

**PARTNERSHIP PROJECT GERMAN - VIETNAMESE COOPERATION  
 FOR THE COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIETNAMESE WATER SECTOR (DEVIWAS)**



Dear Readers,

On behalf of the partnership Project German-Vietnamese Cooperation for the Competence Development of the Vietnamese Water Sector (DEVIWAS), I am Nguyen Dac Hoan, project manager of DEVIWAS. DEVIWAS is implemented under cooperation of the German Water Partnership - GWP and the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association - VWSA. The BMZ - Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung / German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development - financially supports this project

via Sequa - Stiftung für wirtschaftliche Entwicklung und berufliche Qualifizierung/ Foundation for Economic Development and Vocational Training. The DEVIWAS has been implemented since July 2013 with the objective to strengthen the competence, role and position of VWSA to improve the sustainable development of Vietnamese water sector. The first phase will end by 30/6/2016. The second phase is expected to start afterward depending on the result of the first phase. With this press review, I would like to give you an overview of results that we have achieved over the past year.

**Thank you very much!**



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## First achievements of DEVIWAs project

After one year of implementation, the project has achieved initial successes with many practical and effective activities.



Mr. Friedrich Barth - GWP Director in a workshop organized by the DEVIWAS project

Both VWSA and GWP understood that identification of actual labour quality and training needs would be a very crucial preparation for the project to address all relevant issues in Vietnamese water sector. DEVIWAS project implemented questionnaire-based survey “Situation of human resources, training needs and assessment of VWSA’s members” that was conducted from August 2013 to January 2014. The study quantified and analysed the needs for additional manpower of water utilities, ring alarm about the training quality of Vietnamese universities and vocational schools that does not meet the actual requirements. This survey also collected the members’ comments on and expectations for VWSA’s performance, specifically focusing on training and capacity building and continuing its linking role between the members and governmental authorities in policy feedbacks.

Based on the survey result, the workshop “Overview about strategic orientation of VWSA and German - Vietnam experience sharing in water association development” was organized in February 2014 with participation of leaders and specialists of both associations.

On this occasion, Mr. Cao Lai Quang – Vice Minister of MoC, Chairman of VWSA emphasized: **“VWSA commits to implementing DEVIWAS project with all efforts and confidence... not only in training but also all other activities of this project aiming to strengthen the competence of human resources in the water sector”**.

In a number of project activities implemented in the 1st year, DEVIWAS organized successfully two training courses on Communication skill with customers for water utilities in northern and southern areas for more than 120 managers, deputy managers of Business/ Customer Division of water supply and sewerage companies. With support of the project, the website as well as other media materials of VWSA have been upgraded and renewed. The DEVIWAS also support to promote images and develop business linkages between GWP’s members such as Wilo, Rehau or Bilfinger with VWSA’s members are: Tien Phong, Binh Minh, Dat Hoa plastic companies...

After gaining some first successes, VWSA and GWP have been speeding up the project implementation with series of activities such as the national politic dialogue about Safe water plan in Vung Tau on 22nd August 2014 with participation of 36 national water supply companies in all regions and German specialists; some seminars which were trained by German specialists about how to design a proposal, how to access to EU funds, risk management in water supply etc.



Looking back the past year, both VWSA and GWP are very proud of its initial achievement of the DEVIWAS project. Hopefully, those will be a good start-up for the journey of 2 years ahead of the 1st phase, as well as 3 more years of 2nd phase with common goal of improving the competency, role and position of VWSA to improve the sustainable development of the Vietnamese water sector.

## Experiences sharing and Roadmap for Water Safety Plan in Vietnam

***Ba Ria - Vung Tau - 22/8/2014 - A workshop on “Development and Implementation of the water safety plan in the period 2014 - 2016” was held in Vung Tau. This is part of capacity buliding activities of DEVIWAS Project with the common objective of strengthening capacity of the water sector in Vietnam.***

Mr. Nguyen Hong Tien - Head of Administration of Technical Infrastructure (ATI), Ministry of Construction, Mr. Tran Quang Hung - Vice Chairman of VWSA, Dr. Jürgen Wummel - CEO of Sachsen Wasser GmbH (Germany), Mr. Nguyen Dac Hoan - Manager of DEVIWAS Project, Representative of GWP and other key leaders of 36 water supply companies which are members of VWSA in the North, Central and the South have participated in the workshop.



