an authoritative order that all schools should organise training sessions on the main contents of the new Law to teachers and integrate lessons of the new Law into extra curriculum for students.

Changes and impact of the new Law:

The new Law being approved and promulgated for one year, there have been several positive changes and advantages in prevention and protection of children's rights as follows:

- The revealing of detailed and specific information on the victim of child abuse (real name, house address, etc.) is prohibited.
- The posting of children's images and their other privacy (study results, etc.) on social media by unaware parents without their children's consents is considered as law violation
- Teachers' inadequate attitude and child abuse against children in schools, especially in kindergartens such as scolding, insulting, isolating, beating children, etc. are reduced as the schools strengthen supervision and awareness-raising among their teachers.
- The new & easy-to-remember Hotline (111) is helpful for the people to denounce/report child abuse cases as well to get counselling for the protection of children's rights and well-being of children.

Constraints and areas in need of adjustment/modification:

- Inspection process (Article 6, Clause 3)¹¹: is not clearly mentioned and therefore performed differently by various governmental competent agencies. In addition, the deadline of the announcement of results sent to the litigants and their lawyers is unknown.
- There is a need to have more female investigators to be trained so as to handle cases of girl sexual abuses.
- As far as the support/intervention process towards various child abuses such as physical violence/sexual abuses is concerned, the paperwork process should not be complicated/be diminished or wait later for submission. Instead, an Introduction Letter from the local authority at the ward level where the child victim is living is just enough so that the child victim should be sent to the hospital immediately.

¹¹ Article 6. Prohibited acts, clause 3: Involve in child sexual abuse; use violence against children; abuse or exploit children

- Criminal procedure: The lawyer should be allowed to participate in the beginning of the case investigation as soon as the child's family denounces the offender to the police/authorities.

With regards to HCWA, since the new Law was approved, its projects have conducted many discussions, sharing the new Law within the local communities, local people, parents and children with a view to enhancing the awareness of everyone about prevention and protection of children's rights. The target groups are aware of the benefit of the new Law and their responsibilities toward the prevention and protection of children's rights.

Summary of problems

In 2017 the HCWA core staff participated in a weeklong training workshop, which was part of the previous migrant children project. The main purpose was to introduce various processes of project planning and development of project applications with due considerations to the use of the Logical Framework Approach. A DVA consultant facilitated the workshop.

Before the workshop took place the HCWA staff had identified 'problem areas' based on the surveys of street children. The survey results and the identified problems should act as a common reference for the workshop exercise, 1) in order to utilise the results of the survey, 2) and in case that it later on would be decided to develop a new CISU project application.

The HCWA staff had identified seven main problem areas within 1) education, 2) child abuse, 3) broken families, 4) malnutrition, 5) health, 6) drug addiction, 7) recreational activities. The main cause to these problems is 'poor families'.

During the workshop the staff was also introduced to the new CISU guidelines, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Human rights-based approach, and the CISU Development Triangle.

During the workshop the participants identified the following problems:

Child abuse, Poor health condition, Child malnutrition, Insufficient priority of health by poor people, Insufficient health services to poor families/children, Insufficient enforcement from public authorities, Early unwanted pregnancies, Children with HIV/AIDS, Poor knowledge on SRHR among children and parents, Unsafe sex relations (rape), Limited prevention measures on SRHR, Child prostitution, Child trafficking, Violence against children, Domestic violence, Broken families, Unstable family relations, Unsafe living environment/relationships, Abandoned children, Child labour exploitation, Poor school attendance of children, Insufficient parents support to children's education, Inadequate society priority of children's education, Problems with legal papers

The problems were categorised into four main groups:

Health + SRHR issues, Child Labour, Education/schooling and Children's rights

The focal/main problem was identified as 'child abuse' and it was decided to carry on focusing on the prevention of child abuse in its many and various forms. Protection of the child and its rights should also be in focus. The various identified problems do not consider any gender differences or similarities.

Interventions by local authorities and other organisations in this sector

The Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union Central Committee will be the organisation representing the voice and aspiration of children and supervising the exercise of rights of children according to their opinions and aspirations. This is a new progressive mechanism, showing the State's and society respect for the voice of children.

Donor assistance from multilateral and bilateral organisations as well as international NGOs has been provided in the field of child protection and child abuse to both government and non-

governmental organisations. In a report from 2013 UNICEF ¹² highlights the challenges of social assistance programs offered to vulnerable groups in Vietnam, including children. According to this report the quality of social services is low in poor areas and poor people have constrained access to public services.

A study of child labour in Vietnam ¹³ stated that one-sixth of the child population, or 2.83 million children, was engaged in some form of economic activity, 42.6% of them girls. The study also reveals some 1.75 million working children been categorised as 'child labourers', accounting for 9.6% of the national child population or 62% of children taking part in economic activities. Among the 1.75 million almost 32,4% worked on average over 42 hours per week, placing a severe limit on their schooling, so that 96.2% of them were not attending school.

Limited research has explored the situation of disadvantaged children living in Vietnam. However, a number of surveys conducted by the Ho Chi Minh Welfare Association (HCWA)¹⁴ focused on and concluded the following barriers and challenges:

- Domestic violence is a pronounced problem in many households. This has widespread physical, psychosocial, emotional and educational consequences for children¹⁵
- Exposure to labour abuse and accidents threatening disadvantaged children.
- Limited access to education
- Limited access to health care
- Sexual abuse and the risk of getting infected by HIV/AIDS

The overall conclusion of the surveys is that all disadvantaged children whether they are street children, migrant children, shelter children or resident children they should be included in policymaking to create more appropriate policies together with a complete childcare system. This will ensure a better prevention and protection system and in a long-term perspective improved opportunity for disadvantaged children.

Partnership - Danish partner

Dansk Vietnamesisk Forening (DVF) and its purpose, vision and mission, activities in Denmark and past experience in international cooperation and assistance as well as its democratic and public basis is described in detail in the organizations fact sheet (annex A).

Dansk Vietnamesisk Forening (DVF) as part of its work in Denmark and Vietnam for increased and improved contact, information and cooperation between Denmark and Vietnam, since its formation in 1976, has worked with the health aspect of Vietnamese children's rights through cooperation and support to Pediatric Hospital No 1's work for children's health. From 1976 to 1992 this cooperation primarily consisted of deliverance of supplies of basic medicine, basic equipment and technical advice financed by DVF's own funds (membership fees and collections). From 1992 to 2008 the cooperation aimed at developing Pediatric Hospital No 1 into a Centre of international standard for facilitation of children's health and prevention of children's diseases in Ho Chi Minh City and Southern Vietnam, for diagnosis and treatment of sick children and for training of health staff at community level and hospital level in South Vietnam in promotion of children health, prevention of disease and diagnoses and treatment of sick children. In addition to advocacy for

¹² UNICEF/Ministry of Education and Training, 2013: All Children in School by 2015.

