

EASTERN REGIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

CONFERENCE BULLETIN

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2014 EROPA Conference formally opens



His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung, Prime Minister of Vietnam, delivers his keynote address during the Opening Ceremony of the 2014 EROPA Conference, held at the National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Distinguished officials and guests from the member states of EROPA witnessed the formal opening of the 2014 EROPA Conference on “Public Administration and Governance in the Context of Regional and Global Integration.” The Opening Ceremony was held in the afternoon of 20 October 2014 at the National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam.

After warmly welcoming the guests and participants to this year’s EROPA Conference and expressing his gratitude to all who have made efforts in the successful preparation of the event, H.E. Minister Nguyen Thai Binh of the Ministry of Home Affairs quickly reviewed why EROPA exists. He outlined the objectives of the organization which include the promotion of Public Administration best practices, awareness-raising on the importance and value of effective administration, conducting researches in the field, and building the capacity of government personnel in the region.

Taking into account the increasing interdependence between and among countries, he observed that many are also making efforts to integrate globally. And because such integration appears to be the mantra of the decade, at least in the region, he trusts that members of EROPA are determined to improve their respective governments and public management approaches. In the light of this issue, he affirmed the rational choice for this year’s conference theme, “Public Administration and Governance in the Context of Regional and Global Integration.”

Dr. Tran Anh Tuan, Head of the 2014 EROPA Conference Organizing Committee, warmly welcomed the distinguished guests and participants to the conference. He introduced EROPA as a regional organization on public administration that Vietnam had always been active in. He hoped that the different countries would be able to share and learn new ideas in the field from the said conference.

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Minister Nguyen Thai Binh of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Vietnam.

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Meanwhile, Minister Nguyen Thai Binh of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Government of Vietnam for giving to MOHA, through the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), the opportunity to organize the event. He also acknowledged the roles that each member of EROPA have played in the success of the conference, as well as the contributions of all partners and volunteers who are one in wishing for a successful avenue of sharing and learning. He ended his welcoming speech by wishing for the good health of Vietnam Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung, the conference's keynote speaker, as well as the other distinguished guests and participants.

The Prime Minister of Vietnam, His Excellency Nguyen Tan Dung, graced the important occasion. In his keynote address, the Prime Minister acknowledged the effort of the Ministry of Home Affairs and other institutions in Vietnam in preparing for the conference. The Prime Minister explained that Vietnam has always been proactive in regional organizations, including EROPA. He added that the conference would be a great opportunity for the participants to share important insights, experiences and practices in public administration reform towards socio-economic development. He presented



Dr. Orlando S. Mercado, EROPA Secretary General.

four possible areas for discussion: 1) civil service reform; 2) policy formulation and strengthening of the constitution; 3) administrative procedures and 4) finance reform.

The Prime Minister strongly believed that to cope with the challenges of regional and global integration, state governments should be strengthened internally. As such, he pressed for the importance of public management in policy implementation and delivery of public services. According to the Prime Minister, this is where Vietnam is striving to implement reforms. The Prime Minister believed that EROPA will serve as a platform for public administration practitioners in Vietnam to learn from the successes and challenges in public administration and governance in other countries.

Dr. Orlando S. Mercado, Secretary-General of EROPA, welcomed the participants to the 2014 EROPA Conference. In his speech, Dr. Mercado emphasized the need for reform initiatives that balance economic growth with more important aspects such as the needs of the marginalized sector, human security and environmental sustainability. He challenged the younger generation of public administration scholars to be innovative in policymaking and administrative reform. He asserted that these innovations should be sustainable and “disruptive,” or lead to more radical changes in the public sector.

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Dr. Tran Anh Tuan, leader in-charge of NAPA and Vice Minister of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Vietnam.

60th EROPA Executive Council convenes in Hanoi, Vietnam

Representatives of EROPA state, group and individual members discussed a number of important issues concerning the organization during its 60th EROPA Executive Council Meeting, held on 19 October 2014 at the National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam. More than 20 dignitaries and staff of representative institutions were present in the said meeting. Dr. Akira Nakamura, Professor Emeritus at Meiji University, presided at the said meeting.

