An Analytical Study of Some NGOs'/NPOs' Contributions by promoting Library Activities at Disadvantageous Areas in Vietnam to Create Potential and Lifelong Learners.

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Abstract

The two key concepts of this paper are the significance of Library and NGO/NPO. The missions of both libraries and NGOs/NPOs increasingly intersect each other. These organizations collaborate to provide essential services that revolve around the creation, dissemination, and storage of information. Besides hundreds of national NGOs/NPOs, 177 (Wikipedia) international non-governmental and non-profit organizations are working for a humanitarian cause, development of education, improvement of the intellectual standard of the people and children in the disadvantageous areas in Vietnam. They attempt to get out of poverty, diseases and illiteracy marking the contribution to the establishment of a united Vietnam with different ethnic groups living together in harmony, peace, freedom, democracy and prosperity. This paper presents how some national and international NGOs/NPOs contribute to increase literacy and lifelong reading habits among the Vietnamese especially school goers by supporting and promoting school and community library activities through building and renovating libraries, providing books and trained librarians. Results (Fig. 1) show that respondent NGOs/NPOs built and renovated around 750 libraries; and provided the participants' libraries, mostly school libraries, with over two million books and non-book materials.

Keywords: Library, NGO, NPO, Vietnam, Lifelong learning.

Introduction: Contents and Study Questions

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are high-profile actors in the field of international development, both as providers of services to vulnerable individuals and communities and as campaigning policy advocates. According to Wikipedia, the acronym "NGO" was first used in 1945 when the UN was created. "NGO is an independent voluntary association of people acting together on a continuous basis for some common purpose other than achieving government office, making money or illegal activities" (Peter Willetts, 2012). Akira Iriye (2004) defines NGO as "a voluntary non-state, non-profit, non-religious, and non-military association." Streeten (1997) said, "NGOs are professionally-staffed organizations aiming at contributing to the reduction of human suffering and to the development of poor countries". NGO is also known as a civil society organization. On the other hand a non-profit organization (NPO) uses its extra funds for the purpose of the organization, rather than dividing it between the shareholders and the owners of the organization. "A nonprofit organization is an organization that uses surplus revenues to achieve its goals rather than distributing them as profit or dividends"- Wikipedia. Examples of NPOs are public arts organizations, trade unions and charitable organizations. NGOs and NPOs should become the source of inspiration for every government to respect and implement all vital human needs. The various governments of the world have at least one thing in common i.e. they all know that without people involvement in the solution of

problems, the nation may deteriorate to the point of disintegration and self-annihilation. In fact, in countries where we have plenty of volunteers working through various NGOs and NPOs, we tend to discover less problems and less human suffering. Very fortunately, from the very outset, the United Nations has realized this tangible evidence and thus it proceeded to establish good rapport with several NGOs and NPOs. Over the past 60 years, since the United Nations came into existence, NGOs and NPOs have played a big role in the implementation of the peaceful objectives of this world body of nations. They do this in various ways such as by funding projects, engaging in service provision and capacity building, contributing to awareness, and promoting the self-organization of various groups (Baccaro, 2001) that obviously empowered the society towards its development. Empowerment is the ability of individuals to gain control socially, politically, economically and psychologically through (1) access to information, knowledge and skills; (2) decision making; and (3) individual self-efficacy, community participation, and perceived control (Zimmerman and Rappaport 1988).

Consonantly libraries have been identified as one of the key elements for open access to information, which is crucial to democratic information society development. The unique function of libraries is to acquire, organize, offer for use and preserve publicly available material irrespective of the form in which it is packaged (print, cassette, CD-ROM, network form) in such a way that, when it is needed, it can be found and put to use. No other institutions carry out this long-term, systematic work as libraries do. "A library is an instrument of self education, a means of knowledge and factual information, a centre of intellectual recreations and a beacon of enlightenment that provides accumulated preserved knowledge of civilization which consequently enriches one's mental vision and dignifies his habit, behavior, character, taste, attitude, conduct and outlook on life (Islam 2004)." The online Dictionary, Thesaurus and Encyclopedia describe the library as a place in which literary and artistic materials, such as books, periodicals newspapers, pamphlets, prints, records, and tapes, are kept for reading, reference, or lending. In a digital sense, a library may be more than a building that houses a collection of books and other materials as the Internet has opened up an avalanche of online and electronic resources for accessing documents on various fields of interest.

As the missions of libraries and NGOs/NPOs increasingly intersect each other numerous libraries are built and patronized by NGOs or NPOs throughout the world. Nowadays these kinds of contributions have overcome the geographical barriers as NGOs and NPOs are growing exponentially and becoming INGOs/ INPOs. NGOs and NPOs act as windows on applied knowledge and provide links to sources of information; therefore these organizations are collaborating to provide essential services that revolve around the creation, dissemination, and storage of information. There is no doubt about the fact that development is a product of education and education is a process through which people are formally and informally trained to acquire knowledge and skills. 'Education' and 'Library' are two inseparable indivisible concepts, both being fundamentally and synchronically related to and co-existent with each other. One cannot be separated from the other. None of them is an end in itself; rather both of them together are a means to an ultimate end. One dies as soon as the other perishes. One survives as long as the other exists. This inter-relation, co-existence, if you like, this dependence of one upon the other has been coming down from the birth of human civilization to the posterity through a process of evolution in accord with varied needs, changes, and circumstances of various stages of human life (Adio & Olasina, 2010). A school, a club, and enterprise of a society can never alone impart education; each of them is dependent upon a library – a centre of wholesome education, and the quencher of thirst for