¹³ ILO, 2014: Vietnam National Child Labour Survey – Main Findings

¹⁴ Ho Chi Minh City Welfare Association, 2017: Challenges, Barriers and Reflections of Underprivileged Children in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

¹⁵ According to Vietnam's Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, 2016; the country recorded about 5.300 cases of child abuse cases in the past three years, most of them in family situations or environments that are familiar to the victims.

child health in South Vietnam in general the cooperation specifically addressed the work in Pediatric Hospital No 1 with 1000 pediatric beds and 4000 outpatients visits daily as well as health institutions from grass root level and up in 42 wards/communes in 4 provinces in Southern Vietnam. Focus has been on acute respiratory tract infections, Dengue fever and so called integrated management of childhood illness programs directed at prevention and management of those five diseases most often causing death in Vietnamese children.

Since 2005 DVF has been working with the local NGO partner, Ho Chi Minh City Child Welfare Association (HCWA) to meet the broader needs of street children and underprivileged children including needs for shelter, education, health and prevention of sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS. The so called shelter project's phase 1 and 2 and the child survival project have had aspects of both specific service provision to target groups of vulnerable children as well as advocacy in favor of the target group and capacity building of the local partner. The latest project: "The Rights of Underprivileged Migrant Children in Ho Chi Minh City" 2014-2017 has continued this work but with an increased emphasis on capacity building and advocacy. Danida has supported the cooperation with HCWA with approximately 13 mio. DKr.

Local partner

Ho Chi Minh City Welfare Association (HCWA) is the oldest Vietnamese NGO, founded in 1975 with the aim of helping vulnerable and at risk children and youths in Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) especially in the fields of protection, health, care and education.

HCWA has 160 members supporting the organization through membership fees and contributions and through voluntary work. A board of 7 members governs it, the present chair being a previous head of the HCMC Committee for Population, Family and Children. The organization has 25 employees and one head office and 4 project office buildings in HCMC. Its yearly turnover varies from year to year but usually is in the order of USD 300.000, most of it from external funding. Most of the organizations employees have a background as social workers, board members have backgrounds in social work, health and various public services, and the volunteers come from many different backgrounds.

The HCWA has been undertaking the following activities:

1. Advocacy for children's right to protection, health, care and education.

In view of the restricted climate for public advocacy that may be seen as critical towards the government in Vietnam HCWAs advocacy work until now has been based on a strategy aimed at gaining respect from the party, government agencies and civil society members through practical work with disadvantaged children and adolescents in the social fields and the health field. Its advocacy work has been carried out through networking and contacts with local authorities, government agencies and private organizations in favour of the vulnerable groups with whom it is working, rather than advocating publicly in the media. An example of this way of working has been negotiations with various health institutions and clinics in HCMC to ensure proper reception and treatment of children in need, in spite of their sometimes poor clothing, unhygienic condition, bad manners and rude language, which without such previous negotiations may often result in them being turned away without assistance

2. Operation of 2 shelters providing housing, education and social rehabilitation for street children.

The Green Bamboo shelter in Central HCMC since 1994 has provided assistance to up to 40 street boys at a time, and likewise the Little Rose Warm Shelter in HCMCs district 8 since 1998 has helped another 40 disadvantaged or abused girls at a time

3. Social- and health work for disadvantaged children and youths in poor communities in HCMC.

This includes preventive work in the fields of sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS prevention as well as support to families actually affected by HIV/AIDS and the so called social performance integration projects (SPI) focusing on vocational training for disadvantaged youth in 3 training canter in HCMC.

After the end in 2017 of the Children's Rights Project carried out as a co-operation between HCWA and DVF, a SWOT analysis of the HCWA was performed as part of the external project evaluation. The main findings are given in the Table below.

SWOT analysis of HCWA present situation:

| Strengths | Weakness |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Profound knowledge, skills and experience (both board and staff) * Old and well established * Good cooperation with the authorities – (work within the framework of yearly action plan of the government) * Development oriented approach * Strong network NGO and GO * Many different donors over the years * Strong advocate for child rights * Transparent, accountable, open-minded, committed and dedicated * Well established organization structure, administration, planning and facilities * Shared vision * Officially acknowledged | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Small office and core staff * Necessity for continuously development within the focus areas including new technologies and strategy for this * Work success depends on continuously good cooperation with local authorities * Systematic survey skills/capacity and writing limited * English can be improved * Board member capacity and contribution is uneven * Lack of active academic volunteers assisting HCWA |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Expand training to other topics * More intensive training on existing topics * Use survey to design future interventions * Translate survey findings to further advocacy activities within the field * More staff and new staff could add innovation, creativity and competences * More publicity to improve future funding * Social media/app strategy * Homepage (to complete on-going update) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strategy for the next years, Particularly funding and fundraising strategy (including local funds) can be improved. * Sharpened profile (in contrast to other organizations) |

Partnership and development of relations

DVF and HCWA have had contact and cooperated since 2005 through the following projects:

- Rehabilitation of sexually abused and vulnerable girls (Little Rose Warm shelter project phase 1) 2005 – 2008 supporting shelter, education and social rehabilitation of female street children
- Building capacity for child abuse prevention and rehabilitation in South Vietnam (Little Rose Warm Shelter project phase 2) 2009-2013 supporting shelter, education, social rehabilitation of female street children and building capacity of HCWA as an advocate for street children
- Child Survival in Southern Provinces of Vietnam (2008-2012) supporting health, prevention of exploitation including sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS and social rehabilitation of children in Ho Chi Minh City in 42 wards/rural communes in 4 provinces in South Vietnam.

- The Rights of underprivileged migrant children in Ho Chi Minh City (2014-2017) supporting migrant and street children's protection and prevention of abuse, education and training and advocacy for children's rights as well as capacity building of HCWA

The Danish Embassy in Vietnam has supported work at HCWA's Green Bamboo shelter for male street children for the last 4 years period.

The cooperation has consisted in strategic services, projects within the fields of child health and social support and rehabilitation to disadvantaged children with the aim of building up HCWA's capacity as an advocate for children's needs and rights in South Vietnam. As illustrated by the SWOT analysis mentioned above the cooperation has facilitated HCWA's ability to fulfill this role but further capacity building, use of volunteers and knowledge sharing is needed to develop the organizations full potential as an advocate for disadvantaged children's rights to ensure the sustainability of its work. A minor strategic service project to this end will consolidate the organizations credibility as an advocate in the field and help to further build up its capacity and competences in fundraising as well as its ability to manage volunteers as part of its working strategy.

HCWA contributes with its close relationship to the target group through previous projects as well as experience with local culture and network to both public and non-public organizations working with various elements of children's rights and protection in the locality. DVF contributes with technical knowledge especially in health, training and education, experience from work with disadvantaged youths from Denmark, volunteer recruitment and management and vocational rehabilitation as well as funding. The intervention is thus expected to catalyse HCWA's relation to and cooperation with the other network partners working with disadvantaged children in Ho Chi Minh city and to further strengthen the partnership between HCWA and DVF to their mutual benefit.