Dr. Tran Anh Tuan, Head of the 2014 EROPA Conference Organizing Committee and leader in-charge of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), Vietnam, briefly explained the progress of their preparations for the conference and encouraged feedback from the Executive Council on the said preparations.

In his report, EROPA Secretary General Orlando S. Mercado highlighted the following, among other activities of the organization: the formal launch of the EROPA E-Government Research Center in Beijing, China; online EROPA Members' Corner page; and the e-mail survey for EROPA members as feedback mechanism to help improve the services of the organization to its members.

Heads of the various EROPA Centers, namely, the Development Management Center, E-Government Research Center and Local Government Center, presented their respective reports to the Executive Council. In particular, they highlighted activities such as the conduct of training programs, publications, research and collaborative activities, among others. On behalf of the Editor-in-Chief of the *Asian Review of Public Administration* (ARPA), Dr. Pan Suk Kim, Ms. Eula Mangaoang delivered a brief summary of the progress of ARPA and the efforts of the Editorial Board to improve the quality of the publication. On

behalf of the EROPA Auditor, Mr. Teguh Kurniawan, Dr. Akira Nakamura summarized the financial position of EROPA and noted the prudent use of resources. Membership applications were also approved by the Executive Council in the said meeting.

Guidelines for the implementation of the Raul P. de Guzman Award were presented to the Executive Council for their review. Professor Roger Wettenhall, one of the luminaries of the organization and former Associate Editor of ARPA, was recognized by the Executive Council as the first recipient of the said award.

Last but not the least is a brief presentation of the major theme and sub-themes for the 2015 EROPA Conference by Professor Hu Wei of Shanghai Jiaotong University.

The following representatives of EROPA member states in the said meeting were: Dr. Tran Anh Tuan, leader in-charge of the National



Members of the EROPA Executive Council discuss the current state of EROPA and issues concerning the organization during its 60th Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Academy of Public Administration, Vietnam; Mr. Shuangping Luo, Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Personnel Science (CAPS), People's Republic of China; Mr. Kazuo Miwa, President of the Local Autonomy College, Japan; Ambassador Dal Young Maeng, Director-General of the Central Officials Training Institute, Korea; Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhyaya, Secretary of the Ministry of General Administration, Nepal; and Ms. Noemi Rabe-Torres, Director at the Civil Service Commission, Philippines. Also present in the meeting were representatives of group members: Ms. Maria Anthonette V. Allones, Executive Director of the Career Executive Service Board, Philippines; and Mr. Masahide Adachi, Director of the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations. Dr. April Dream Rico, Professor at the West Visayas State University, represented the individual members. [EB]

PA scholars, practitioners reflect on the conference theme

Experts from the academe as well as the frontliners of public administration (PA) shared their insights on this year's conference theme, "Public Administration in the Context of Regional and Global Integration."

Dr. Tran Anh Tuan, Head of the 2014 EROPA Conference Organizing Committee, facilitated the discussions in the said session. He emphasized the importance of the theme, particularly in improving governance in states affected by integration, such as those in the EROPA (Asia-Pacific) region.

The speakers for the said session include: Prof. Koichiro Agata, Professor at Waseda University; Dr. Maria Fe V. Mendoza, Professor and Dean at the National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines and Deputy Secretary General of EROPA; Dr. Nguyen Ngoc Hien, Former Vice Minister of Home Affairs, Vietnam; and Mr. Bach Ngoc Chien, Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Nan Dinh Province.

Transparency and Government accountabilities: Japan's numbering system and its regional implication



Professor Koichiro Agata of Waseda University, Japan, presented the current level of transparency and accountability in the numbering/

identification system employed by the Japanese government for its citizens.

Professor Agata mentioned Western approaches to ensuring public trust and accountability, particularly on e-governance. He stressed that at the third stage of maturity as laid out in the Public Sector Process Rebuilding Model, it is important for institutions to enhance transparency and accountability. He went on to explain the numbering system in Japan, which involves interworking or synchronization of information of Japanese citizens for the delivery of

relevant services in tax welfare, social security and disaster management. He pointed out several models of the numbering system that the Japanese government currently employs and those that will be used in the future.