concrete, fathomless, ultimate knowledge! Leaders in almost all of the developing countries are now sharing the same faith in what libraries can potentially contribute to the development of their countries. In this regard, this is worth mentioning: "Libraries are therefore needed for farmers, industrialists and scientists, planners, government officials and para-statal organizations, personnel and all people, i.e. rural and urban, who are engaged in the economic development of a country" (Tawete 1988). In consonance with Tawete, Makotsi (2005) said, "Improving access to relevant information and promoting a reading culture are prerequisite for strengthening literacy skills, widening education and learning opportunities, and helping people to address the causes of poverty". So the roles of libraries and librarians in the concept of poverty alleviation and capacity building of the people can never be overemphasized if it serves in innovative way by breaking the tradition (Ogunsola, 2011).

However, we may state categorically that the ultimate objective of NGOs and NPOs, regardless of their character, nature and eventual original purpose, is to promote educational and economical development toward the creation of a better and more stable global community whereas libraries provide access to reading materials through which school children and youths can gain and improve their skills. Ellen M. Coe stated, ". . . the library and its work is supplementary to the school, or that the school is preparatory and introductory to the library" (1892).

Library is a wonderful gathering place to pursue knowledge whether you are student, teacher, parent, labor, employed or unemployed regardless of creed, culture or color and librarians are the people who always welcome you to gain a flavor of the library i.e. knowledge creation, knowledge preservation and knowledge dissemination that make them special and it is like to be part of our community development since the Neo-Assyrian Empire period (2600 B.C). The national survey (1996) of Australia shows that extensive use of the school library was associated with a difference of as many as 27 points to students' literacy achievements when compared with non-use of the library. Kofi Annan, former UN Secretary-General (UNESCO, 2003) said, "Literacy unlocks the door to learning throughout life, is essential to development and health, and opens the way for democratic participation and active citizenship." The Libraries create literacy among the people through library services which include: public enlightenment or rights in the society, understanding social values and expected conduct in public life; assisting to adjust to existing social, political, spiritual and economic activities of the society. Moreover library services improve knowledge and skills for positive productivity as a tool for national development.

Consequently, it is easy to realize that besides institutional education libraries have significant contributions among others in order to create literate and lifelong learners to be an active citizen. According to Rubin (2002), "Children with poor reading habits have a higher chance of anti-social behavior. Delinquency; school violence, bullying, hacking computers, and even examination malpractices have a correlation with poor reading habits. This does not mean that those with poor reading habits display such behavior; however, poor reading habits are associated with such behavioral patterns while good reading habit helps develop a steady and constructive mind."

NGOs/NPOs and Library Activities in Vietnam

The principle "people know, people discuss, people execute and people supervise" which has been repeatedly mentioned in documents and policies of the Vietnam's Communist Party

(CP) reflects the wish of the Government to encourage every social organization and citizen to participate in formulating, implementing and monitoring policies. Private, nonprofit development organizations began to emerge in Vietnam following a 1993 decree on 'Science and Technology Associations'. The government at this time was decreasing the size of the bureaucracy and wanted to see what innovations could emerge in rural development through private initiatives. At the same time, a new agenda was emerging among international donors to support 'civil society organizations' such as development-oriented NGOs and NPOs. Indeed, there are many examples of good cooperation between Vietnamese NGOs and government structures in particular on the local level (PRSP, 2000). The recognition for NGOs by the government is considerably greater today than this has been the case in the past (Friis, 2007). According to the VUFO-NGO Resource Center –Vietnam, besides hundreds of National NGOs/NPOs there are about 128 international NGOs (INGOs) work in Vietnam whereas Wikipedia listed 177 international NGOs/NPOs that are working in Vietnam or connected with Vietnam. Vietnam NGOs/NPOs as one of the institutions or components of civil society, which grows out as "self organisation outside the formal political circles" and "expands space in which individual citizens can influence the condition in which they live both directly through self organization and through pressure on the State" and "provides a substitute for many of the functions performed by the state [....] and the function in the field of welfare which the state can no longer afford to perform" (Kaldor 2000). Vietnamese NGOs, community based organizations and other groups emerging in Vietnam are active in a variety of sectors. Many are concerned with development issues and providing services to poor and disadvantaged people. Even more than mass organizations, especially small community-based groups intend to fill the gap that came up after the retirement of the state in social affairs (Frehner, 2006). Hibbard and Tang (2004) in their study in Vietnam have noted the importance of NGOs' roles in sustainable community development. One of the roles was that NGOs balance the social, economic and environmental factors in promoting sustainable development. Another important role of NGO that they discovered was decentralization of the central government which helps the local communities to acquire more power in order to make their own decisions. But, sometimes the local communities lack specialists to do professional work and resources that are important for the particular projects. In this situation, NGO assists local staff with drafting sustainable development plans that are functional under the umbrella of a central government policy. Finally, they concluded that sustainable community development is process-oriented, and it requires extensive community participation and relies on network to share resources, knowledge and expertise. According to the World Bank (2010) the dropout rate after fifth grade is almost 50% in Vietnam, especially in rural and mountainous area since most students cannot afford to attend secondary school or university hence most of those students don't get the opportunity of lifelong learning due to the lacking of library or such activities. In such a situation, NGOs/NPOs in Vietnam are performing a crucial responsibility to continue informal education through providing various facilities in order to increase literacy and lifelong learning.