HCWA's profile, professional ability and credibility as an advocate for disadvantaged children's rights towards government institutions and NGO partners will be strengthened through the direct strategic work with the target group and through the parallel capacity building with emphasis on the use of volunteers and development of volunteer networks. The project will likewise strengthen and expand DVF's base of experience with children's rights in urban Vietnam in particular, as well as in general.

The project protocol has been worked out in collaboration with HCWA based upon analysis of experiences from the previous project. Structured interviews and group discussions, done as part of that project, with 486 disadvantaged migrant children and 100 street children about their barriers and challenges has lead to this proposals focus on child abuse. This includes sexual abuse, labor abuse, domestic violence, drug use, crime involvement and health hazards. The detailed results of the interviews have been described in a printed report in Vietnamese and English. The establishment by HCWA during the latest project of the **Child Rights Working Group/Network of Ho Chi Minh City (CRWG)** as a network of active members working in the field of protection, care and education of children, and aiming at sharing experience and strengthening cooperation for child rights advocacy work, will form a basis for an important part of HCWA's advocacy work in this project. The thirty Members of CRWG are representatives and staff members of NGOs, local social organizations, national and international funding agencies and various governmental agencies working with disadvantaged children. It also includes ad hoc presence of representatives from police, teachers and Buddhist pagodas. The network has two co-chairs and an advising core group of members. The two co-chairs are Mr. Nguyễn Ngọc Phúc – board member of HCWA and Ms. Nguyễn Thị Bảo Trân – program officer of NMAV. Core members consists International NGOs, e.g. Save the Children, UNICEF, etc., Besides this HCWA in the previous project has been conducting

child rights advocacy through public awareness-raising activities in the local communities, child forums, contests, dissemination of leaflets, photo display, etc. and thus conveyed knowledge and behavior changes towards children's rights to many parents and community members HCWA has been working closely with various governmental agencies and local social organizations and organized meetings, workshops, forums, and public awareness-raising activities to disseminate knowledge and create awareness of children's' rights. The experience gained from this type of advocacy methods will be utilized also in this project to disseminate knowledge about the contents of the new children's' law.

The experiences from the latest project with capacity building of HCWA including results of the SWOT analysis presented above, and the challenges of sufficient local fund raising experienced, has lead to an emphasis on a combination of fund raising support and volunteerism .It has been an important lesson from the previous project, that HCWAs authority among other stakeholders of social work with vulnerable children including official authorities, is very much based on its extensive knowledge of and involvement of the target group via its service provision. A certain service funding has therefore been maintained in this proposal, but with an aim of reducing the need for external support for this over time by emphasis on fund raising and more use of volunteers.

The project districts have been selected because they based on official figures and general experience hold large numbers of poor families with vulnerable children. The draft project proposal has been discussed and modified based upon comments from public social service providers in the project area as well as NGOs working with children and after repeated discussion between the two project partners. The project falls within the work defined in the statutes of HCWA and is approved in general terms by the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City. The People's Committee will approve the final project program when funding is secured.

Important inputs to this project also were provided from an external evaluation of children's rights project, of which the above-mentioned SWOT analysis of HCWA is a part.

Roles and responsibilities

DVFs board is overall responsible to CISU for the implementation of the project.

The board establishes a project committee in charge of practical implementation, monitoring and progress- and financial reporting, project reviews and professional consultancies. The project committee reports every 6 months to the board. The committee consists of 5 members, a consultant in developmental affairs, a paediatrician, a teacher and educationalist, an anthropologist and a secretary. The committee elects a chair/coordinator. The committee members are individually given responsibility for reviews and consultancies in relation to planning, implementation and analysis of surveys, trainings in project management, fundraising, advocacy, strategic planning, sexual-and reproductive health, child protection, life skills, development of additional project activities based on survey results, participation in Vietnamese project management committee meetings etc. The tasks are assigned so that continuity is maintained in the respective subjects. At the beginning of the project a detailed time line and formats for follow up, monitoring and reporting will be worked out jointly with the HCWA. There will be Danish project committee member participation in the inception seminar, the midterm review seminar and the final external evaluation seminar.

At the DVA General Assembly 2017 a new strategy was adopted. This strategy focuses on four specific SDGs within gender, healthy lives, promoting of well-being, etc. and further the strategy identifies the primary target group of DVAs development efforts as 'vulnerable women (girls), children and youth of Vietnam'.

DVA has through its history as an advocacy organisation, its organisational structure as a membership-based NGO and its year-long experience developing capacity of non-governmental organisations in Vietnam, DVA is in a unique position to strengthen the role of HCWA as a civil society organisation. DVA can specifically contribute with experience, competencies, qualifications

and knowledge related to organisational development, project management, advocacy, networking and fundraising. In addition, DVA can contribute with knowledge of pedagogical principles and methods to children and youth, development of teaching curriculum and a specific pedagogical approach. With the present culture in Vietnam of top-down communication in all aspects of interaction – from the family sphere to the policy-making – the culture of communication and governance itself stands in the way of providing children and youth with relevant and effective methods of dissemination, including a different pedagogical approach.

The contribution, role and areas of responsibility of the DVA technical assistance will focus on the professional expertise as well as the pedagogical approach in order to ensure these two complementary issues are in focus. Moreover, the DVA will also act in a facilitating role during the various workshops. TORs for each mission have been developed, but are not included due to the limitation of the length of the application.

DVA technical assistance will include the following 4 consultancies:

1) **Advocacy**

In order to strengthen the HCWA capacity we believe that the development of a HCWA advocacy strategy will be an asset. Therefore, we suggest conducting a workshop with the purpose of the development of an advocacy strategy. A DVA consultant will arrange and facilitate a workshop with the HCWA staff to work out a detailed plan of activities and strategy for HCWA's advocacy activities that will include continued cooperation with CRWG, focused information campaigns on children's rights and the children law for owners of small scale business (labour abuse), teachers (unauthorised collection of fees for various services from pupil, the police (inappropriate use of sanctions and placement in detention centres), groups of parents, community members and the target group (drug abuse, sexual abuse, domestic violence) In order to gain as much as possible for the outcome of the strategy during the life of the project it should be conducted during the beginning of the project.

2) **Fund-raising**

This issue was also part of the previous HCWA project. However, there is still need for improvements. We suggest the development of a fund-raising strategy plan of activity with a specific focus on how to obtain local/national funds and funds from international foundations. A DVA consultant that has worked with fundraising will facilitate a workshop for HCWA's fundraising group on methods of fundraising incl. identification of donors, foundation application, donor reporting and continuous donor contact.