Basing on the Japanese experience, Professor Agata cited some regional implications of the numbering system to global governance: 1) degree of accountability of governments; 2) levelling off and attainment of expectations; and 3) ways by which states and researchers in governance can cooperate with one another.

Private Sector Engagement in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation in the PH (and Other Countries): Implications in Regional Governance



In her presentation, Dr. Maria Fe V. Mendoza highlighted the role of the private sector as a complement to the public sector's efforts in climate

change mitigation and adaptation in the ASEAN region. Dr. Mendoza explained that climate change is a problem of sustainable development and warrants holistic, multilevel, multisectoral and multidisciplinary response. She pointed out that ASEAN is especially vulnerable to climate change impacts, owing to its geographical features as well as persistence of poverty in the region.

Dr. Mendoza presented a number of policies and initiatives by the different states in ASEAN to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. These include the Bali Accord of 2007, the ASEAN Declaration of 2009 during the UN Copenhagen Conference on Climate Change, the ASEAN 2020 Vision, and implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.

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PA scholars, practitioners reflect on...

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She also pointed out the response of the Philippines to the problem, particularly the Climate Change Act of 2009, which also created that Climate Change Commission of the Philippines as the sole policymaking body of the government to address this problem. The commission formulated the National Climate Change Action Plan, which focuses on a number of priority areas such as food security, water sufficiency, ecological and environmental sustainability, and human security, among others.

Dr. Mendoza asserted that the private sector can collaborate with the public sector in these key areas, in that they possess resources and skills that complement that of the public sector. As such, the public sector must be able to effectively involve its “former adversary” by enhancing trust and communication between the two sectors, recognizing the multidimensionality of climate change, as well as putting the values of good governance in practice.

Public Administration and Governance in the Context Globalization and Integration: Challenges and Solutions for Vietnam’s Public Administration

Globalization is about movement of capital and production along with the expansion of international trade and technology.

According to Dr.

Nguyen Ngoc Hien, this led to increased integration and economic interdependence which posed disincentives for countries. Among these include the threat against state sovereignty and democracy as well as economic, political and cultural inequalities due to the concentration of power among selected transnational firms, government elites and inevitable dependence from other countries.

Dr. Nguyen explained that such circumstance justifies the need for global governance. However, he provided that these global institutions are often ascribed to the United Nations (UN), World Bank

or the International Criminal Court (ICC). Most of these institutions tend to have limited enforcement powers to resolve transboundary concerns. This predicament offers a challenge in the practice of public administration specifically, in terms of awareness and action, on effectiveness and efficiency, professionalization of the civil service and self-sufficiency of local governments. He further explained that the advent of globalization has influenced the institutions, machinery, personnel and fiscal concerns of which public administration operates.

Nevertheless, Dr. Nguyen explained that the Vietnamese public administration has introduced innovations to manage the challenges brought about by globalization. These include strengthening Vietnamese government institutions to attract investments and encourage public participation, enhancing the legislative, executive and judiciary branches of government and improving the quality of the civil service. Among these recommendations, Dr. Nguyen emphasized the importance of enhancing the competency of the civil service. He explained that by means of clearly defining the competency criteria of civil servants, improving the work environment, remuneration and providing opportunities for personnel development will foster the development of the civil service.

Dr. Nguyen concluded that safeguarding good governance requires a reformed public administration which essentially calls for a need to introduce innovations to strengthen government institutions, the various branches of government and its partnerships and the civil service.