Library activities appeared very early in Vietnam. In the 20th century, libraries and archives received considerable attention from the French in Indochina. The National Library of Vietnam was established on November 21st, 1958 and was actually the successor of the Central Public Library of Indochina founded under the Decree dated on November 29th, 1917 by A. Sarraut, the French Governor-General of Indochina. The Vietnamese Library Association established on October 22nd 2006 is the professional association for librarians in Vietnam that also organized several trainings and workshops for the development of the library professionals (Vietnam Country Report, 2008). At the present time, the network of information agencies and libraries comes under the control of the State. For a developing

country, Vietnam possesses a remarkably sophisticated library system where more than 23, 000 state funded libraries and over 25000 people are working to provide different kinds of library services (NLV report, 2009).

Actually, there are five major library systems in Vietnam:

• Public Library System headed by the NLV consists of 63 city and provincial libraries, 582 district libraries and nearly 7,000 commune and village libraries (NLV report, 2009),
• Academic Library System: 353 libraries,
• School Library System: 17,459 libraries,
• Special Library System: 60 research libraries run by research institutes and 218 libraries and information centers under ministries and other governmental agencies, and
• Military Library System: 2,740 libraries and reading rooms.

Apart from those government funded library systems, there exist thousands of communities and private libraries, reading rooms, book stacks operating in various forms such as international information centers, boat libraries, communal cultural post offices, border posts, books cafés, etc. It should be noted that some of those are funded by national and international NGOs/NPOs through different types of library activities in order to increase lifelong reading habits. After April, 2012 the Vietnamese govt. approved a draft law. This is as follows:

"Foreign individuals and organizations would have the right to establish libraries in the country (Discussed at the 7th session of the National Assembly Standing Committee)" that would be a milestone in the history of library in Vietnam.

Role of Libraries in Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning is the development of human potential through a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes, and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances, and environment. If it is agreed that the educational process must continue throughout the life of the individual, then it is impossible to argue the roles of libraries in this concern. The prospect of instituting lifelong education and the need for it are to be judged not in relation to other people or to a given body of knowledge external to the pupil, but in relation to the personal development of a particular individual. Lifelong education also emerges as a possible solution to one of the critical problems of our modern societies i.e. relations between different generations and their way of thinking. Library education however can greatly help them in order to overcome such a modern critical troubles. Libraries have put their time, energy and expertise into supporting those who find reading more of a challenge, encouraging them to take their first steps towards reading for enjoyment through lifelong learning programs. In 2003 IFLA, as an umbrella organization in the field of librarianship, published a report on the project entitled "The Role of Libraries in Lifelong Learning" where it clearly emphasizes the need for strengthening of the educational role of libraries and the principles based on UNESCO's Manifest. According to the Manifest, a library should become a place of learning and provide minimum conditions for lifelong learning. Three years later IFLA's Section on Information Literacy issued Guidelines for Information Literacy for Lifelong Learning in which it emphasizes that information literacy, i.e. possibility of access, search, use and evaluation of information, is a

necessary pre-condition and a key factor for making lifelong reading culture in a society today.

Libraries assist in finding, using and interpreting appropriate information that opens up opportunities for lifelong learning, literacy enhancement, informed citizenship, recreation, creative imagination, individual research, critical thinking, and ultimately, empowerment in an increasingly complex world. The role of the libraries in promoting lifelong learning is especially crucial in developing scientific, reflective thinking and creativity. Library and adult education services are at the front line of lifelong learning. "School libraries and public libraries should be pivotal to the 21st century educational experience, and the base for a positive attitude by young people towards information skills development, lifelong learning and enhancing their life chances" (Bandy 2006).

Libraries, especially school and public libraries, help to introduce the use of reading for information, pleasure, passing examinations, and personal growth through lifelong learning. Voluntary reading helps develop reading skills and mastery of language, extends students knowledge, and assists them in their academic work. Students and youths who read are likely to have background knowledge, familiarity with new topics or subjects, and thus, find learning easier and interesting as libraries provide materials that offer more extensive and varied information than classroom study alone.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to show how a number of NGOs and NPOs contribute to make literate and lifelong learners by building, renovating or patronizing libraries, providing books and other library resources including trained librarians throughout Vietnam. In this paper the author explores the comprehensive insight of some NGOs/NPOs regarding the school and community library activities for increasing lifelong learners in Vietnam. The aims of this study are to show how NGOs/NPOs enhance lifelong reading habits of Vietnamese young generation through their library projects; and to explore the impacts of NGOs/NPOs library activities in Vietnam.

Study Methodology

In order to get information for this paper, several methodologies have been used. Most of the NGOs/NPOs primary data was collected from VUFO-NGO Resource Center Vietnam (http://www.ngocentre.org.vn) and then using the questionnaire method through emails while the literature sources are collected from internet and local newspapers reports. The study questionnaire was sent to 21 selected NGOs/NPOs while 14 out of them responded. The response rate is 66.6%. After having the responses, the collected data has been analyzed. There were 7 study questions (SQs) have been posed that guided the study these included:

SQ1. How many Libraries has your organization built/renovated in Vietnam?

