

News and Events of the LIN Center for Community Development

NPO Roundtable: Audit Training & Discounted Audit Service for NPOs



As a crucial part of the Irish Aid funded project to promote Financial Management and Auditing Capability of local NPOs, the LIN Center for Community Development organized a meeting among 20 representatives of 17 not-for-profit organizations to detail the project objectives and to request their input

on the training content prior to finalization with the training team at Mazars STT.

During her presentation, Ms. Elizabeth Pham, LIN Advisory Board Member and project consultant, highlighted the significance of Auditing and Financial Management in enabling not-for-profit organizations to improve transparency in their expenditures and the impact that transparency could have on accessing additional funds.

The presentation was followed by an open discussion, among participants, of the challenges NPOs face when managing and reporting their revenues and expenses. The discussion also addressed concerns shared by many of the participants about the time and commitment required to undertake an audit.

Ms. Samatha Yau, visiting Senior Auditor from Deloitte Canada, helped address some general questions regarding audits. When asked about multi-year projects, Ms. Yau advised NPOs to conduct regular year-end audits rather than one audit upon completion of the project.

Other participant questions revealed some of the challenges that may be unique to NPOs operating in Vietnam, such as the need to provide original, red receipts to auditors versus the requirement to provide them to government oversight agencies. This challenge, among several others arising from the discussion, were duly noted by the LIN team and will be transferred to the audit training team at Mazars for incorporation into the final training content.

The meeting also provided one last opportunity for interested organizations to confirm their participation in LIN's Financial Management and Auditing Training Program 2011. To date, ten organizations have embraced the opportunity to participate in the program.

Note: There is still space available for LIN partners to register before **08 Jul 2011**. Kindly contact the LIN Team with any remaining concerns (npo@LINvn.org).

Click here to download the [Presentation on audit by Ms. Elizabeth Pham](#).

LIN Center

NPO Partners of LIN Center in 2011

During the first half of 2011, the LIN Center for Community Development welcomed the following 12 Not-for-Profit Groups/ Organizations as partners:

- **ARC and Saigon Pet Clinic**
- **HIDGE Volunteer Group**
- **Center for Deaf and Hard for Hearing**
- **Tam Viet Charity Group**
- **Anh Linh School**
- **Vietnam Hope Volunteer Charity Group**
- **Bung Sang Shelter**
- **IFP Alumni**
- **SIFE Foreign Trade University**
- **Free Hugs Vietnam**
- **Thien An Elementary School**
- **Young Disability Club**

Currently, LIN has 66 NPO partners. For a complete list, please visit our website at: [LIN NPO partners](#). If you work with an NPO that would like to become a LIN partner, network with other NPOs, inform our programs and gain special access to our capacity building services, please contact the LIN team at npo@LINvn.org.

More information on the partnership process and partnership benefits, including a partner application, is available on our website. Click here for details: [Partners with LIN](#)

Second meeting of LIN's NPO Advisory Group

On the morning of 16 June 2011, representatives from eight local and international NPOs assembled for the second meeting of LIN's NPO Advisory Group, which was hosted in the warm Smile Group offices, in District 3, HCM City.

The meeting revolved around issues relating to access to justice for vulnerable groups, which are served by HCMC based NPOs, as LIN is about to launch

its survey of Civil Society Organizations – the first phase of a project funded by the Justice Initiatives Facilitation Fund (JIFF).



Mr. Son Pham, Deputy Director of the LIN Center for Community Development, shared details of the JIFF-funded project and initial feedback from NPOs participating in two roundtable meetings. Members of the NPO Advisory Group then shared their personal opinions and experiences, including obstacles faced when supporting a beneficiary. Among the issues raised, NPOs discussed difficulties involved in acquiring personal documentation for a beneficiary, obtaining a license to operate a project and/or event for vulnerable groups and challenges when requesting support from public officials. Participants also discussed problems specific to start-up or volunteer groups, which do not have official registration documents, such as obstacles to organizing public events.