Performance-Based Management Over Public Officials—Constraints and Guiding Solutions

For Mr. Bach Ngoc Chien, the traditional methodology of assessment in the Vietnamese state management agencies is no longer relevant in today’s human resource management system. As a government practitioner, he sensed that the use of old-fashioned operational assessment was a problem in Vietnam Television International when he became the agency’s Editor-in-Chief seven years ago. In his presentation, he shared how he reformed

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Dr. Mercado capped his speech by announcing the implementation of Raul P. de Guzman Award, in honor of one of the most important pillars of the field of public administration (PA), the late Dr. Raul P. de Guzman. This award strives to recognize the contributions of EROPA members to the organization, in the form of papers or distinguished services rendered in the name of PA and EROPA. In light of his remarkable support for the organization, Professor Roger Wettenhall, Professor Emeritus at the University of Canberra and one of the luminaries of EROPA, was announced as the first awardee of the said award.

Dr. Akira Nakamura, Professor Emeritus at Meiji University, Japan, delivered a welcoming speech on behalf of Mr. Kazuo Miwa, President of the Local Autonomy College, Japan and Chair of the EROPA Executive Council. Dr. Akira Nakamura expressed his appreciation to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the National Academy of Public Administration as hosts and organizers of the EROPA 2014 Conference.

From both his personal and professional lenses, Dr. Nakamura emphasized the relevance and importance of this year's EROPA Conference. This is because the EROPA (Asia Pacific) region has been showing an impressive trend in the area of regional integration. He cited examples like the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN (formed in 1967), Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation or APEC (formed in 1989), the ASEAN+ChiJaKo (China, Japan and Korea) (started in 1997), and ASEAN+6 (ChiJaKo, Australia, New Zealand and India) (started in 2005).

Reflecting on this trend, Dr. Nakamura acknowledged the importance of the EROPA and ASEAN regions as shown by their rapid economic growth (citing Vietnam and Philippines as specific examples). He also noted that many countries in these regions have experienced rising standard of living and amazing economic expansion activities which may be attributed to global and regional integration.

Despite these developments, government and public management remain to be wanting. He stressed the need to move forward and better achieve efficiency, economy and equity in government performance. Towards this end, he called on governments to institutionalize a consolidated practice and observance of transparency, accountability, participation and equity (TAPE). As a final note, Dr. Nakamura encouraged the participants to maximize their participation in the EROPA 2014 Conference through active discussions, meaningful debates, and exploration of ideas that would improve governance and public management in the EROPA and ASEAN regions. He is hopeful that each participant would go back to their respective countries with better ideas and solutions to address governance challenges.



Dr. Akira Nakamura, Professor Emeritus of Meiji University.

Representatives from the state delegations of EROPA also delivered their message of gratitude and hopes for the said conference.

In his message, Ambassador Dal Young Maeng, Director-General of the Central Officials Training Institute, Korea, acknowledged that the theme of the conference is a timely response to increased dynamism, mobility and connectivity among governments in the light of globalization. He hoped that the conference will serve as a platform for sharing new practices, insights and ideas in governance among countries in the EROPA region.

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Ambassador Dal Young Maeng (Korea).

Mr. Naindra Upadhyaya, Secretary of Ministry of General Administration, Nepal, also recognized the interdependence and interconnectivity of countries. The ensuing globalization process has created new needs for the

people of Nepal and other countries. It also bound countries to common problems and concerns in public administration, such as strengthening civil service towards governance, ensuring performance-based human resource management, and civil service reform in line with federalization and state-building. Mr. Upadhyaya suggested that avenues be explored for greater cooperation and knowledge-sharing initiatives among EROPA member states, ways by which post-MDG goals could be achieved, and new research and education research agenda



Mr. Naindra Prasad Upadhyaya (Nepal).

to address emerging concerns in governance.



Mr. Kazuo Miwa (Japan).

On behalf of the Japanese delegation, Mr. Kazuo Miwa, President of Local Autonomy College, Japan delivered a brief greeting to the

participants of the 2014 EROPA Conference. In his speech, Mr. Miwa encouraged sharing of experiences in public administration, and he emphasized the role of EROPA as a breeding ground of ideas in the said field. In reference to the theme of the conference, Mr. Miwa stressed that the countries in the EROPA region should be able to understand regional trends

and their implications to integration. They should also explore external approaches for developing and implementing ideal regional governance structures. Lastly, he presented the activities carried out by the Local Autonomy College, also known as the EROPA Local Government Center, in contributing to the development of public administration.