At the workshop, Mr. Nguyen Hong Tien presented an overview of Water Safety Plan - WSA in Vietnam. According to Mr. Tien, the implementation of water safety plan helps water supply utilities actively controlling their production and distribution processes, ensuring safety water for users. The sources for water supply in major urban areas like Ho Chi Minh City, Bien Hoa City, Thu Dau Mot Town, etc. are Dong Nai and Sai Gon River. The quality of the source has been strictly controlled. However, with the development of industrialization and urbanization, the threat to ensuring water quality is increasing.

Vietnam has established legal framework in the water sector like Decree No. 117/2007/ND – CP, Decision No. 2147/QĐ – TTg and Circular No. 08/2012/TT – BXD, guiding the implementation of Water Safety Plan. Since the Circular 08 went into effect, 25 provinces have established a Provincial Management Board on Water Safety Plan, to strengthen cooperation among water



resources management authorities, environmental police and water supply authorities within the province. Some provinces have achieved positive results: the rate of non – revenue water reduced significantly comparing to the average rate nationwide; water environment and resources are protected; water quality is improved, etc. However, Management Boards on WSP still faced some difficulties during operation.

With support of WHO, the ATI as a focal point for the implementation of WSP – phase 3 will develop an Implementation Plan, focus on: training on WSP and developing an awareness raising campaign for WSP in urban areas; developing an Outline to strengthen the effectiveness of Circular 08 and organizing workshops guiding the establishment of Provincial Management Board on WSP, as well as workshops on disseminating Quality Assurance Tool and Investment Plan for Water Safety Supply.

Reporting the result of WSP implementation in the 2007 – 2013 period, Vice Chairman of VWSA, Mr. Tran Quang Hung said that, VWSA has supported WHO to organized training courses for 68 companies on WSP; developing 7 pilot projects in Hai Duong, Hue, Vinh Long, Hai Phong, Quang Tri, Khanh Hoa and Vung Tau. After 7 years of implementation, WSP has created positive changes: improving the quality of water supply, enhancing the reliability of the system and reputation of the companies, expanding service areas, reducing the rate of non – revenue water, etc.

Thua Thien Hue Water Supply Company, Ba Ria – Vung Tau Water Supply Company and Hai Phong Water Supply Company have shared their experiences during the implementation of WSP. Realized difficulties during the implementation of WSP, VWSA is implementing phase 3 of WSP with the target by 2016, 50% of urban water supply utilities will successfully implement WSP and at that time, WSP will be implemented in rural areas.

At the workshop, Dr. Jürgen Wummel shared German experiences in Risk Management in the Water sector, emphasized the importance of ensuring safety technique standards for water supply utilities and activities. Experiences from Australia in Risk management in the water sector has been presented by Mr. Nguyen Trong Duong – expert on WSP.

After the presentation, participants have discussed about the Action Plan on WPS in the period 2014-2016, focusing on in – depth activities like training, developing and disseminating materials, awareness raising, workshops, cooperation; heading to the issuance of certificates for successful implementers.

## The training course “Improving the communication skill with customers” for Southern water supply and sewerage companies

Meeting the demand for improving the quality of human resources at VWSA's members, DEVIWAS project has supported Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association - VWSA organized successfully the training course “Improving the communication skill with customers” for relevant staff of water supply and drainage companies in the South of Vietnam on 23-24/7/2014.



This course was organized at Binh Duong Water Supply, Sewerage and Environment Co., Ltd attracted nearly 90 trainees as Managers, Deputy Managers of Business Division, Customer Division of water supply and sewerage companies in the South. Mr. Tran Quang Hung – Vice Chairman of VWSA, Mr. Nguyen Dac Hoan – Manager of DEVIWAS project also attended this course.

Dr. Pham Van Pho – former Director of Training Center – Ministry of Planning and Development was invited to be trainer. He highlighted the importance of customer, introduced the code of conduct and basic principles in communicating with customers.

At the end of this course, most of trainees highly appreciated the topic and useful knowledge. This topic is really interesting and suitable with the actual demand. It showed that there was a real demand from the companies on such training topics. Some of them also would like to invite the trainer of the course to train for their own staff or were eager to pay fees for training courses like this. It is proven that communication skills and dealing with customers at water utilities is absolutely necessary and that DEVIWAS project has met this necessity.