During the meeting, NPO representatives updated one another on their upcoming activities, some inviting their active participation. Among the announcements made were an invitation to International Free Hugs Day (July 16, please contact thuy.nguyen@freehugsvietnam.com), a meditation day for families suffering from domestic violence (end of August, please contact aidsprogram@hcm.vnn.vn), a visual impairment prevention project for children (Volunteers for Peace Vietnam), the Rainbow Project for children infected with or impacted by HIV (World Wide Orphans).

"This is the second meeting of the NPO Advisory Group organized by the LIN Center for Community Development with the purpose of strengthening LIN's programs and services to the nonprofit community, creating opportunities for organizations to collaborate and to exchange information" said Mr. Pham Truong Son from the LIN Center for Community Development.

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Upcoming Events

NPO Workshop on “Operational Planning: Moving from Goals to Results” 06 July 2011

- *Is your organization having trouble meeting its goals?*
- *Is it having difficulty complying with regulations?*
- *Would you like to improve your organization’s effectiveness?*
- *Would you like your employees to work together as a team to achieve your goals?*

If your answer is YES at any above questions, please join the upcoming LIN workshop on “**Operational Planning: Moving from Goals to Results**”!

Through this interactive workshop, you will learn how to:

- **Determine the most important areas for focusing your efforts and resources.**
- **Develop clear strategies for achieving your goals.**
- **Developing detailed, step-by-step operational plans setting out timelines and assigning responsibilities.**
- **Measure progress in implementing the operational plan.**

Venue: *Xu Restaurant, 71 – 75 Hai Ba Trung, D.1, HCMC – floor 1*

Date and Time: *from 08h00 to 11h30 morning, Wednesday 06 July 2011.*

If you would like to participate in this workshop, please RSVP by email at: npo@LINvn.org or by telephone: [08 3824-6091](tel:0838246091).

The guest speaker, Ms. **Gail Nordheim**, is a consultant with over 30 years experience providing customized planning and project management for not-for-profit and government organizations, including:

- *Strategic and operational planning*
- *Program evaluation*
- *Business process improvement*
- *Working effectively with government*

In 2010, Gail presented two successful seminars for LIN partners: “Measuring Organizational Effectiveness” and “Running Effective Meetings”. We are thrilled to welcome Gail back, once again, to lead another workshop for LIN and our NPO partners.

Summer Networking Event: Morning Mingle with Donors & Skilled Volunteers
30 July 2011

This summer 2011, with support from Irish Aid, the LIN Center welcomes our NPO partners to join a unique networking event, "Morning Mingle with Donors and Skilled Volunteers". NPO staff will have an opportunity to meet and talk with current and prospective donors and volunteers committed to supporting NPOs in the community.

Objectives for the networking event are to:

- 1. Provide an opportunity for NPOs to strengthen their local networks;**
- 2. Meet and share experiences with community experts and concerned citizens;**
- 3. Exchange ideas and for future support and collaboration; and**
- 4. Outreach to prospective funders and donors.**

The event is all about **NETWORKING - DEVELOPMENT & COLLABORATION**. Finger foods and beverages will be provided.

Venue: *To be informed upon registration.*
Time: *from 08h00 to 11h00 a.m.*
Date: *Saturday, 30 July 2011*

Please RSVP to: npo@LINvn.org or by telephone at: [\(84 8\) 3824-6091](tel:(848)3824-6091).

NOTE: The workshop on "**Effective Networking**", originally scheduled for 29 June (as informed in May NHIP CAU newsletter) was postponed until the middle of August 2011 to meet the needs of our guest speaker. Thank you for your understanding. We think you find that the speaker is well worth the wait!

Details will be provided in the July Nhiep Cau Newsletter.

IMPORTANT AND USEFUL LEGAL DOCUMENTS!