Ms. Noemi Rabe-Torres (Philippines).

Attorney Noemi Rabe-Torres, representing the Philippine state delegation, pointed out that existing perspectives on public administration—ones

which focus on management, organizational structure and internal resources of institutions—may not be sufficient to prepare states for coping with global issues and concerns. She explained that the Civil Service Commission strives to adopt a more outward perspective to keep up with regional and global integration. She expressed her confidence that the insights learned from the conference will offer the EROPA member states more space for discussions on issues in integration and globalization.

In his speech, Mr. Yibin Zhang, representing Mr. Shuangping Luo, Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Personnel Science, urged countries to collectively address the said concerns. Mr. Zhang emphasized that PR China is also striving to keep up with the complex problems associated with globalization by strengthening linkages with other Asian countries. He hoped that through this year's conference, PR China as well as other states in the EROPA region will be able to gain new insights and experiences in improving public administration and governance. [EB]

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Fourth Asian Leadership Forum highlights

One of the main events on the first day of the 2014 EROPA Conference is the Asian Leadership Forum (ALF). This session has been serving as a platform for high-profile government officials to share their experiences and insights on leadership. This year's ALF showcases leadership approaches in line with globalization and regional integration. Dr. Akira Nakamura, Professor Emeritus at Meiji University, facilitated the discussions during the session.

The following key former and present officials in their respective governments presented in the said session: Mr. Takao Abe, former Mayor of the Kawasaki Prefecture; Ms. Maria David-Evans, former Deputy Minister of the Government of Alberta, Canada; and Dr. Trinh Van Chien, Chairman of the People's Committee of Thanh Hoa Province, Vietnam.

Leadership Learned Through Career Experience



The five (5) milestones of Mr. Takao Abe's life offer valuable insights and learnings on leadership. The five (5) milestones are as follows:

(1) 1943 to 1967: Birth to the University; (2) 1967 to 1992: Career as a Public Official; (3) 1992 to 2001: Career as University Professor; (4) 2001 to 2013: Career as Mayor of Kawasaki and; (5) 2013 to Present: Career as Member of the Government's Specific Personal Information Protection Commission.

According to Mr. Abe, his educational background and experience as a law and politics student at the University of Tokyo provided the theoretical foundation and fostered his interest on local autonomy. However, his work at the Ministry of Home Affairs at the Saitama Prefectural

Government further enhanced his learnings from the university. As part of the Local Affairs Division of the Department of General Affairs, Mr. Abe learned that communication is critical to improve performance in collaborative work, and that a leader should learn how to facilitate and develop unity within his organization.

Mr. Takao Abe also emphasized the value of the budget in exercising leadership. In his experience as Director of the Financial Affairs Division of the Department of General Affairs in Ibaraki Prefectural Government, he explained that the budget sets the direction and extent of objectives which may only be realized. Within this context, the budget creates an opportunity to exercise leadership discretion in terms of selecting the most appropriate policies and objectives to prioritize. However, Mr. Takao Abe emphasized that leadership decision-making likewise requires learned insight and foresight which can be drawn from previous experiences or history.

In his third life milestone, Mr. Takao Abe had the opportunity to teach leadership theory, political and managerial leadership, how leaders should communicate and how to motivate followers at the university. His experience as a faculty enabled him to teach the theoretical and applied aspects of leadership which have been directly drawn from his 25 years of experience as a government official.

Mr. Takao Abe's fourth milestone is his career as a Mayor of Kawasaki for three terms. In his 12 years of service, he shared the importance of leadership in effectively performing his duty as mayor. This include the need for leadership in setting the direction for the locality which would require insight, foresight, conceptual powers and planning aptitude; the need to systematically lead subordinates which calls for persuasiveness, personality and credibility; analytical capacity to be able to see the "big picture" and clarify the problem; patience to train people especially those with limited capacity to contribute to the organization and; capacity to exercise good judgment, decisiveness and consistency. *(Continued on the next page)*

Fourth ALF highlights...