3) **Volunteer recruitment and -maintenance**

Denmark has a longstanding tradition for the use of volunteers performing various kinds of activities within a number of different organisations. In a Vietnamese context the utilisation of volunteers is a fairly new phenomenon. We believe that it will be an asset to HCWA to conduct a workshop and together with the consultant develop a strategy on how to identify, recruit and maintain the volunteers. The outcome from the study tours on volunteer work in Denmark and to Blue Dragon in Hanoi should act as a background for the workshop and the consultancy. The workshop will be facilitated by a social pedagogue experienced in street level work with disadvantaged youth in a Danish context. Focus will be on sharing of experiences with volunteer identification, recruitment, training, supervision and maintenance with the HCWA staff. Visits to the project areas and development of written guidelines will also be part of the workshop. Mentorship use and support to those of the target group and peer group formation will also be part of the volunteer program.

4) **Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, incl. domestic violence**

In the previous DVA-HCWA project surveys revealed that disadvantaged children (girls and boys) often were exposed to family conflicts, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Therefore, this consultancy will address these issues, as we believe the targeted girls and boys within the new project also will be exposed to the same issues. We are planning to perform it together with the DVA partner in the project 'Sexual education to young female and male students'

Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED), which is a Hanoi based NGO. CGFED's experience within gender issues in society, the family, children, youth, gender, health issues, labour exploitation. In addition, CGFED has a strong focus on advocacy and in particular their knowledge and experience on the local context will provide the participants in the workshop with new and important knowledge. One of the main issues in the workshop will be on how the child (and girls in particular) avoid sexual abuses, e.g. how they will be empowered to act against these abuses.

Project organisation, management and personnel

HCWA through its 2 board members in the project management committee and its staff is responsible for project implementation, follow up and monitoring in Vietnam as well as for progress and financial reporting bi-annually to DVF.

The DVF will have no staff permanently placed in Vietnam, as HCWA and its staff and volunteers will carry out work. DVFs input will be through planning of project implementation, participation in project management meetings, monitoring visits and short time consultancies (as has been the case in previous projects).

The HCWA establishes the following project organization in Vietnam:

1 Project Implementation & Management Board

1 project manager and

3 social workers

2. Project Steering Committee and Project Coordination Board of the two districts

In each district, there are

1 vice president of the People's Committee at district level

A representative of DOLISA at district level

A representative of Department of Education and Training (DET) at district level

A representative of the Women's and the Youth Union at district level

A representative of the Health Center

Representatives of some People's Committees, Women's and the Youth Union at ward level

Child welfare & protection staff at ward level

Roles and responsibilities of the project manager, the project coordinator, the project officers, the project committees and the project coordination boards on district level has been worked out in the form of written job descriptions, that, however, in the interest of space, has been left out of this application. If needed it can be forwarded.

Leaders of the local authorities at district and ward level will participate in project launching conference, mid-term review and project completion conferences; child forums, contests, and workshops organized in the local communities

Target groups

Stakeholder analysis:

- Public/local authorities
- child care protection officers
- health care institutions
- legal support centres
- education
- police
- Civil society
- Vietnamese Women's Union and Youth Union
- HCWA
- Target groups
- disadvantaged and abused children
- parents

- Partners
- Businesses/companies
- Vocational training centres
- Volunteers
- Press & Media
- Networks on children's rights and protection

Primary target groups:

The two districts selected as project sites, have been chosen because of their economic and social situation with more than 30% of the population being migrants and a high number of disadvantaged children, migrant children and poor children.

The Department of Labour and Social Affairs (DOLISA) estimates that:

District 8 has a population of 432.087 people (female: 52.05%; male: 47,95%); 94,893 households of which 1502 families are very poor and 2097 are poor. There are 75.785 children under 16 years in the district and the number of poor children is 1570 and the number of children in special circumstances is 419 (HIV/AIDS infected). Moreover, the number of vulnerable children (orphans, disabled, with severe diseases, etc.) is 180.

Binh Chanh District has a population of 668.372 people (female: 49,13%; male: 50,87%); 174,234 households of which 2584 families are very poor and 3928 families are poor. There are 133.833 children under 16 years in the district and the number of poor children is 3513 and the number of children in special circumstances is 193. Moreover, the number of vulnerable children is 468.

1. Abused and disadvantaged children.

The total number of disadvantaged children in the two districts is around 6000, and it is **estimated that the project will target around 1000 abused and/or disadvantaged children directly**. Of these 60% are females and 40% males. More than 90% are ethnic Vietnamese Kinh, the others are from small ethnic minorities f.x. Khmer from the Mekong delta and mountain tribes from the southern central highlands. Almost all belong to the Buddhist religion.

The projects aim of contributing to the prevention and protection of child abuse is of direct relevance for these children.(and indirectly through the advocacy work for other children in the same situation)They will themselves be part of the intervention through their participation in work shops, youth clubs, various life skills discussions and peer education . Child representatives of the target group of children will be selected to participate in the selection of the whole target group of children.

HCWA has through a number of previous projects a longstanding experience and legitimacy to work and advocate for the right of the child and in particular for the most disadvantaged children as described above in page 10.

In the two chosen districts HCWA will also cooperate with locally based civil society organisations, e.g. the Vietnam Women Union (VWU) and the Youth Union (YU) and other NGOs in order to mutually catalyse each other's service and advocacy.

2. HCWA staff and volunteers.

The HCWA has 13 regular staff members, of which 9 are females and 4 males. There is 1 director, 1 vice director, 7 social workers, 2 project managers, 1 accountant and 1 English translator. In addition, there are 4 female teachers on time-limited contracts. All the social workers have long experience in working with disadvantaged and abused children and capability to cooperate with various public authorities, incl. providers of social services, schools, etc.

Presently 47 volunteers are working with HCWA, out of which 37 are females, 8 males. Four of these do foreign language teaching, for instruct in creative arts and baking, 4 assists with

communication on social media and web site maintenance and 10 assist with communication to communities and organization of events.

In the two selected districts a Project Coordination Board will be established with participation of the People's Committee, Bureau of Labor Invalids and Social Affairs, Bureau of Education and Training, Bureau of Health, and the District Police.

Volunteers are categorised into two main groups:

1. The role of the volunteers will be to support communication and fundraising within HCWA, writing of news at the HCWA website, and design and organising of communication and PR activities for HCWA in general and the projects in particular.
2. Group of volunteers supporting the implementing of children's activities; training and awareness-raising/discussion sessions to children and parents within the two districts. For example logistic support to the training sessions and forums for children; recreational activities for children; family visits to identify children's needs, etc.

Secondary target groups

1. District based childcare protection officers, social workers, social work departments at schools and hospitals, the police, health care facilities and local mass organisations, i.e. WU, YU, etc. It is estimated that the project should target around 100 people
2. Parents and local people of the two districts. It is estimated that the project should target around 1000 people.
3. Policy and decision makers within child protection at the district and HCMC level; the Child Rights Network, incl. national and international civil society organisations.