SQ2. How many Books has your organization donated?

SQ3. How many Library personnel have been trained by your organization?

SQ4. What is the number of beneficiary of your library programs/activities?

Originality of Data and Limitations

Most of the data for this paper was collected from the respondents NGOs/NPOs while a small number of data was collected from the respondents' websites. Few respondents were unable to provide the exact number of beneficiary related to their library programs. It should be noted that the author couldn't physically visit the areas where NGOs/NPOs work.

Results and Discussions

Profile of the respondents NGOs/NPOs (*n=14*)

Geographic Location of Respondent NGOs/NPOs Library Activities/Programs

According to Wikipedia, Vietnam is divided into 58 provinces (*tỉnh*) and 5 municipalities existing at the same level as provinces. The Vietnamese government groups the various provinces into eight regions: Northwest, Northeast, Red River Delta, North Central Coast, South Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast, and Mekong River Delta. These regions are not always used, and alternative classifications are possible. Figure 1 shows the geographic location of respondents NGOs/NPOs work. Maximum and minimum respondents NGOs/NPOs library activities are at Mekong delta i.e. 7 and both Red River Delta and Central Highlands has 3 whereas 5 respondents NGOs/NPOs work in south central coast i.e. included Hoi An, Cu Lao Cham, Danang, Quang Ngai provinces. 4 respondents NGOs/NPOs work at Northeast and North Central Coastal areas that is the same number of NGOs/NPOs that work nationwide but no respondents are working in Northwest part of the country near the border of Laos and China i.e. Dien Bien, Hoa Binh ,Lai Châu, Sơn La, and Hòa Bình provinces.
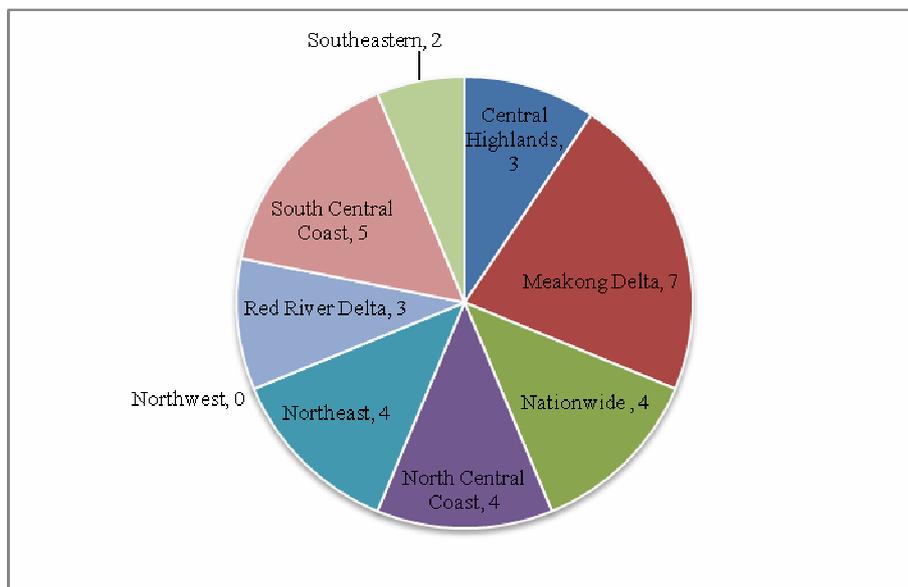

Fig 1: Geographical locations of respondents NGOs/NPOs library programs/projects (up to July, 2012).

Number of Libraries Established/ Renovated by Respondents NGOs/NPOs
Table-1

Name of NGOs/NPOs	Acronym	Types	YoE	Working areas	Total Library established/ rebuilt
Room to Read	RTR	NGO	2001	Can Tho, Ho Chi Minh City, Long An, Thai Nguyen, Tien Giang, Tra	667

				Vinh, Tuyen Quang & Vinh Long.	
The Library Project	TLP	NPO	2006	Ho Chi Minh City and Mekong Delta	17
Aid for Kids	AFK	NGO	2005	Hoi An, Cu Lao Cham and Cam Ranh.	03 (1 toy library)
Peace Trees Vietnam	PTV	NGO	1995	Quang Tri Province	12
Vietnam Fund for Education, Music and Infrastructure	VFEMI	NPO	2011	Kon Tum province	11
Singapore International Foundation for a Better World	SIFBW	NPO	1994	Hanoi	01 (mobile library)
Library of Vietnam Project	LVP	NPO		HCMC, Quang Ngai, Quang Tri, Kien Giang, Thai Binh &Vinh Long	22
Vietnam Dream for Success	VDS	NGO	2001	Hue, Danag and Ninh Binh	06
Highland Education Development Organization	HEDO	NGO	1997	Cao Bang, Gia Lai and Yen Bai	03
HSBC Vietnam's Future First program	HSBCVFFP	NGO	2011	Nation wide	01(Audio Books Library)