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In his retirement as Mayor of Kawasaki in 2013, Mr. Takao Abe was able to introduce several administrative and financial reforms. Moreover, he was able to provide citizen-oriented community developments and strengthen the assets of the city. These innovations are drawn from his leadership competence and skills honed by his rich experiences as a public official and faculty.

Presently a member of the government's Specific Personal Information Protection Commission, Mr. Takao Abe is able to continuously apply and enrich his leadership experiences and learnings to the advantage of his institution.

Asian Leadership Forum—the Canadian Experience

For Ms. Maria David-Evans, integration of social, economic and environmental concerns on a regional (or global) scale is not a standalone.

She stressed that the success of any economy or country in this century is primarily a function of a trusted, competent, professional and non-partisan public sector. This positively characterized public sector shall ensure that the will of the government is carried out and the services needed by the people are provided. She also highlighted that any attempt to integrate and improve the economy should have a competent and professional public sector as prerequisite.

But how do we achieve such kind of public sector? Ms. David-Evans listed five critical factors. The first is “gaining public trust as stewards of the public good” and ways to do this include competence and merit-based appointments, fair administration of government programs, and

ensuring integrity and accountability of public sector officials.

The second critical factor is “serving political leaders with courageous advice and loyal implementation” which comes in various forms such as what Ms. David-Evans termed as “truth to power” (or providing not what the politicians want to hear but respectfully feeding to them what is and what should be) and providing good scientific evidences that rationalize options and decisions.

“Building public institutions and organizations free of corruption” came third on Ms. David-Evans list and this, according to her, starts with the provision of decent living wages for public servants for them to be satisfied and not engage in other dirty sources of “income.” Other approaches that support this factor include the adoption of fair HR systems that encourage equal chances of skills development, and the provision of “tools” and technology that enable the public sector to perform a good job.

Fourth on Ms. David-Evans' list of critical factors is the importance of “working together, both horizontally and across borders” where effective capacity building across government departments and with other players (NGOs, businesses, provinces, states and other countries) is necessary. Thus, various forms or degrees of working together were briefly discussed to include cooperation, coordination, collaboration and integration.

Finally, it is important to “lead and develop a competent public sector teams” to realize the preceding critical factors. This is where leadership comes in together with its two pockets—leader's characteristics and leader's competencies. The first pocket is about the values, virtues and traits of a leader including intellect, integrity, trustworthiness, courage, empathy, respect, accountability, authenticity and passionate enthusiasm. The other pocket is about people skills, organizational skills, business knowledge and strategic thinking. The speaker especially mentioned the need to have excellent risk assessment skills and outstanding crisis management and, in the case of Canada, these were important factors (Continued on the next page)



PA scholars, practitioners reflect on...

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the TV station's performance management system. Before Mr. Bach worked at the Vietnam Television International, assessment of human resources in the organization was a mere two-way approach where an employee evaluates him/herself and he/she is also evaluated by his/her. There was also a difficulty in conducting an objective assessment because of the absence of a system of capacity requirements.



Mr. Bach spearheaded the implementation of the four-level assessment system in which the employee rates him/herself, his/her colleagues also evaluate

him/her, followed by his/her office managers and, finally, by the head of the TV channel. This new system has overcome the long-lasting challenges in the organization and the objective performance management system resulted in a new brand of team spirit. The TV channel got a budget allocation that is 700% higher than its budget seven years ago, thanks to a more objective assessment of the stations' operations.

Mr. Bach also shared his experiences as Vice Chairman of the People's Committee of Nam Dinh Province. His current work allowed him to explore the use of e-governance in terms of receiving requests and responding to such requests via email. The province is also considering the development of a portal which shall connect departments within the province, as well as connect to the national government. He also happily discussed how Facebook was able to help him to reach out to a number of his province's citizens. In sum, Mr. Bach pointed out three lessons from his experience. First is that quality of leadership is important wherein giving importance to staff yields positive results. Second, he emphasized that honest and transparent working of government is important. And, finally, that professionalism and success at work can be attained through ensuring an inclusive institution. [EB]

Fourth ALF highlights...