## Strengthening cooperation between Germany and Vietnam in water sector

On 19/8/2014, at Ministry of Construction, Deputy Minister Cao Lai Quang welcomed German specialists to visit Vietnam within the framework of the project DEVIWAS implemented by German Water Partnership (GWP) and the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association (VWSA). Representatives of the Department of International Cooperation, Department of Urban Infrastructure and VWSA also joined this event.



On behalf of the German delegation, Dr. Jürgen Wummel – CEO of the Sachsen Water Company owned by Geselwasser Coporation - Germany and Europe's largest industry group thanked Mr. Vice Minister for sparing his time for the delegation, and reporting to him on the cooperation of the two associations in the field of water and environment. This activity will strengthen friendly relationship between the two countries, especially in the context that Vietnam and Germany are preparing to celebrate 40 years of diplomatic relations.

During the visit to Vietnam, the German delegation were invited to share experience and knowledge in series of events including the seminars about safe water supply, risk management in water utilities, procedure of EU fundraising in Hanoi, hosted by the DEVIWAS project. Dr. Wummel will have a presentation to share German experience at the political dialogue on **"Implementation of the Water Safety Plan period 2014 - 2016"**, held in Ba Ria - Vung Tau city.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr. Quang appreciated the effective cooperation with Germany in the field of water supply in Vietnam. He emphasize: **"Vietnamese water and environment sector have received great support from other countries, international organizations, especially the collaborative support from German government"**. VWSA has made some considerable progress thanks to the efforts of all levels of the industry, especially the role of advising



the MoC,. The quality of water and water supply in Vietnam has been greatly improved. However, there are several issues to be resolved, especially the drainage situation in the two major cities of Vietnam, Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. On the basis of the strategic planning - in the future drainage system in Vietnam requires a huge capital investment, particularly for drainage. To meet that requirement, the Government of Vietnam has recently issued Decree No. 80/2014/ ND - CP. With this Decree, the people will have to pay sewage charges from 1st January 2015.

According to Mr. Vice Minister Cao Lai Quang, a huge problem affecting water sector in Vietnam is salinization of water resources as well as environmental issue. Therefore, Vietnam has seen Germany as a trustful partners to cooperate for solving both areas as mentioned above.

## How can we access EU funds?

***That was the main topic of the seminar on 19/8/2014 in Hanoi, hosted by German Water Partnership - GWP and the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association - VWSA. This seminar is in the framework of the DEVIWAS project, funded by BMZ through Sequa organization.***

***Mr. Tran Quang Hung - Vice Chairman cum General Secretary of VWSA, Mr. Tran Bien Chung - Department of Technical Infrastructure/ MoC and representatives of Vietnam association of foreign invested enterprises, Vietnam - Laos association of enterprises, consultation companies as VWSA's members participated in the seminar.***

As expressed in the name of the workshop, Dr. Dieter Poschardt shared his valuable experience about proposal preparation, application procedure of EU. Mr. Poschardt said: *“To receive funding from the EU, it is very important to identify specific problems to be addressed by the action...”*. Some specific terms such as “logframe”, “problem tree”, “problem analysis”... were introduced and practiced.



All participants also discussed about one of the burning issues in Vietnam at current time, which is the pollution of our water resources getting worse. The issue is caused by activities of ineffective garbage collection, un-synchronized processing system and inappropriate technology. Solving all of these issues must be comprehensive measures including of legal framework, technical competence and behaviour changing of community.

Although the seminar took place in a short time, but participants comprehended important knowledge about EU donor, how to access EU funding as well as how to prepare a qualified proposal.

## Some highlights of the survey report *“Situation of human resources, training needs and assessment of VWSA’s members”*

***Information from the survey on “Situation of human resources, training needs and assessment of VWSA’s members” showed the urgent need of better quantity and quality of professional labor in the existing water supply and drainage utilities.***

The survey is carried out by the Vietnam Water Supply and Sewerage Association (VWSA) with support of the German Water Partnership (GWP). The survey is executed for the entire members of VWSA and some selected training institutions, management units, agents, branches and representative offices during the time period from August 2013 to January 2014.