Table 1 show that Room to Read (RtR) an INGO established 667 school libraries i.e. around 90% (Fig 2) of the respondents whereas AFK, HSBC Vietnam and SIFBW have special kind of library activities namely Toy library, Audio library and Mobile library respectively. LVP (22), PTV (12), and VDS (6) have newly built the school and community libraries at several provinces like HCMC, Quang Ngai, Quang Tri, Thai Binh & Vinh Long in north and south coastal sides including Mekong delta.
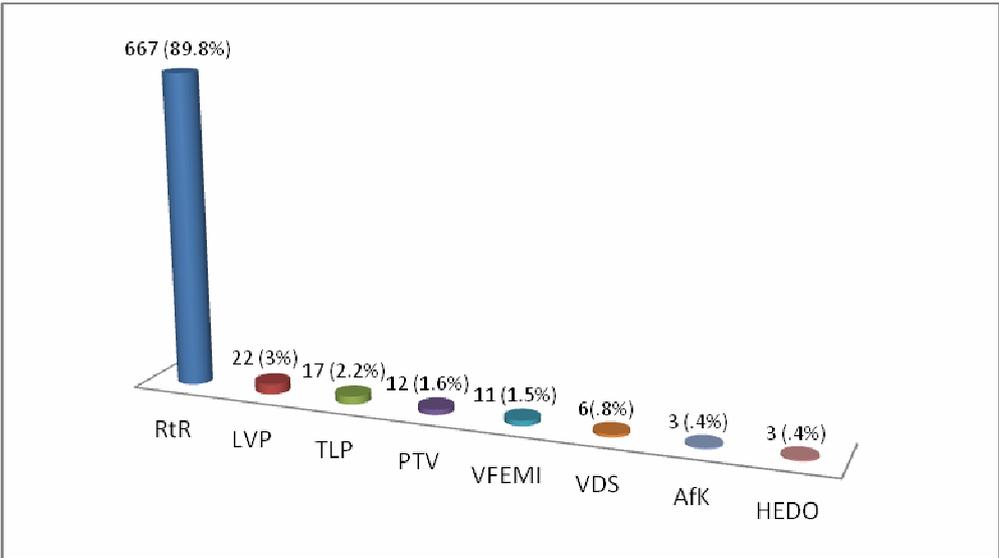

Fig 2: Major libraries built/ renovated by selected NGOs/NPOs (up to July, 2012).

Number of Books Distributed by Respondents NGOs/NPOs

Books are the principal material of a library and obviously the main source of knowledge. Books of all kinds play a critical role in a child's development but unfortunately many countries in Asia, most children do not have access to books beyond basic school textbooks. Having fun educational books available helps to encourage independent learning, intellectual curiosity, and a lifelong passion for reading.Table 2 shows that the RtR has been distributed more than 1 million books i.e. the 73% of respondents NGOs/NPOs on the other hand the Asia Foundation disseminated over four hundred thousand books with the collaboration of different publishers i.e. McGraw Hill, Pearson etc. HSBC has different kind of contribution that already developed over 17000 audio books for their Audio library through the HSBC Future First 2011 program in order to help the visually impaired people.

Table-2

Name of Organizations	Estd	Types	Working Areas	Total Books
Room to Read (RtR)	2001	NGO	Can Tho, Ho Chi Minh, Long An, Thai Nguyen, Tien Giang, Tra Vinh, Tuyen Quang & Vinh Long	1294.696
The Asia Foundation (TAF)	1993	NGO	Countrywide	400.000
Global Village Foundation (GVF)	2006	NPO	Hoi An, Quang Nam Province, Danag	57.000
The Library and Education Assistance Foundation for Vietnam (LEAF-VN)		NPO	Hanoi, HCM, Hue, Vinh Phuc, Ha Tay, Thanh Hoa	26.697* (info. from website i.e. www.leaf-vn.org)
The Library Project (TLP)	2006	NPO	HCM and Mekong Delta	2.000
Aid for Kid (AfK)	2005	NGO	Hoi An, Cu Lao Cham and Cam Ranh	1.000
Good Books Educational and Cultural Project (GBECP)	2007	NGO	Countrywide	10.150 (approx)
Vietnam Fund for Education, Music and Infrastructure(VFEMI)	2011	NGO	Kon Tum province	2.000 (approx)
HSBC Vietnam	2011	NGO	Countrywide	17.000 audio books

Number of Librarians Received Trainings by Respondents NGOs/NPOs

The role of librarians is currently changing from being that of "keeper of books" to "information specialist". School librarians nowadays are actively taking part in acquiring quality reading and learning materials, lesson planning and providing students with necessary information skills. "School libraries help teachers teach and children learned. Children and teachers need library resources--especially books--and the expertise of a librarian to succeed. Books, information technology and school librarians who are part of the schools' professional team are basic ingredients for student achievement (Laura Bush)." "Librarians are the secret masters of the world. They control information. Don't ever piss one off" (Robinson, 1995). So to become a master of information, training for upgrading information dissemination skills among the library personnel of Vietnam is an important agenda. It is estimated that in Vietnam there are about 25000 employees working in information and library agencies and most of them come from various professional sectors. The majorities are graduates of professional schools followed by foreign languages. The lowest numbers (approx 3,275) are the graduates from professional training courses in information, library and documentation (NLV report, 2008).