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that spared the country from the 2008 world financial crisis.

She introduced the Institute of Public Administration Canada (IPAC) and its roles and contributions in maintaining an excellent Canadian public sector. She also proudly presented the forms of assistance the IPAC offers to its partners including research, training, building knowledge networks, study missions and consultancies. With the aim of making the public sector competent and professional on a global scale, Ms. David-Evans assured possible partners that IPAC can be of help. She cited specific on-going partnerships such as in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam.

Management Experience in Improving Public Administration and Governance in Thanh Hoa Province



Dr. Trinh

Van Chien shared the experience of Thanh Hoa Province, Viet Nam in managing the results of the Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI). Introduced since 2011, the PAPI is a tool employed nationwide to be able to determine the leadership and public service quality among local governments in Viet Nam. It employs the following criteria namely: 1) participation of the local people, 2) transparency, 3) accountability, 4) curbing corruption in the public sector, 5) public administrative procedures and 6) public service. The initiatives of the Chairman and leaders of the Thanh Hoa People's Committee paved the way for improvements in the locality. They were favorable to the Thanh Hoa Province not only in the 2013 PAPI ranking but also in other indices such as the Provincial Economic Integration Index (PEII) and Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) of which Thanh Hoa Province belonged to the Top 10 lists. Indeed, ranking 9th in 2013 from 18th in 2012 is a notable testimony to the effective innovations introduced in the Thanh Hoa Province.

Dr. Trinh shared that there were six (6) management innovations introduced by the Chairman and leaders of the Thanh Hoa People's Committee. First, the People's Committee of Thanh Hoa improved public communication and local awareness especially on local policies implemented. This facilitated active involvement not only on how to address local concerns but participation in local elections especially among the minorities.

Second, various strategies have been employed to enhance transparency and to accelerate the response-time on service delivery. These include the disclosure of socio-economic development plans and land-use plans, annual prices of land, budgetary management (i.e. revenues, expenditures) and fees and charges. Moreover, clearly defined, transparent and strict adherence to the recruitment process was enforced and information on the poverty classification process as well as lists of poor households were made accessible to the public.

Third, the People's Committee of Thanh Hoa Province regularly reviews and consolidates the operational effectiveness of the people's inspection board and board community investment. Feedback and disclosure of regular meetings between the people of heads of agencies and departments are publicly disclosed. These create a mechanism for public participation especially in exercising their right to have an accountable local government.

Fourth, anti-corruption strategies were employed to promote transparency and accountability among civil servants. These include strict enforcement of anti-corruption laws and regulations, disclosure of income and assets of civil servants, investments, budgeting and public policies and development of a code of ethics and conduct for civil servants.

Fifth, reforms in the administrative procedures were initiated to improve the business and investment environment. Information on the 1,811 public administrative procedures was made available in the websites, one-stop shops and local governments. Moreover, a supervisory system was developed to regularly monitor the performance of government agencies and the principle of three (3) "No" was followed namely, no disturbance, no repeated request for documents during review and

evaluation and no lateness. Finally, the resources of the Thanh Hoa Province have been invested on infrastructure development to improve service delivery on education and healthcare. Examples of infrastructure developments include the building of primary schools and public healthcare facilities at the provincial and district levels, development of inter-hamlet road system and other welfare projects.

Dr. Trinh believes that the Thanh Hoa Province, with its strategies to uphold a transparent and effective public sector, will be able not only to top the PAPI rankings but likewise exceed the national average per capita income by 2020 [EB].



THE ASIAN REVIEW OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

The *Asian Review of Public Administration* (ARPA) is a biennial journal published by the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration. Since 1989, papers and articles in ARPA have dealt with various topics on public administration, reform, economic and political transitions, and governance, among others.

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DAY 1 IN PICTURES



(Photos courtesy of the 2014 EROPA Conference Organizing Committee and the EROPA Secretariat)

