



ACVN is a non-governmental organization with members and cities and towns nationwide. It was established in 2000 with 8 initial members. The membership is now up to 99 cities/towns. Three of ACVN's members are piloting the *MPED LED strategic Planning projects*. These cities will contribute to the pool of LED experiences for sharing with others in Vietnam.

Functions and Missions

- Organizing sharing, and cooperation activities for members
- Conducting research to inform and advocate on issues and improved policies

- Organizing training courses to enhance members' capacity in local governance
- Networking members with international networks of municipalities, LGAs, and LGs

Organizational Structure

The organization includes:

- **An Executive Committee** (23 members, on a five-year term with 1 President and 4 Vice Presidents),
- **A Monitoring Board** (4 members on a five-year term),
- **A Secretariat** (4 members on a five-year term) and
- **An operation office** (7 staff).

COUNTRY CONTEXT FOR LED IN VIETNAM

In Vietnam, a local government is a legalized administrative unit, which is recognized by the constitution and law. Local governments are called the People Committees at province, district and commune levels. The heads are Chairmen or Chairwomen. They are elected by People Councils by secret ballots. People Committees include vertical departments at provinces and districts. Their role is to administrate one territorial area in the nation. It provides public services (tasks of expenditure) to its local citizens. It is entitled to collect taxes (revenues).

Revenues differ among different governments. Most local governments develop industries and services while some of them develop food processing. The main sources of revenues are:

- Taxation
- Profits from industries and other local economic activities
- Central budget
- Funding from international donors.

LED is a very important task of local governments. Regarding economic development, the local governments of districts are entitled to have the following tasks:

- Developing the local socio economic development plan for approval by the district People Councils and province People Committees, implementing and monitoring the implementation process;
- Developing the plans for budget revenues in their areas with planned expenditures, revenues;
- Approving the commune socio economic development plan



KEY CHALLENGES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN DOING LED

■ CHALLENGE 1: Policy and organizational structures

In terms of policies and institution, the laws and regulations are incomplete. The process of improvement has different and unclear changes. Organizationally, the structures of many authorities are overlapped, inconsistent with unclear task assignments, and job descriptions.

■ CHALLENGE 2: Good governance and resources for LED

Capacity of local officials/leaders/managers is limited. The heads of local governments are lacking in knowledge, skills

and experience in good governance and LED. Sources of finance for local development are limited. The resources for LED are inadequate. Awareness of LED and other issues of local governance is also low.

■ CHALLENGE 3: Global economic crisis and environment

The global economic crisis has impacted Vietnam's economy. This has led to the withdrawal of investors and incomplete development. Serious environmental pollution has not been solved.

Climate change influences local governments negatively with flooding, typhoons, landslides or drought, among others.



SUCCESS STORY: NINH BINH CITY'S "COMMUNITY IN BLOOMS" PROJECT (2009-2010)

The project was conducted under the MPP (Municipal Partnership Program) between the City of Fredericton, New Brunswick and Ninh Binh City. The focus of the project was to:

- Involve citizens in the city beautification, city park plan development in alignment with the city tourism strategy
- Improve the people's awareness of the role of the community in environmental protection and civic pride
- Introduce advanced technologies of horticulture, city forestry, bonsai and the use of essential equipment for their work to the leaders and staff of the city.

Ninh Binh City has become a sought-out destination for both domestic and international tourists who are amazed by the natural beauty and welcoming citizens. The Ninh Binh City working closely with the Ninh Binh Province and the citizens of Ninh Binh are trying to preserve and introduce its unique image to the world.