To overcome this professional shortage some of the respondents NGOs/NPOs who therefore realized this crucial problem and offered several training opportunity to the Vietnamese library professionals especially school librarians. In 2009, The Asia Foundation started a project, supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to strengthen the public library institutions by creating a more welcoming and accessible library environment in select pilot sites in Thai Nguyen, Nghe An, and Tra Vinh provinces. They had trained around 400 librarians throughout the country by 2011in cooperation with different projects. The LEAF-VN also arranged a number of trainings, workshops and seminars in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City related to DDC and LC classifications, AACR2, MARC21, development of Subject Heading List etc. in order to share the modern and technical knowledge of librarianship with the Vietnamese librarians.

Table-3

Name of the NGOs/NPOs	Total Trained Librarians
Aid for Kid (AfK)	05
The Library Project (TLP)	25
The Asia Foundation (TAF)	385
*The Library and Education Assistance Foundation for Vietnam (LEAF-VN)	316

information retrieved from LEAF-VN website i.e. www.leaf-vn.org

Besides the above NGOs/NPOs library activities, local newspaper reports show that the following remarkable library enterprises also greatly contribute to Create Potential and Lifelong Learners through their library programs and activities:

Mobile Library for the Blind (TalkVietnam)

The first speaking mobile library for the blind was put in operation on October 20, 2007 at the General Library of Ho Chi Minh City. This US $66,000 mobile library has two internet link computers, two laptops and applied software. In addition, it also has a Braille printer, enlarger, speaking book reading machines, 10 pocket-size reading machines, and other alternative documents. This modern mobile library has been established with funds from the Standard Chartered Bank and the Force Fund of the Netherlands. A training course will be opened for the library's staff in the last two months of 2007 to ensure good quality services in various localities. From early 2008, the mobile library services began at 10 places in Ho Chi Minh City's outskirts and in Southern provinces. The library will open 4 times a year for 5 days.

Another Mobile Internet Library inaugurated at the same library provides its services to people and army personnel. The 84,500-USD project was launched with funding from LG Electronics Corporation and the Amcham-United Way Viet Nam. This mobile library is a customized coach equipped with eight Internet-connected computers in addition to peripheral devices, two TV sets, DVD players as well as some 1,500 book titles, including Braille books and illustrations for visually impaired people.

Samsung Smart Library Program (TalkVietnam)

Samsung "Smart Library Program" encourages and provides books to poor children in the suburbs of big cities to study and increase their lifelong reading habits. A charity joined by 7,400 people in HCM City by Samsung raised more than US$85,000 to build libraries for

rural children. It also trains librarians and organizes activities to promote the reading habit among students.

In addition, the above INASP (International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications) website shows that it has arranged several workshops and events in Vietnam since 2008 those are hosted and funded by INASP and its partners. They organized 18 (approx) workshops/events on librarianship for college and university librarians from 2009 to 2011.

Impact of NGOs/NPOs Library Programs in Vietnam

Research in the area of library programs and their impact upon students' achievement has consistently shown the importance of libraries specially school libraries with an end in view to create lifelong learners. "The school library functions as a vital instrument in the educational process, not as a separate entity isolated from the total school program, but involved in the teaching and learning process (ISLA)" Lance and his fellow researchers Marcia Rodney and Christine Hamilton-Pennell have found consistently in numerous states in the US, where the studies have been replicated, that school library programs have a positive and profound effect upon student achievement (Lance, et al, 2000). Libraries help to introduce the use of reading for information, pleasure, passing examinations, and personal growth through its services. Voluntary reading helps develop reading skills and mastery of language; extends students knowledge; and assists them in their academic work. Students and youths who read are likely to have background knowledge; familiarity with new topics or subjects; and thus, find learning easier and interesting. Mobile Library Project by Global Village Foundation (GVF) in Vietnam brings library facilities to rural areas. Each of their Portable Mobile Libraries (PML) is a portable wooden box containing 200 to 250 books; novels, comics, short stories, appropriate for the grade levels of the schools. After few months later the mobile library got enormous response by the users. Consequently, the authority had to decide to extend its activities in Hoi An and Quang Nam Province. It is because one library box couldn't be shared amongst dozens of villages, hundreds of schools, and thousands of young minds. Therefore, a creative way to satisfy the desire to read was to implement cost-effective book boxes or PML which would travel from school to school on a rotational schedule. The estimated beneficiaries, accordingly GVF, are more than 21000 students.

Singapore International Foundation Mobile library (SIF) is the first mobile library (another name Words on Wheels) in Vietnam that not only brings books, educational games and toys, but also importantly in today's new world, access to the Internet and multi-media facilities. The project aims to give greater access to technology and new learning's to the rural populations in Hanoi. "The majority of the 27% of Vietnamese who use the Internet are located almost exclusively in the big cities. "Words on Wheels, we hope, will help bridge the digital divide and inspire the young to a culture of reading and self-learning- said Ms Jean Tan, Executive Director of the SIF. By promoting a culture of reading and self-learning", SIFBW hopes that Words on Wheels will inspire the young towards brighter dreams for the future. Vietnam Toy Library (VTL) the first community public library began in Hoi An by Aid for Kid (AfK) with support from the local government in 2007 and since that time it has offered books and other non-book materials to the area children and the general public. The VTL offers loaning books is a new concept in Vietnam which helps around 4500 area people to access books for education and enjoyment. In the past six years, Vietnam Dream for Success (VDS) in cooperation with the Mission Office of the Archdiocese of Washington, Sr. Cecilia Nguyen and the archdiocese have been able to build and stock the first full-size

Lavang Library in the vicinity of Phu Cam Cathedral in Hue in 2001. In 2002, through the same Missionary Cooperation Plan, the second full-size Lavang Library was built in the vicinity of Thanh Duc Parish in Da Nang. In 2003 the third full-size Lavang Library was built in the vicinity of Phat Diem Cathedral. Through individual donors, two Lavang Mission Libraries were established in the Diocese of Da Nang in 2003, and one Lavang Mission Library was established in the Diocese of Hue in 2004. These libraries now provide reading resources to thousands of children, young adults, and adults in North and Central Vietnam.

