

TWG sub-group meeting

Brief report

Sub-group: GIPA

Time: 14:00 – 16:00, 4 March 2008
Venue: UNAIDS Office, No. 24, Lane 11, Trinh Hoai Duc Street, Hanoi
Chairperson: Duong Truong Thuy
Participants: UNAIDS, Viet Nam Women's Union, HPI, VSO, Bright Future Network, GIPA Office in Hanoi, White Dove Group, Milk Flower Group, Dawn Group in Dong Anh, Green Pine Group

Discussion points

1. Workplan of GIPA sub-group in the upcoming time:

- *Selection of new co-chair:* All the participants agreed to nominate a representative of Bright Future Network to be the Co-chair in GIPA sub-group. The two representatives of BFN will share information with the network and BFN will get back to the Chair of GIPA sub-group on the name of the nominee.
- *Themes for future GIPA sub-group meetings:* The participants also agreed that there should be a theme for each GIPA sub-group meeting in the coming time so as to elicit the discussion among the participants. In these meetings, it might be possible to invite specialists to facilitate the discussion or to help organize some field trips to share the information and experiences. Some themes identified by the participants include: employment and recruitment/vocational training for PLHIV, register for self-help groups of PLHIV.
- *National network of PLHIV in Vietnam:* The meeting highlighted the importance of setting up a National Network for PLHIV in Viet Nam. A question raised is why a network and how this network will related to the HIV/AIDS Association. Some participants thought that there is a need of having a meeting between self-help groups of PLHIV to agree on pros and cons for having an independent network, after that a meeting of self-help groups of PLHIV with AIDS Association can be called for groups to share their wishes and expectations as well as the necessity of such a network. HPI is supporting to establish such network and GIPA sub-group can take a role in this process. UNAIDS representative shared that UNAIDS also can support in the legalization of groups of PLHIV.
- *Recruitment of PLHIV to work as intern at UNAIDS:* UNAIDS representative informed their intention of receiving some PLHIV to work as interns at UNAIDS so that PLHIV have the opportunity to work in a professional working environment. It is hoped that more organizations will also develop an intern scheme for PLHIV to work in their respective organizations. A working group under the GIPA sub-group will be established to discuss related issues, such as type of work that PLHIV can perform and recruitment process... organizations.

2. Updates the activities of the groups:

1. *Milk Flower Group:* With the support from CARE International, the group carried out a training session on the Law on HIV/AIDS for Protestant youth. The group continued to provide porridge at Dong Da Hospital.
2. *Dawn Group in Dong Anh District:* The group has been formalized and has theme-based

monthly meetings with the support from GIPA Office and Hanoi AIDS Center. Members of the group tried to help other PLHIV to get access to counseling and care services, as well as actively participated in distributing HIV propaganda posters in their area.

3. *Green Pine Group*: is a self-help group of MSM in Hanoi, sponsored by Hanoi AIDS Center, the group was established on 1 October 2007. Members of the group are MSM and they are now self-funded. They cooperated with some other PLHIV groups to organize art performances and distribute lubricant and condoms to other MSM in communities.
4. *Bright Future Network*: The network collaborated with Green Pine Group to carry out propaganda activities in the community. Furthermore, they worked with ISDS to publish a newsletter for and by PLHIV. Besides, they also run the “cheap ARV” Club and the Fund supporting children living with HIV, who are in difficult circumstances. These activities have helped to lessen the daily life burden of PLHIV and their families.
5. *White Dove Group*: The group continued to provide counseling and care for PLHIV in communities. With the support from CARE International, the club holds training sessions on the Law on HIV/AIDS in 21 Wards and 2 schools in Thanh Xuan District. Currently, the group has to face with some difficulties, including: many members live outside Hanoi, which takes a lot of time and efforts to travel to Hanoi for the group’s meeting; the group yet to have the Internet connection, resulting in the limit in information updating; the activity of providing nutritious soup had to stop since January 2008 due to the lack of sponsoring activities from individuals and organizations.
6. *GIPA Hanoi*: Volunteers of GIPA Hanoi continued to provide counseling and care, and referring PLHIV to hospitals. GIPA held some training courses on using Internet and email for key members of the groups. They also supported the establishment of the Dawn Group in Dong Anh and sponsored their monthly expenditures. On the occasion of Tet, GIPA Hanoi organized a meeting to honor and award the volunteers who had considerable contributions to GIPA in 2007.

Other businesses:

1. **Representative from Viet Nam Women Union** announced on the annual workshop of GIPA Project in Hai Phong from 28 – 29/2/2008. The workshop is a chance to review the success and shortcomings of GIPA Project in the last two years. At the same time, the participants also developed the framework for the project in the coming time.
2. **HPI representative** made an announcement on small grants for the HIV Prevention in the groups. HPI is also recruiting some PLHIV to work as their collaborators.

Time and venue of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 9/5/2008. Venue to be informed later.