Ad 1: Training sessions on issues related to rights of the child and the new children law will be conducted

Ad 2: Training sessions on issues related to parenting skills, positive disciplinary approach, parent's responsibilities/duties, prevention of domestic violence, and general awareness raising activities about child rights, the new children law, incl. protection of children and the prevention of child abuse will be conducted

HCWA is already an active member of the HCMC based Child's Rights Working Group/Network. The project will focus on strengthening the Network and in particular on more focused advocacy on the protection of children and the prevention of child abuse.

3. Strategy and expected results of the intervention

Development objective

Awareness of the new children's law by all stakeholders and a comprehensive child protection system in HCMC is created

Immediate objective:

1. An advocacy strategy for HCWA has been developed and the implementation of the strategy targeting the duty bearers is well under way
2. HCWA's capacity in fund raising and volunteer recruitment and -maintenance has been strengthened and a written strategy has been elaborated and is being implemented
3. HCWA's authority as an advocate for disadvantaged children has been consolidated and enhanced through a limited strategic service delivery to, and with involvement of, the primary target group.

Means of verification

Ad 1. Minutes of advocacy strategy workshop, document describing the advocacy strategy., document describing plan of implementation., minutes of child rights network meetings and other advocacy initiatives. Ad 2. Minutes of fund raising and volunteer work shops and implementation pplan. Ad 3. Service delivery plan of activities

Outputs and activities

Outputs and activities are listed in the table below. Indicators are only given for objectives and outputs.

| | Description | Indicators |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Development objective | Awareness of the new childrens law by all stakeholders and a comprehensive child protection system in HCMC is created | Child abuse in HCMC is reduced by 30% based on reports from the department of labor and social services (DOLISA) |
| Immediate objectives | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An advocacy strategy for HCWA has been developed and the implementation of the strategy targeting the duty bearers is well under way 2. HCWA's capacity in fund raising and volunteer recruitment and - maintenance has been strengthened and a written strategy has been elaborated and is being implemented 3. HCWA's authority as an advocate for disadvantaged children has been consolidated and enhanced through a limited strategic service delivery to and with involvement of the primary target group. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Advocacy strategy and- implementation plan in place and operational. 1.2 Attitude change <i>among stakeholders and duty bearers</i> in accordance with the new childrens law. 2.1 Sufficient funds raised to cover HCWA's core costs 2.2 The number of volunteers targeted at the volunteer workshop recruited 3.1 The number of service activities agreed upon at the project initiating meeting performed 3.2 HCWA's role as an advocacy organisation is recognised by other Civil society organisations and authorities at the end of project. |
| Outputs | <p>Regarding objective 1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Advocacy strategy and - implementation plan developed</i> 2. <i>Stakeholders in the project area (and some beyond) are aware of the most important points in the new children's law</i> 3. <i>Stakeholders in the project area are acting in accordance with the new children's law.</i> <p>Regarding objective 2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Sufficient funds to cover HCWA's yearly core activities raised not later than by the end of project year 3</i> 2. <i>A written strategy related to recruitment and education of volunteers has been elaborated</i> 3. <i>5 workshops targeting potential volunteers has been completed</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Written advocacy strategy and - implementation plan existing 1.2 6 monthly reports and external mid-term evaluation documenting awareness. 1.3 Key informants outside the project agree that stakeholders are acting in accordance with new law 2.1 The amount of funds raised, and the number of volunteers recruited and working. 2.2 The stakeholders in the project has received strategy related to recruitment and education of volunteers |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>4. <i>100 volunteers has been recruited and are working within two main areas (communication / fundraising and children's activities) not later than by the end of year 3</i></p> <p>Regarding objective 3:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Schooling and health insurance provided for 300 children, support during probation provided for 1000 children, emergency health services provide for 15 children. 2. Curriculum has been developed regarding skill trainings, preventive trainings against sexual abuse, drug abuse, labor abuse, domestic violence, criminal activities and health hazards performed 3. Peer lead clubs, peer education, sports and recreational events held for the target group 4. Family counselling performed in accordance with the activity plan and time line, as adjusted and agreed upon at the project initiating meeting 5. The above-mentioned curriculum and activities will be a new approach / model for working with prevention and protection for the children. Not later than by the end of year 3 it has been presented to stakeholders through web site, manual and workshops | <p>2.3 6-monthly reports, external mid-term evaluation and final report of activities performed</p> <p>3.1 <i>Basic services have been provided and curriculum is being implemented.</i></p> <p>3.2 <i>Education, recreational vents and family counselling has been implemented and target group and stakeholders agree that this have lead to awareness and possibility to act.</i></p> <p>3.3 <i>A fundament for demonstrating a new approach / model for working with prevention and protection for the children has been documented through website, manual and workshops</i></p> |
| Activities | A detailed timeline for activities has been worked out in draft, but has not been included due to the limitation of space. It will be adjusted and finally agreed upon at the project initiation meeting | |
| Activities for output 1 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. workshop for development of advocacy strategy and -implementation plan 2. Implementation of advocacy activities in the child rights working group and with governmental agencies and local social organizations through organized meetings, workshops, forums, and public awareness-raising activities in the local communities and by child forums, contests, dissemination of leaflets, photo | |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| | display, social media and in the press and when possible TV | |
| Activities for output 2 | 1.Fund raising workshop and development of a fund raising strategy, a fund raising organisation within HCWA and an implementation plan 2.Ongoing fund raising activities throughout the project period 3. volunteer recruitment workshop with development of a volunteer strategy and a implementation plan. 4.Ongoing volunteer recruitment and volunteer maintenance activities including supervision and feed back to volunteers on working methods and achievements 5.Midterm and final evaluation of the use of volunteers | |
| Activities for output 3 | 1.identification of candidates for school support, health insurance support and probation support on a yearly basis and provision of the support with control of its proper utilization 2. work shops on labor abuse and domestic violence resulting in recommendations for the preventive work in these fields 3.performance of interactive case based trainings on life skills and prevention of sexual abuse, drug abuse, labor abuse, domestic violence, criminal activities and health hazards 4.organisation of sports and other recreational activities 5 performance of peer lead clubs and street peer education 6.Family counselling activities for families of children where domestic sexual abuse or domestic violence is an issue | |

Strategy

1.Relation to the previous project with HCWA: The rights of disadvantaged migrant children in Ho chi Minh City.

The previous project achieved all the expected results and met the objectives in relation to strategic service delivery to the target group and to forming a basis for HCWAs advocacy for children's rights through capacity building of HCWA and establishment of advocacy networks and connections.