Thanks to the generous support of Russin & Vecchi law firm, the LIN Center is pleased to make available (on our website) the following documents concerning the forms of establishment of not-for-profit organizations in Vietnam:

- Russin & Vecchi Memo - Forms of NPO Establishment in Vietnam
- Legal Documents (in Vietnamese & English) concerning the establishment and operation of the different forms of NPOs in Vietnam, including: social relief organizations, foundations, science and technology organizations, associations, international NGOs, museums, etc.

Download any of these documents from LIN's website at: [USEFUL RESOURCE](#)

Donor's Corner

- **Site Visit to 2 Projects funded by Charity Cabaret Committee**

In June 2011, the LIN staff, together with members of the Charity Cabaret 2010 organizing committee visited two of their funded projects: the Bird Park in Ben Tre Province and the TePhan Love House in HCMC.



Birds are back to Vam Ho

some rare species of birds.

**Young Creative Group:
VamHo Bird Park Project:**

This was the 2nd site visit to Ben Tre, combining an interim report meeting with a visit to the VamHo Bird Park. The Young Creative Group demonstrated their efforts to manage the project, coordinate with local authorities, and create awareness throughout the local community on the importance of protecting birds at Vam Ho. The site visit offered an opportunity for donors to observe many types of birds nesting, giving birth and taking residence in the park, including

TePhan House

Arts, Dance & Painting Project:

The donors were blown away upon first site of the children's paintings, which were no different from those fine pieces of art sold to tourists throughout District 1. The children of TePhan House, disability and disadvantages aside, demonstrated their artistic talents in their own unique and interesting ways.

During the site visit, we were entertained with moving songs and dance performances, with the participation of more than 20 children. Some members were brought to tears when listening to Thanh, a 9-year-old, visually impaired child, singing an English-Vietnamese



Cabaret team and children at Te Phan

song with sad rhythm. After concluding the visit, it was clear that the project brought a lot of happiness and fun for the children at TePhan.

- **Support to LIN**

LIN would like to recognize and thank the following people/organizations for their recent contributions to the LIN Center:

- Ms. LamQuynhAnh& Mr. Van (VND 5 million)
- Mr. Landon Carnie (VND 10,442,000)
- British International School in HCMC (VND 2 million)

- **Make Giving Your Weekend Activity**

Nothing planned for this weekend? Want to do something different? We've got an idea for you...

Think through your approach to philanthropy with a group of friends or family. Start out with an activity, like "[The New Philanthropist](#)," which we've uploaded to the LIN website, to narrow down the causes most important to you. It will also help to get the conversation started about ways to work together. Then, you can plot out the resources you have available using this handy worksheet, "[Assessing Our Resources](#)".

Got kids? Check out the 22 June Wall Street Journal article, "[How to raise a philanthropist](#)," for further inspiration.

- **LIN VACANCY: Account Manager for Philanthropic Advisory**

Services - As we prepare for the official launch of LIN's Philanthropic Advisory Service, we are looking to hire an Account Manager. If you have a knack for marketing and customer service along with a passion for community development, this position may be of interest to you. Check out the full job description on LIN's website at: [Account Manager JD](#).

About LIN:

Welcome Mr. Alim Manji and Farewell to Ms. Ha Mi

LIN is pleased to introduce one of our Summer Interns - Mr. AlimManji. Alim just completed his first year in the MBA program at Harvard Business School after having worked several years with Bain & Company in Boston and New York. Alim joined LIN this summer to help us launch a Philanthropic Advisory Service, which is being set up to support the donor community and help fund the Center's not-for-profit programs.

At the same time, we are sad to bid farewell to Ms. Ha Mi, a dedicated LIN volunteer who has helped with everything from event logistics to marketing and translation. Ms. Ha Mi will be leaving us to pursue a university degree at Occidental College in California (USA). She will be missed.

Don't Forget the [Give/Request](#) Page!!!

Over the past year, the [GIVE/REQUEST](#) board on our website has helped connect not-for-profit organizations with in-kind donations and pro bono services from individual and corporate donors. But, we need your help to keep the postings up-to-date, so:

NPOs: Please remember to log-in and update your [REQUESTS](#). And be sure to check out what is currently on offer. Don't miss an opportunity to receive donations!