Room to Read (RtR) an International Non-profit organization (INPO) was founded in 2001 as its second country of operation in Vietnam and in the beginning it worked in a few regions along the Mekong Delta, and have now expanded to include communities throughout northern and southern Vietnam, Tuyen Quang and Thai Nguyen for example where student enrollment and literacy rates remain extremely low. RtR built/renovated 667 school libraries and donated over 1,294,696 books among the participant school libraries while over 364.000 children are benefited towards lifelong learning (RtR Report, 2011). According to a research conducted by Room to Read, "Data from our cross-national evaluation shows strong evidence for the value of libraries. In one district, students were 80% more likely to read for an hour a day than those without access to a library." One of the greatest challenges to early adoption of the habit of reading in developing countries especially in Vietnam is a lack of high-quality, age-appropriate children's books in the local language. Often, the few books that are available are either second-hand books in foreign languages or low-quality, black and white books for more mature readers. RtR responded to this need by going into the publishing business and so far 49 titled books were published in local language with a special focus on printing "big books" for shared reading that will inspire them to read, expand their minds, and develop a lifelong love for reading and learning. Moreover RtR Vietnam School Libraries program made substantial progress in 2011 toward completing and distributing global guidelines on professional development for educators. These guidelines equipped RtR with a global strategy so as to create a three-year professional development plan and to support teachers, librarians, principals and school management authorities. The progress in the process is worth mentioning. RtR School Libraries program provided 52,160 participants with proper trainings by 2011. Another respondent NGO namely Highland Education Development Organization (HEDO) has already implemented more than 100 projects over the last ten years throughout the country. All projects focused on providing education, science and health aid for disadvantaged ethnic groups in highland areas in Vietnam. HEDO built one library for ethnic minority at boarding high school in Yen Bai province that is being used by more than 1500 ethnic students. Another 2 libraries were established for teacher training colleges in Cao Bang and Gai-lai provinces where more than 2300 beneficiaries among the teachers can access them. HSBC Vietnam developed over 17,000 copies of cassettes and computer discs to help the visually impaired people to understand the surrounding world and to raise their knowledge through the products of the Audio Books such as the text books of all subjects from primary school to high school, reference books, literature, history and fundamental sciences through a program namely Future First Program. Those copies were distributed to Sight Impaired Associations (SIA) nationwide serving a total 1.2 million people. Good Books Educational and Cultural Project (Sach Hay Project) was founded in 2007 by more than 70 of Vietnam's most prominent intellectuals embodied by leading educators, writers, journalists, entrepreneurs, publishers, and government officials to promote better reading habits and raise the intellectual standards in Vietnam by creating a virtual meeting point for millions to share world knowledge. With more than 10,000 books shared and recommended by 30,000 readers/members, 200 experts, 60 publishers and 35 news outlets, GoodBooks.vn or SachHay.org is widely recognized as the largest book-sharing forum in Vietnam.

Library and information services have always been important providers of national, local and grassroots community information. Librarians are skilled in handling information – sourcing, classifying, managing and retrieving – and providing the signposting and connecting people with a valuable service. Information is an extremely valuable commodity that can have a direct impact on people's life chances. Having access to good quality information cannot only improve country's economic outcomes, but also affects people social, personal and learning outcomes. Library services already provide a comprehensive information service that gives a good coverage to employment, learning and skills, health, housing, childcare, tourism, travel and so on. But this is not enough to promote and disseminate lifelong learning services in Vietnam. Much more should be done to develop and formulate an 'information offer' in the same way libraries have developed a sophisticated 'reading offer' over the last decade. Librarians in Vietnam tend to focus only on those people who specifically request their services, rather than proactively reach out to the general public. In addition, though many Vietnamese librarians are well-trained in library science they are not skilled enough to relate them with their clients and reach out to new groups in the community, such as school droppers, retirees, housewives, the unemployed, household businesses, and farmers. In fact, Vietnam's extensive public library system is seriously underused that suggests a significant lack of public awareness about the system's resources and potential contributions. In order to overcome all shortcomings of Librarians, some of the respondents NGOs/NPOs have already arranged several trainings and workshops for Vietnamese librarians. The Asia Foundation's (TAF) Books for Asia program officer Ms. Dinh Kieu Nhung, for instance, mentioned that after receiving the training in 2009 arranged by TAF, Ms. Le Thi My Ha, director of Tra Vinh Provincial Library told her, "Since the training they have encouraged their staff to be friendlier in their communication and interaction with readers then they found out children's visits to the library have risen from about 20 to 30 kids per day to 50 to 60 per day." The LEAF-VN mainly operated by Vietnamese overseas who are professionally related to librarianship is also providing assistance with the development of library professionals so as to become capable of maintaining and continually developing international standards. Complying library systems and services in Vietnam, it has done a good number of significant tasks-arranged training workshop, seminars and translated concise version of AACR2, LC and DDC outlines-that are serving the demands of all Vietnamese library professionals. Moreover, LEAF-VN website consists of vast amount of resources related to librarianship. Therefore, Vietnamese librarians have ample opportunity to provide assistance to the development of library collections and to adequately support the learning, teaching and research functions of educational institutions in order to the modern technology based national education system as well as promote potential lifelong learners.