Exceptions were, that local fund in the future raising did not meet the target, as only 10.000 usd

were raised against a target of 20.000, and fewer vocational trainings were carried out as adolescents preferred to take paid unskilled labour rather than training. The way experiences from the previous project has been fed into the new project has been described in detail under project preparation above in page 11. This project introduces the dissemination of knowledge about the new Vietnamese children's law and the advocacy for it with emphasis on the prevention and protection of child abuse by HCWA.

*The point of departure for this project is **the Change Triangle**.*

*First we have the **Strategic service delivery***

The Strategic service is on a more limited scale than previous projects. It takes up 16 % of the budget.

The strategic services gives legitimacy downwards to the target group who can see that actual change is happening. It is also an important element in relation to be able to involve the target group. Furthermore, through these strategic services it will be possible to promote a new way to work with prevention and protection related to child abuse.

In a Vietnamese context it is very important to demonstrate a practical way which can qualify how to implement the legislation related to "The Convention on the Rights of the Child." The staff working with child rights at provincial level as part of the government will see a new model through which they can gain professional knowledge and skills. In this way it will contribute to close the current gap between the legislation and the policy on the ground.

Furthermore the strategic services maintain and strengthen the authority and credibility of HCWA as an advocate for children's rights in general and for vulnerable children in particular, which is not possible if the organization does not have direct experience with work with the target group. In addition it is important for the organization to interact with the target group on an ongoing basis to know what new challenges arise in the dynamic environment in which this group of children move around. A secondary aim of course is to make the beneficiaries self supporting in a longer perspective.

The change strategy includes a revised strategy and plan for the strategic service delivery to the target group especially for the school support element. In the interview survey of barriers and challenges of the target group performed during the last project period, access to school-education was given the highest priority by the respondents. Barriers in addition to payment of school fees (and health insurance, which is linked to the school fee) were often the lack of ability to follow the teaching because of previous school dropout due to social and economic reasons. Priority of school support to previous drop outs in terms of support to catch up classes and to the following integration into normal classes will be part of the strategy. For those judged to be less likely to be self-supporting after leaving school a mentor arrangement by volunteers will be introduced in order to avoid maintaining dependency of this group. Courses, information at youth clubs and peer education in life skills, avoidance of sexual abuse, drug abuse, recruitment to criminal activities and labor abuse were also listed high in the interview survey mentioned, and will be part of the strategic service offered

*And secondly at the same time it builds up **capacity for the partner organization and networks**, who based on evidence can present another way to work with the abused and disadvantaged children*

It will strengthen HCWAs authority as an organisation with ongoing experiences from work with and involvement of the target group. Its capacity to enter into networks with other civil society organisation and public entities will be strengthened through the involvement with other stakeholders and duty bearers.

Through the project HCWA will develop its fundraising capacity. As part of that they will also develop a volunteer strategy and a corps of volunteers, thus relying more on volunteers rather than paid staff doing the work.

The change strategy will include development of a plan of activity for strengthening of fundraising in both extent and scope, including fund raising activities towards local communities, companies

and foreign foundations, the use of social media and a strengthening of the fund raising group of the organization with support from expatriate English speaking volunteers (typically spouses of expatriate husbands working in Ho chi Minh city). Also included is the development and initiation of a strategy and plan for the use of volunteers to partially replace the salaried social workers, previously used by the organization, including guidelines for the recruitment, training, support to and retention of volunteers. This implies a gradual transition of HCWA to being primarily an advocacy organization for vulnerable children, with less emphasis on social service provision. All the above elements also aim at making HCWA less dependent on external funding.

Thirdly the strategic services and the strengthening of the capacities in various forms will facilitate HCWA's authority in its **advocacy** work. HCWA will be seen as a legitimate spokesman for the primary target group of children.

HCWA's profile, professional ability and credibility as an advocate for disadvantaged children's rights towards government institutions and NGO partners will be strengthened through the direct strategic work with the target group and through the parallel capacity building with emphasis on the use of volunteers and development of volunteer networks.

The change strategy will include a plan for extending the scope and the methods of HCWA's advocacy for awareness of the new Children's Law and the needs of disadvantaged children. This will include continuation of networking on these issues with the CRWG and targeted campaigns towards important office bearers on the new law and emphasis on special problems like:

- teachers (avoidance of unauthorized fees from the target group,),
- police (support rather than placement in detention of children apprehended for offences),
- DOLISA on district and provincial level (increase of public resources for the target group),
- District Health Staff (avoidance of discrimination of the target group in spite of poor clothing and bad language)
- and DOLISA ministry (argue for priority for resources for disadvantaged children).

The campaigns will also be targeted at the owners of small businesses (labor abuse) and at parents (domestic violence) and the target group (how to avoid sexual abuse and drug abuse).

Members of the target group will be involved as much as possible and peer groups established.

The interventions in the advocacy field of the project is expected to act as a catalyst for mobilizing those targeted by the advocacy to participate in the dissemination of the knowledge of and the values inherent in the Children's Law.

The interventions related to the 3 immediate objectives are thus believed to mutually synergetic and in accordance with the development triangle.

Catalysing effect

Input from DVF, HCWA's activities and HCWA's interaction with other stakeholders are believed to be mutually catalysing. The intervention will strengthen HCWA's strategic and organizational approach to involvement with the Vietnamese society, and its motivation and ability to cooperate and network with other private and public stakeholders. HCWA's interaction with these will augment the effect of its advocacy because the interaction is believed to motivate and strengthen the ability of other stakeholders to participate in the dissemination of the knowledge about the Children's Law and its implication for attitudes and treatment of children. The planned activities with teachers, police, small businessmen, parents and the target group will create engagement of these and mutual trust, facilitating further cooperation. Exchange of experience and knowledge with CRWG members and with CGFED and Blue Dragon during consultancy workshops adds to the interventions catalysing effect.

Advocacy in Vietnam

As earlier mentioned, it is the intention to include a workshop in the project on advocacy, because we believe HCWA, its partners and the specific target groups of this project will benefit strongly. Advocacy in Vietnam is not a tradition and there are certain limits to what the authorities will allow.

So, the outcome on a different approach to advocacy would be a great asset for the stakeholders in the project, including the development of an advocacy strategy. Emphasis will also be on how HCWA would be able to influence key policies and decision makers.

HCWA is working with children and youth so the advocacy agenda needs to come from the children/youth themselves. Advocacy aims to change policies, legislation, behaviour, attitudes, and awareness so that they will have a positive effect on the lives of children/youth. So, the challenge for HCWA is to build children/youth's skills and confidence as effective advocates able to address the Vietnamese society norms and attitudes in relation to the concerns of children/youth.

Duty bearers are the target of advocacy and represent institutionalised power and have the authority to make changes. The government and the Peoples Committee of HCMC are the primary duty bearers but many other groups in society at the district level are also duty bearers, e.g. DOLISA, the police, school management committees, teachers, trade unions, etc. The media are important collaborators in advocacy at all levels. Press releases, press conferences, interviews etc. are important in order to draw attention to the underlying problems of the disadvantaged children/youth in the selected districts. The Social Media should also be included.