### ***82% of sewerage sector workers are “self-trained”***

Regarding the quality of labor, the survey shows that over 90% of the officials at department-chief level and higher in companies are tertiary graduates and postgraduate degree holders. However, the proportion of managerial cadres and professional staff who have been trained on relevant technical field of water supply and sewerage sector is not high: 27.4% for directors and deputies, 21% for chief/deputy chief of departments and 18% for professional staff. Regarding the technical workers, though the ratio of labors trained on related technical field of water supply and drainage or pipelining reaches 44%. This ratio is assessed as lower than required. Identification of this issue, VWSA cooperated with the University of Civil Engineering to organize 4 on-the job training classes for 390 people from water companies in the South of Vietnam at the end of 2013, early 2014. VWSA has plan to expand this kind of training to the similar target group in the central and northern areas by the end of 2014.

The survey results also rang alarm about the training quality of universities and vocational schools that does not meet the actual requirements. It is assessed by enterprises that training quality of the national education institutions is not high. Students and graduates who are recruited by the enterprises cannot immediately assure their performance, and are to pass refresher trainings from 3 - 6 months or even 1-2 years.

In fact, the survey results spelled out that, in 2012 and the first six months of 2013, the units of water supply and sewerage sector had to organize trainings for 38% of their labors. In particular, the enterprises of drainage sector had a very high rate of "self-training", up to 82 %.

### "High demand" of vocational college, high school graduate labors

The survey results also indicated that, in the coming years, the needs for additional manpower of water supply and sewerage enterprises for professions directly related to operation of such enterprises as graduates of drainage and environment, college graduates of water supply, water supply and drainage high school graduates, pipelining workers, and water supply and sewerage workers will be high uptakes.

Specifically, enterprises in the fields of consultancy, material supply mainly need additional staff of college level (49.5%) while the water supply and drainage enterprise has a high demand for personnel at high school level, up to 60.4%.

Notably, the results of survey on the needs for additional water supply, drainage and environment professional cadres and workers 2014 - 2020 also reveal that manpower of vocational college, high school and primary training systems are much higher than the manpower of universities and college graduated. The needed university graduates is 795 persons, while the need of vocational college graduate is 2,917; of vocational high school graduates is as high as 5,159.



### "High satisfaction - high expectation of VWSA's members"

This survey also collected members' comments on performance of VWSA. The result showed that, most of the VWSA's members have very high trust on the operation of the Association. Up to 86% of members assessed VWSA has properly and very well fulfilled its role as a focal point of information and experience sharing among Association's members. The role of creating opportunities for cooperation between scientific researching group and water business companies of VWSA were also recognized by 75% of members. 65% of members are also agreeing that the Association has executed well and very well its role of promoting international relationships, initiating conditions for members integrating into the world.





For the period 2014 – 2020, VWSA will continue undertake efficiently its role of linking between the training institutions and enterprises, specifically focusing on training and capacity building. Furthermore, the Association will strengthen its cooperation with international organizations such as GWP, GIZ, WB, ADB and foreign enterprises to support capacity building and technology transfer for the Association's members. In 2014 and 2015, the VWSA and GWP are intending to organize a program on sharing experience of institutional development and human resource development, supporting scientific researches for the areas of water drainage and waste water treatment. A detailed development strategy of VWSA until 2025, vision 2030 has been finalized to visualize all vision, missions and action plans of VWSA.

## Short introductory about GWP

*In April 2008, private and public firms, research institutes, water sector associations and institutions teamed up with the support of federal ministries to found the German Water Partnership - GWP. Currently, GWP unites roughly 350 members from industry, research and politics. This network acts as a central coordination office for foreign clients and decision makers seeking German expertise in the water sector. We look forward to transferring this efficiency and high standard in water treatment and management to any region in the world that needs help solving the present and future water problems, including those caused or aggravated by climate change, population growth and desertification. GWP dedicates to deliver integrated, individual adapted and sustainable solutions to international clients and partners.*

For more information, please contact us at:

**(Mr.) Nguyen Dac Hoan – Project Manager**

Mobile: 0988 976 309

E-mail: [dachuan@germanwaterpartnership.de](mailto:dachuan@germanwaterpartnership.de)

Address: 65 Van Ho 3, Hai Ba Trung District, Ha Noi

[www.germanwaterpartnership.de](http://www.germanwaterpartnership.de)