Donors: Take advantage of this open forum to make sure that your contribution goes where it is most needed. Tell us if you have something to [GIVE](#) away.

Remember: If you need any support from the LIN team, you can contact us at npo@LINvn.org, donor@LINvn.org and [08 3824-6091](tel:0838246091). Thank you!

“Don’t We Have People For That?” Operational Planning & Strategy Execution

Included with the permission of the author – Mr. Joe Evans

www.methodframeworks.com

Well-implemented strategic planning provides the vision, direction and goals for the organization, but operational planning translates that strategy into the everyday execution tactics of the business that will ultimately produce the outcomes defined by the strategy. Operational planning is the conversion of strategic goals into execution. No business likes to admit it, but most are lacking in the know-how, competencies (skills, knowledge, experience) and discipline to carry off precise execution of strategic goals. This article addresses just how critical operational planning is to having good execution and offers help to those organizations who struggle with why and how to do it.

What Is The Secret to Executing on Strategy?

If you think about what corporate strategy documents normally look like, it is not terribly surprising to find that a high percentage of corporate strategies fail to be implemented. They range from ugly Excel spreadsheets to beautifully bound books. Unless operational planning has accompanied the strategic planning effort, the strategic plan will always accomplish less than the intended result, resulting in wasted effort.

We have stated in previous articles that a high percentage of plans fail to be fully executed or fall flat altogether. How high a percentage you may ask? Here are a few statistics:

- "Organizations realize just 60% of the potential value of their strategies" Source: Economist Intelligence Unit
- "The average ROI on most strategic planning initiatives is 34% or less" Source: Harvard Business Review
- "90% of organizations fail to successfully implement their strategies" Source: Kaplan and Norton

Yes, there is a problem here to be solved. Most companies would receive a failing grade for their operational planning efforts. This is largely due to a lack of understanding of how such planning should be done. True, it is sometimes perceived to be the less “sexy” part of planning, but it is essential that operational planning be done and organizations must learn how to do it properly. Many companies have the attitude of, “Don’t we have people to do that?”. Far too often, they don’t.

It’s not that operational planning is that complex to carry out, but there is some art to doing it well and it does require finesse. In short, operational planning requires a different skill set and discipline than its counterpart - strategic planning. The biggest difference is that we must adjust our thinking to the day-to-day business operations and consider all of the constraints, inhibitors and accelerators that must be evaluated and factored into tactical planning. The discipline required is a mix of strategic planning with good old fashioned program and project management.

Hope is Not a Business Strategy

Operational planning must be done if strategic goals are to be accomplished. This is because the enterprise is really an eco-system, where a change in one area almost always effects others. The strategic goals of the organization must be translated one business unit / division / department at a time. Why? Because the goals mean something different to each area of the organization, based upon that area's function in the enterprise.

It is not enough to simply put the strategic goals out there and let the business interpret the strategy on its own. To do so is not planning, but instead is crossing fingers and hoping for the best. We've all seen or read about the countless examples of failed strategy implementation this leads to (see more about this in the article [Strategy Misalignment](#)). Since hope is not a strategy, organizations need to buckle their safety belts and leave their comfort zones while mastering the art of execution or face the harsh realities of failing to execute on their plans.

Okay, So How Should It be Done?

For starters, the executive strategy team must carefully construct goals and metrics that will guide the layers of the organization to plan very effectively. Goals and supporting metrics should be defined and pushed downward through the organization -- approaching plan goals almost as if they were marketing them to the rest of the business. The metrics and measurements promote the governance aspect of planning and the buy-in from the enterprise is part of the change management needed to excite and mobilize action for accomplishing the objectives of the strategy.

This requires a communication plan that will educate, inform and help the operations leaders and management to understand what is expected of them and allow them to do the same thing with their people. This is important, since the tactics will be established by the operational leaders who are responsible for carrying out the execution of the goals. Their clear understanding and involvement is a must. This constitutes a bi-directional (or top-down / bottom-up) planning effort and lays the groundwork for operational planning.