In order to become advocates for their rights the children need adult support from HCWA. Adult HCWA facilitators will therefore play a main role in child-led advocacy and specialised training of adult facilitators is crucial as well as the teaching methodologies. The target group is disadvantaged/abused children, girls and boys, so it will be important to equip HCWA facilitators, women and men with relevant gender skills.

Basically, the advocacy strategies can take one or two pathways: 1) Direct policy influence, where HCWA advocates on behalf of the disadvantaged children; and/or 2) Indirect support where the disadvantaged children are empowered to advocate for their own cause. The direct advocacy work may be successful in changing the policies and practices of the duty bearers, as the agencies can use their political leverage, network and institutional relations to pressure for change. It is important to combine direct advocacy policy influence with the development of local, i.e. the various target group's capacity for advocacy applying a participatory approach.

A realistic outcome of the advocacy activities is to influence the police, the schools (teachers), DOLISA, etc. in order to change the cultural norms and create awareness and change attitudes towards the children.

Capacity building of HCWA

The development objective is approached on two levels: 1) by strengthening the recruitment and management of volunteers capacity of HCWA and at the same time also strengthening its fund raising capacity thus reducing its dependency on external funding, and 2) to strengthen its advocacy capacity in relation to the new Children's Law by consolidating an open and regular dialogue between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the local authorities and other stakeholders on this issue (with emphasis on prevention and protection) and by maintaining its authority as an advocate for children's social issues through continued social service work on a minor scale for disadvantaged, vulnerable children.

HCWA is in a favourable position to succeed in consolidating the dialogue with the local authorities and other stakeholders, as they are already being recognized as a serious and competent NGO. This is due to HCWA's previous and present work with disadvantaged children. By ensuring the children's protection in the two selected districts the project will further strengthen HCWA's credibility in the eyes of other stakeholders, and reinforce HCWA's voice as an advocate for children's rights. Furthermore, it will serve as a model on work with underprivileged children's rights in the future available for other stakeholders to follow. In support of this, an Internet website will be regularly updated gathering information on child rights work in Ho Chi Minh City

A major threat against HCWA is its dependence on external funding. This threat is only reinforced as foreign NGOs and development agencies are phasing out their support for Vietnam due to its new status as a low-middle income country. With the financial foundation in danger, the ability of HCWA to function as a strong advocate for children's rights is also under threat.

In a Vietnamese and HCWA context the utilisation of volunteers supporting the organisation is a quite new phenomenon. As mentioned earlier it is the intention that HCWA in this project will use volunteers at two levels: 1) at HCWA level: 10-15 volunteers to give support to i.e. advocacy, fundraising, etc. 2) at the project areas: 40-50 volunteers who are local authority's child care and protection officers, heads of local communities, Women's and Youth Union members, etc.

In order to obtain the latest information and to build up capacity on how HCWA identify, recruit and retain volunteers we propose two study tours.

- 1) To Denmark because there is a long tradition for the utilisation of volunteers for various purposes. Visits will mainly be to organisations working with disadvantaged children. e.g. The Sports Project, Street Society, Headspace, etc. Moreover a dialog seminar with practicing social workers, regarding working methods and ways of identifying, recruiting and detaining volunteers will be included.
- 2) We suggest two HCWA participants, namely the project manager and the project coordinator
- 3) To Hanoi in order to visit 'The Blue Dragon' which is an organisation working with disadvantaged and abused children and in addition the organisation has a long tradition for the utilisation of volunteers. Participants: the staff involved in the project

The HCWA staff will also be trained in gender tools and methods mainly in order to be able to take into consideration that there are different prevention and protection needs of girls and boys.

Moreover, the new Children's Law is more or less gender-blind. The project will be designed and implemented by applying a gender-based approach to protection of the child.

In addition, all educational/information materials, trainings, advocacy activities, etc. will take into account the particular needs and interests of girls and boys and be designed and implemented accordingly. All aspects of the project from design of activities and planning to implementation and evaluation will be gender mainstreamed in order to ensure that the particular needs and interests of both girls and boys are adequately addressed. This includes the perception of gender roles, gender stereotypes and gender relations, and attitudes among the various target groups and stakeholders of the project.

The main reasons for supporting HCWA for another project period therefore are:

- The need for HCWA to adjust their activities to be in accordance with the priorities in the new Children's Law
- The need for HCWA to become less dependent on external funding by changing their way of working to rely much more on the use of volunteers trained by HCWA and by continuing the limited local fund raising possible

Monitoring and evaluation.

The DVA is accountable to CISU and will oversee the communication with CISU. DVA is also responsible for the overall monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the project via regular basis communication with HCWA, review of semi-annual progress and financial report submitted to DVA in accordance with the CISU guidelines as well as reports submitted by consultants providing technical assistance under the project. DVA will conduct regular monitoring and evaluation visits throughout the project period and participate in the annual, mid-term and final stakeholders' meeting/workshop. Consequently, three monitoring visits have been planned for and are included in the budget.

HCWA will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the project activities and the progress towards the immediate outputs and the outputs. HCWA will submit

semi-annual progress- and financial reports in accordance with the rules and guidelines of DVA and CISU

An *inception review* and stakeholder workshop will be held at the first half of year 1. The review will emphasize the adaption of the new working model with much more focus on the use of volunteers guided by trained volunteer trainers, focus on prevention and protection in advocacy work, as well as learning from previous projects. The recommendations of the inception review will be reviewed and endorsed by the coordination committee, which will also monitor its follow-up.

The meetings of the coordination committee will review project performance and make adjustments to approaches during the project period. The meetings will include an assessment of the appropriateness of program strategies and of the extent to which outputs have been produced as planned at that stage.

In addition, an annual, mid-term and final stakeholders' meeting/workshop will take place in order to share, assess and discuss the results and best practices of the project. The workshops will also be used as a vehicle further to disseminate information about project approaches, progress and results and carry out advocacy for the sustainability and replication of activities and approaches.

An *external evaluation* will be conducted after the middle of the project period, rather than at the end, to allow for any needed changes in implementation based on assessment of the outputs and possible impacts of the program at that time.

The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation will act as the guidance for the remaining part of the project and on this background make the necessary adjustments. The evaluation will specifically look into the use of volunteers as this a new action in the DVA project cooperation with HCWA. Moreover, the evaluation will look into any unforeseen challenges and threats to the project. An adaptive approach of the evaluation is required to ensure that the project is adjusted and revised based on the learning by the project partners, - we therefore suggest a participatory approach when conducting the evaluation, i.e. a workshop for all stakeholders of the project which will also include a review of the project document/application. The mid-term stakeholders' meeting/workshop will be merged with the mid-term evaluation in order to reduce the number of meetings.

