The program “Field Building Leadership Initiative (FBLI): Advancing Ecohealth in South East Asia”:
THE FIRST ANNUAL REGIONAL CORE GROUP MEETING

On January 03, 2014, the Vietnam Public Health Association (VPHA) organized the program “Happy Tet for children”. The VPHA gave gifts for Tet to over 200 toddlers, school supplies and utensils to Lam Trach Kindergarten (Bo Trach district, Quang Binh province).

In the afternoon of same day, the Hue TC Enforcement team organized the quarterly meeting to make the best preparation for the campaign from January 20 to 25, 2014. In Nha Trang, from January 13 to 27, the Nha Trang Enforcement team will also implement the TC campaign. The Enforcement team will work with facilities of the city to urge, remind, guide and make a report if there are any violations of the TC Law at the facility.

Strengthening implementation of TC activities at the end of the year not only contributes to enhancing law enforcement, but also helps citizens of both 2 cities to have healthier and cleaner atmosphere during the Lunar New Year.

HUE AND NHA TRANG TO CONDUCT “SMOKE-FREE IMPLEMENTATION AND ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN”

On January 8, 2014, the Hue Tobacco Control (TC) Task Force held the quarterly meeting with participation of all members of TC Task force and VPHA’s representatives. This meeting focused on implementation of the quarterly “Smoke-free implementation and enforcement campaign” in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the TC Law and Decree No. 176/2013/ND-CP.

In the afternoon of same day, the Hue TC Enforcement team organized the quarterly meeting to make the best preparation for the campaign from January 20 to 25, 2014. In Nha Trang, from January 13 to 27, the Nha Trang Enforcement team will also implement the TC campaign. The Enforcement team will work with facilities of the city to urge, remind, guide and make a report if there are any violations of the TC Law at the facility.

Strengthening implementation of TC activities at the end of the year not only contributes to enhancing law enforcement, but also helps citizens of both 2 cities to have healthier and cleaner atmosphere during the Lunar New Year.

The first Annual Regional Core Group (RCG) meeting of the FBLI program in South East Asia has been hosted by the Universitas Indonesia from December 17 - 20, 2013 in Jakarta, Indonesia. The RCG consists of the founding members of the FBLI program which is funded by the International Development Research Center (IDRC), Canada and aims at promoting Ecohealth as new field in South East Asia.

The VPHA is one of the eight partner institutions i.e., Mahidol University, Universitas Indonesia, Kunming Medical University, Hanoi School of Public Health (HSPH), Kunming Institute of Botany, Veterinarians without Borders, and VPHA. The meeting marked the milestone of signing the Consortium Agreement (CA) among eight partner institutions which affirms their commitments in partnership and collaboration. Besides, the progress of two-year implementation of each country team (Viet Nam, Thailand, Indonesia, and China) as well as other components of the program was reported.

The side event marked the visit to the study site of the research “Ecohealth and Dairy products: Connecting issues and finding interventions for small-scale farmers in the context of South East Asia” in Pangalengan, West Java, Indonesia. The meeting activity was coordinated by the Coordinating Unit of the program housed by the Center for Public Health and Ecosystem Research (CENPHER), HSPH and VPHA.
THE YEAR 2013 IN REVIEW: A PROSPEROUS YEAR

The year 2013 marked a year of VPHA’s profound achievements.

The most remarkable event in 2013 was the success of the 4th Asia Pacific Conference on Public Health with the theme “Climate change and population health” organized by the VPHA and the World Federation of Public Health Associations in Nha Trang City in November, 2013. The conference attracted nearly 300 domestic and international delegates from more than 30 countries. The conference success has greatly contributed to raising the VPHA’s prestige at national and international level, opening up new opportunities for cooperation in future.

The VPHA’s programs also continue to be maintained and have achieved remarkable results. The Elderly health promotion program in Tien Hai, Thai Binh maintains operational activities in Phuong Cong, Tien Hai town, while it continues expanding to 4 other communes including Tay Tien, Tay Giang, Dong Co, and Nam Ha. Currently, there is a total of more than 300 senior public health volunteers (SPHVs). This program was honored to be selected as one of five best innovations to help the elderly improve health and to contribute actively to the social development in the framework of the International Conference on Elderly Initiative organized by the International Federation on Aging and TURYAK Seniors Association Council in Istanbul, Turkey.

The smoke-free city program deployed in two cities of Nha Trang and Hue have organized training courses for leaders, officials and the local media on skills to develop, monitor smoke-free environment, updating regulations on the Law of Tobacco Control. Hundreds of smoke-free signs were provided to public transport means in those two cities. Many diverse activities in response to The World No Tobacco Day and National No Tobacco Week in Hue and Nha Trang have made a strong impression for the community.

EcoHealth and OneHealth are regarded as the interdisciplinary approach of the future to protect human, animal health and the environment. The VPHA is one of the pioneers in developing and applying this new approach in Viet Nam. The VPHA is serving as regional coordinating unit of the “Field Building Leadership Initiative (FBLI): Advancing EcoHealth in South East Asia” program as well as taking part in and organizing the fora on EcoHealth and OneHealth at national and regional level.

The “Tool to assess environmental and health risks of integrated human and animal waste management in Viet Nam” program (PAMS) deployed in Kim Bang, Ha Nam has succeeded in building pilot models of integrated management of the human and animal waste, improving environmental sanitation in the households and local communities, making appropriate recommendations to expand the model.

In 2013, VPHA in collaboration with Queensland University of Technology and dioxin laboratory to conduct the assessment of Knowledge - Attitude - Practice on Dioxin exposure prevention and health risk assessment of environmental exposure to dioxin through food consumed by people living in hotspots around Bien Hoa Airport and Da Nang Airport. The Research’s objective was to evaluate the sustainability of the public health intervention program and to make the database for expanding the program to other hotspots in the future. In addition, the VPHA has also conducted a baseline assessment of the program “Support to comprehensive and integrated services for people with disabilities” in provinces of Dong Nai, Binh Dinh to make recommendations for improving supportive services for people with disabilities.

Another outstanding event in the field of publishing is the publication of the first issue and the launch of Vietnam Journal of Public Health (VJPH) in November 2013. The VJPH is published in English with two issues per year and available both online and in hard-copy version. Previously, the VPHA had organized a training course on “Writing the international scientific journal” lectured by Prof. Collin. W. Binns and Prof. Andy. H. Lee from Curtin University, Australia to attract the authors submitting high-quality papers. The Vietnam Journal of Public Health in Vietnamese edition also continues to attract the attention of readers. The State Council for Professor Title, and The Council for Professor Title of Medicine has upgraded to 1 point for scientific works for the scientific papers published in the journal.

Moreover, the VPHA has been active in the social programs such as giving gifts for Tet to 200 pupils of Nguyen Van Cu Primary School - Binh Minh commune, Thang Binh district, Gia Nghia Nam province. The VPHA in collaboration with HSPH and Project Vietnam provided counseling, general health examination for children and other volunteer activities in Phuong Ky commune - a poor commune in Tu Ky district, Hai Duong province.

The Provincial Public Health Association Network also actively participated in activities of public health at local level.

The results achieved in 2013 are the foundation and motivation for further development in 2014.