A bi-directional planning approach allows executive management to set the goals and plan initiatives collaboratively with all the lower levels of management, thus providing a consistent direction for the strategic plan execution effort. Taking a top-down only approach leads to confusion within the organization and undermines buy-in of the corporate direction. Alternatively, a bottom-up only approach can lead to mission-drift from the strategic plan's intentions when operational managers are left to interpret the strategy goals on their own. This is especially true if the plan goals are ambiguous from the outset.

Let's Walk Through an Example on Bi-Directional Planning

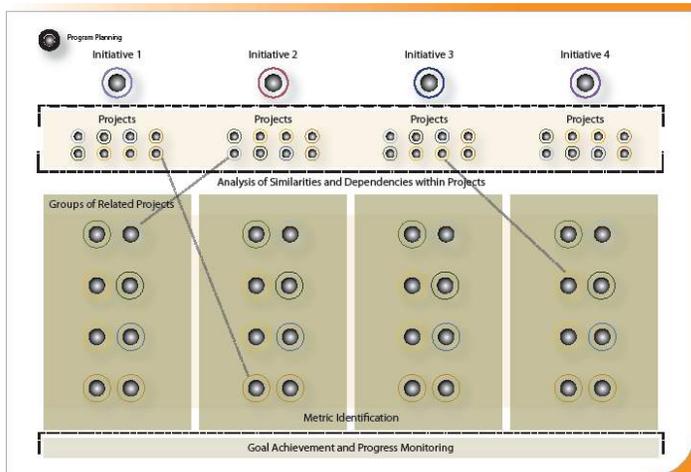
As an example of good bi-directional operations planning, consider this scenario. During strategic planning, executives set an organizational goal to "reduce COGS by 3%". As operational planning is conducted, the director of purchasing sets forth ideas that support the plan goal of reducing COGS by 3% and might set as an objective "to negotiate more favorable supplier rates and payment terms", or to "aggregate buying channels to increase volumes and cut costs".

In order for the example above to work, the strategic plan needed to state the plan goal crisply so that its outcome could be measurable. In this example, that was accomplished. Vague or ambiguous goal statements are subject for interpretation and should be revised when they are discovered.

To sum up these two points, the ideal process for operational planning involves senior management working in conjunction with the other layers of management to set operational goals that ensure alignment the enterprise goals. This sets the direction for funded tactical initiatives that will produce the desired key outcomes of the business.

A Program Planning Example

Let's assume that the enterprise strategic plan in this example consists of three major key outcomes (strategic goals), each one being well-articulated through a controlled vocabulary of minimize or increase statements. As a result, each strategic goal is measurable and has accompanying metrics that will be tracked for progress through plan governance.



Reminder: LIN will host a workshop on Operational Planning for NPOs, with guest speaker Ms. Gail Nordheim on 7 July 2011.

At the operational level, in business unit #1, the planning team (consisting of the company's Chief Operating Officer, the key business unit leaders and the departmental managers of the unit) would define the necessary changes in business tactics to address each of the plan goals effecting their business operations within the unit. This process is usually done through workshops and is very interactive in terms of discussion and brainstorming. See more detail and examples in "Why We Fail At Strategic Implementation: A Roadmap to Execution".

These "changes", once decided upon, would be refined through further planning into initiatives that are comprised of many projects to be completed by the business unit during the plan period. It is at this point that initiatives then need to be grouped into programs in order to fully understand interdependencies, resource sharing, scheduling and timelines. Each program represents a grouping of inter-related projects.

Programs will likely span across more than one business unit or department in terms of impact. There is a one-to-many relationship between each program and the initiatives under that program. Additionally, the strategic initiatives at the business level may fall under more than one program once the operational plan groupings have fully been established and the programs supporting plan goals identified.