Conclusion and Brief Recommendation

Vietnam is facing major challenges in her efforts to get herself ready for the fast-approaching Development Goals especially in education and technology. There is no doubt that libraries will be playing a very important role to this national endeavor. All effective school library programs are capable of producing an intended result of increasing students' achievement across the country in order to make good contributions to the national economic and educational development. "Libraries allow children to ask questions about the world and find the answers. And the wonderful thing is that once a child learns to use a library, the doors to learning are always open (Laura Bush).Therefore, Vietnamese libraries should have the right tools to organize their collections for effective retrieval and exchange of knowledge. This view is not totally foreign to Vietnamese library leaders as witnessed by a British

librarian since 1989 during a visit to the country on behalf of UNESCO: "In particular, the desire to increase their international contacts, and become fully in tune with developments in the international information science were, characteristic of the senior librarians, information workers and officials that we met" (Vaughan, 1989). For such progress to occur, library standardization is crucial. As Ogunsola says, "The development of education on the other hand may be said to be synonymous with the development of libraries and the library services within a given community. But libraries can only help about social development if and when the people within communities make regular use of them" (Ogunsola 2011). Until now, there has been no unified policy for the development of information and library personnel in Vietnam, and there lacks a coherent policy for the training of information and library staff, and the employment of these trained staff at the different levels. There is also no policy to encourage this group to use their capacities to the maximum. There is no official standard regulation for the running of libraries. Consequently, each library works autonomously. Results from Room to Read (2011) show that students' reading behavior positively relate to the presence of a full-time librarian, library support, parental support for reading and an emphasis on reading in teachers' instruction. In this regard, the NGOs/NPOs especially, INGOs/INPOs can greatly contribute to develop a standard library and librarian policy in collaboration with the government and the Library Associations of Vietnam. The government should encourage Library and Information Science (LIS) education by opening new LIS departments in the tertiary institutions throughout the country. Besides providing undergraduate and post-graduate degrees the existing Library and Information departments of different universities in Vietnam should launch research based degrees i.e. MPhil and Phd in order to seeking to advance the state of knowledge in their particular domain by gathering substantial data, evaluating theory and generating original arguments regarding a significant library and information management, and development issues. It is because without any shadow of doubt, the extent to which library and librarian of today will be creative; and informed and knowledgeable will be shaped by the boundaries of the contents of the library resources available within their environments or organizations. Moreover, government should encourage and collaborate with large INGOs/INPOs like Action Aid, CARE, Oxfam, Plan International, UNICEF etc. in promoting library projects to increase literacy and lifelong learners. In addition, the concerned authority should create some pre-conditional frameworks for the NGOs/NPOs either national or international i.e. they should work more or less for educational development so at least one project for each is related to the development of library and librarianship activities throughout the country. Although many fears exist among NGOs and states concerning NGO-state collaboration it is argued here that both actors should realize the fundamental benefits that come from this type of partnership. Firstly, NGOs and governments by working together will potentially reduce duplication efforts when implementing development plans (Riker 1995). Secondly, NGOs are seen as 'watchdogs' of the state and this increased NGO-government interaction can only enhance their role as regulators. A central theme outlined here is the need to acknowledge that co-operative efforts between civil society (NGOs/NPOs) and the state can strengthen the capacity of both to pursue development objectives. A balance of confrontation and co-operation between the state and civil society is needed to meet the needs of the people as can be seen in case of Vietnam.

Similarly, the state may serve to ensure that NGOs/NPOs activities remain supportive of national objectives. The state's infrastructure resources and political power combined with the participatory strategies and specialized knowledge of NGOs/NPOs can make for a reliable development model. Clark states, "Though controversial and risky, many of the more strategic NGOs are overcoming their inhibitions and are seeking closer collaboration with

governments. By doing so, they believe they will be better able to contribute to participatory development . . . and they will be able to expose the governments to a grassroots perspective which might otherwise be neglected" (Clark 1995). As the term 'Non-governmental Organization' is unknown and misleading in Vietnam, the organizations often call themselves 'Social Development Organizations' (PRSP, 2000).The overall situation of NGOs in Vietnam still needs further improvement. For instance, more and better opportunities for establishing an organization as well as improvements in the field of freedom of speech are very likely to ease the working atmosphere of NGOs especially when it comes to democratization (Norlund et al., 2006). Vietnamese NGOs still have limited access to state resources and, despite all visions, are not fully accepted by the government as partners in development (Norlund, 2007). Thus, an improved communication between the state and non-governmental organization would promote NGOs' and NPOs' working conditions in Vietnam. On the other hand, NGOs/NPOs should keep training people to make them very active and efficient. They should also be encouraged to seek local input into whatever they are doing for a community. Finally, education development, for example, should be focused on lifelong learning through promoting library activities in order to make a literate, peaceful and prosperous Vietnam.

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