Social Work Education Development in Vietnam: A case of SWEEP Program

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Outline

- Overview about Vietnam and SW Education in Vietnam
- SWEEP and its objectives
- SWEEP Achievements
- Upcoming activities
Vietnam and Social Work Education

- About ¼ of the population need SW services
- SW services have been provided in Vietnam in one form or another since before the French colonial period (before 1862)
- The effort to develop SW curricula in higher education started in 1990s
- MOET approved core curriculum for SW undergraduate program in 2004
- The SW profession was officially recognized by the government in 2010
- The Government issued Decree 32 to develop the SW profession in 2010
Despite rapid expansion of SW education programs, there are limitations in the universities’ ability to provide SW education:

- Lack of social workers with advanced degree to teach in higher education
- Most SW faculty come from other disciplines
- Under-developed curriculum addressing core SW content and practice
- Lack of Vietnamese language texts and training materials
- Very few field training opportunities with experienced supervisors
SWEEP = an international consortium

- USAID
- SJSU
- Vietnam Universities
- Government Agencies
- Private Sector Partner: Cisco Systems, Inc.
- Community Stakeholders

GOAL: strengthen capacity of Vietnam’s higher education social work programs to deliver quality education and prepare trained, job ready social workers
Background for SWEEP Establishment

- Originated from collaborations since 2008
  - Collaborate with VNU in providing SW training for faculties with the funding of UNICEF
  - Sign MOUs with other universities
- Based on the demand to train human resources in social work field of Vietnam
Objectives of SWEEP

1. Develop undergraduate social work management and administration locally and regionally

2. Improve undergraduate social work faculty professional capabilities

3. Implement competency-based undergraduate social work curriculum

4. Create network linking five partner universities with each other and with SJSU
Administrators’ need for training

- Management & human resource skills
- Introduction to social work principles and practice
- Understanding of how to expand and improve research infrastructure
Objective 1 – Accomplishments

- Two leadership Academies
- Leadership conference in Hanoi
- Establishment of Leadership Group with monthly online meeting
- Helping universities develop strategic plans in developing SW education program for their own universities
Coach the learning needs of junior and senior faculty

- Junior faculty need mentoring towards professional goals
- Senior faculty need to understand social work principles, research and professional identity

- Need to understand how to link theory with practice

- Improve teaching and ability to conduct research

- Develop knowledge and skills of agency-based field instructors
Objective 2 – Accomplishments

- Three Fellows Academies
- Implementation of collaborative research projects
- Online trainings about research methods
Shared Issues—Objective 3
Curriculum Development

- Upgrade curriculum
  - Develop shared standards for student competencies
  - Specific courses in relevant social problems as required in region
  - Need for more flexibility in curriculum development

- Improve field practicum
  - Agency cooperation
  - Effective field supervision
  - Effective learning methods for students in field settings
Objective 3 – Accomplishments

✓ Trainings about competencies and how to develop competency-based syllabi

✓ Development of competency-based syllabi

✓ Development of national competencies for SW programs
Shared Issues—Objective 4
Networking and Collaboration

- Gaps in technology to enable networking
- Desire to increase collaboration across universities
Objective 4 – Accomplishments

✓ Regular webex meetings with universities’ leaders and faculties
✓ Two annual summits
✓ Public website
✓ Shared google site to share training material and resource https://sites.google.com/a/sjsu.edu/sweep
✓ Support universities to establish their own webex accounts
Other Accomplishments

- Strengthening relationships between US and Vietnam universities/governments/NGOs which will be sustained beyond SWEEP project
- Strengthening ties among SWEEP universities
- Building cultural relationships between Vietnamese and American scholars
Upcoming Activities

• Conference about national competencies
• Training for non-SWEEP universities
• Third Annual Summit
• Third Leadership Academy
• Focus effort on maintaining sustainability after the project ends
Questions & Discussion