Operational Planning Brings Alignment and Accountability & Results

Operational planning is truly the lynchpin of execution, producing plan outcomes while managing constraints on time, money and resources. It is the conduit by which strategy is converted to action and places accountability for goal execution on the leaders, the managers and the doers. Execution of corporate strategy can go awry very quickly in organizations large and small. The frustrating part of implementing strategic goals is that it usually takes far longer to detect that things are off track than it does to get off course in the first place. We all know that misfiring on execution leads to unnecessary costs, wasted management and employee time, committed financial resources that don't produce the desired outcomes and missed revenue or profit targets. So how do we ensure that strategy execution will be spot on? Superior operational planning is the answer. Unlocking the power of this element of planning allows organizations to accomplish strategy and builds alignment to the strategy into the business framework.

“T” is for Inspiration...

An innovative contest taking place in Hanoi: “Thong Nhat Park: A Place for All”

The Vietnam Urban Planning Development Association, Lac Viet Centre for Community Support and Development and the Globalization Research Center at the University of Hawaii are organizing a contest for young architects and urban planners titled “Thong Nhat Park: A Place for All”. Through the development of proposals, and the implementation of the winning project, the contest encourages young architects and urban planners to develop their skills by working with communities in designing or renovating public spaces.

Like many of the Hanoi inner city parks, Thong Nhat Park is heavily used by residents for rest, relaxation and recreation. As one of the last quiet places in this crowded city, and its largest green space, Thong Nhat Park attracts thousands of users every morning and evening. There is a normal cycle to this use, with sports, dancing, aerobics, and other physical activities prevalent in the mornings and evening, before and after the park is officially open, and more relaxed activities, like meetings friends, fishing, or walking with grandchildren, more common during the day.

With this in mind, the winning proposal will show clear evidence of research on the history of the park and issues that have affected previous attempts at redevelopment; it should show evidence of the participation of park users and managers in developing modest improvements in design and management, and it should include a preliminary strategy for funding that draws on public support, donors and sponsors, and the state.

The contest is being carried out in three stages with short proposals due before mid-July and a winner selected on July 21st.

For further details, you can contact:

Lac Viet Centre for Community Support and Development
1 Trang Tien Street (Khu Tap The Nha Hat Kich)

info@lacvietcentre.vn

<http://www.hanoi.org.vn/publiccity>



INTERNATIONAL FREE HUGS DAY (Free Hug – Connecting Love) July 16, 2011

“We need 4 hugs a day for survival. We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance. We need 12 hugs a day for growth ...”

(Virginia Satir)

“Think of the people in your life. Are there any words you'd like to say? Are there any hugs you want to share? Are you waiting and hoping someone else will ask first? Please don't wait! Initiate!”

(Charles Faraone)

Together with the free huggers around the world, Free Hugs Vietnam welcomes you to the International Free Hugs Day 2011:

Time: 7h30 – 11h30, Saturday July 16, 2011
Venues (HCMC): 30/4 Park
Saigon Notre-Dame Basilica
Saigon Central Post Office
Tao Dan Park

“The goal of the campaign, first of all, is to guide our young generation toward a positive direction, to act for a better world. We create and spread happiness to show our enthusiasm and our readiness to serve. It would be nice to introduce to Vietnamese this campaign, which is simple yet has an enormous impact that improve our spirits...” said Ms Hang and Ms Ngan, representatives of **Free Hugs Vietnam**.

During the day, FHV will have volunteers spread out in public places throughout the city giving out free hugs. There need not be much in terms of money or effort, just a sign with the words “FREE HUGS”, together with your message of goodwill, is enough for our volunteers to give and receive warm hugs.

To find out more about the campaign and how you can participate, please visit: <http://freehugsvietnam.com> or <http://www.facebook.com/FreeHugsVietnam>. You can also contact FHV's HCMC representatives for more information:

Ms. Hằng Nguyễn: hang.nguyen@freehugsvietnam.com

Ms. Ngân Thái: ngan.thai@freehugsvietnam.com