The project document can be amended by DVA and HCWA. Any major changes to the project document will be presented to CISU by DVA in accordance with the CISU rules.

Assumptions and risks

Main assumptions:

- It is assumed that the local district partners and all stakeholders will continue their support to the project
- It is assumed that the various target groups will participate in the activities of the project
- It is assumed that the various target groups will share their awareness of child rights issues, incl. the new children law and how to protect and prevent children from abuse
- It is assumed that the child rights issues are culturally accepted among the participants of the project

Main risks:

- The public authorities of HCMC will not be willing to participate in the project
- The advocacy activities on the child rights issues performed by HCWA and its partners will not be accepted by the HCMC public authorities
- Parents and in particular fathers will not be committed to and support the project the activities
- It may prove more difficult than anticipated to recruit a larger number of qualified and motivated volunteers
- Fund raising efforts may not lead to significantly increased revenue

Mitigation of risks:

In Vietnam It is at present not feasible to conduct or advocate for activities without the consent or at least passive acceptance of the authorities. In case the authorities attitude towards cooperation with the projects activities including its advocacy initiatives should change into a negative direction during the course of the project, the first mitigation measure would be to request meetings with those authorities in charge to explain and discuss the issues and try to change or modify their attitude. If not successful, a change of modus operandi as a second priority mitigation measure might be negotiated, provided this could be done without compromising the major aims of the project.

An insufficient commitment and support from parents will to be mitigated through an increased effort on family counseling.

Volunteering has not been a strong tradition in the Vietnamese society, possibly except some volunteering for social work in relation to Buddhist pagodas. This attitude, however, seems to be changing gradually. Recruitment of an insufficient number of volunteers will sought mitigated by an extra effort to communicate success stories from previous work using videos and motivational communication by already enrolled volunteers.

If fund raising gives rise to challenges, as it did in the previous project, DVF will to identify expatriate volunteers (e.g. expatriate spouses, living in Ho chi Minh city or Danish students of international development, using a stay at HCWA as a required trainee period) to help HCWA produce qualified, English language applications to international foundations that priorities the kind of social work, HCWA is doing.

Phase out and sustainability of the project

The change of working method of HCWA intend to be brought about by the project. This will be with emphasis on the selected items of prevention and protection in its advocacy for the new Children's Law. Furthermore on the use of trained volunteers for service provision to the target group of disadvantaged, vulnerable children *combined with a strengthened capacity for fund raising including fund raising from foundations*. Thix is expected to make HCWAs work more cost/effective and make it less dependent on external funding at the end of the project period. This is expected to facilitate a phase out after the project period.

The strengthened efficiency and capacity of HCWA will allow the organization to play a key role in implementation of the new Children's Law in the local civil society and to advocate more efficiently for disadvantaged children's protection in Ho Chi Minh City and beyond without further external input. *A presumed, enduring positive effect of the project is, that the relatively large number of the disadvantaged children of the target group will have received education, obtained relevant life skills and knowledge important for avoidance of exploitation and prevention of abuse and disease. This will put them in a much better position to be able to sustain themselves economically and socially. To reduce the risk of some of them anyhow ending in dependency a volunteer mentor arrangement for those judged least capable of becoming self-supporting will be established*

The experience and findings gathered from the project will be made available to all stakeholders and published so that the strategic deliveries with regard to the children in the two districts will serve as a model for future work on securing underprivileged children protection. The establishment of a website gathering information on child rights work in Ho Chi Minh City will further strengthen the long- term sustainability of the project.

The projects experiences will be gathered in systematic six-monthly progress reports used by the partners but also presented at social seminars in both South- and North Vietnam.

It is further expected that the following will enhance the sustainability of the project effects and add to the attainment of the overall development objective beyond the actual project period:

- The combination of 1) 'direct policy influence', where HCWA advocates on behalf of the disadvantaged/abused children and/or 2) Indirect support where the disadvantaged/abused children are empowered to advocate for their own cause. In this project the primary target group is disadvantaged/abused children, and it can change the lives of these children that

HCWA works with them directly. However, as HCWA also engages in advocacy on a larger scale within local and national policy it could potentially impact many more children and the change in their lives will not be dependent on the involvement of HCWA.

- The training of the HCWA project staff, volunteers and other stakeholders will leave an institutional capacity, which can be further developed through internal skills and knowledge sharing by those key staff members who were trained by the project.
- In addition we expect the utilization of volunteers in the project to have a sustained impact. HCWA will gain knowledge and useable information on the use of volunteers due to: 1) the study visit to Denmark, 2) the study visit to Blue Dragon in Hanoi, and 3) the workshop on how to use and retain volunteers. All these efforts will strengthen the use and retaining of volunteers and should in a longer-term perspective contribute to less dependence of external support.
- Documentation of the project results, lessons learned, 'best practices' and methods will be documented and will be communicated to relevant stakeholders such as policy and decision makers, civil society organizations and the Child Rights Network as part of advocating resource allocation and attention towards prevention and protection of disadvantaged/abused children
- In the final phase of the project the sustainability will be boosted through the final stakeholders' workshop hosted by HCWA in order to promote the processes and results of the project

Phase out

An exit strategy will be developed in year two in connection with the mid-term stakeholders' meeting and sharing workshop in order to secure the sustained knowledge sharing after the project ends. HCWA will in good time before the meeting formulate a draft exit strategy and forward it to all stakeholders allowing the participants in the meeting to participate in the design of the exit strategy. This strategy will include a plan for the remaining part of the project and as such also include a plan for the continued formalized networking, including dissemination and sharing of experiences on protection and prevention of abuse of disadvantaged/abused children.

The conclusions and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation will also provide important inputs to the exit strategy. The term of references for the evaluation will include this issue. The experiences gathered by HCWA as a local CSO specializing in protection and prevention of disadvantaged/abused children will have a sustainable impact on HCWA's legitimacy as an advocate on the issue of disadvantaged/abused children.

Information work in Denmark

Beside the dissemination activities in Vietnam DVF will organize project related information work on the project as such and on urban disadvantaged children's right to prevention of and protection against abuse in general through articles in the DVA magazine Vietnam Ajour, through lectures and discussions at the yearly Vietnam cultural day and through other public meetings and seminars to be organized.

More over DVA plans to partner up with MUNDU – centre for global education, who has 30 years of experience in doing teaching projects and information work in Denmark. It is our intention to tell the successful change stories from this project through a short film targeting Danish pupils grade 7-10 (as well a Vietnamese audience, as described above). The film gives voice to some of the older kids (around the same age of the target group) benefitting from this project, giving them an opportunity to share their story and their dreams for the future. At the same time the film conveys the story of a Vietnam, which has surely experienced a growth adventure, but an adventure where many are still stuck in trials with no immediate prospect of living happily ever after. The film will be supplemented with a small teaching guide. MUNDU will assist us in the planning and production of the film and in reaching our Danish target group.