



JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

'Love Journey' social media contest opens online site for submissions

Hanoi, November 24, 2011 - The Love Journey, a social media campaign aimed at promoting discussions and action amongst youth on the attitudes and behaviours of caring and respectful relationships, will begin accepting idea submissions on December 4 from individuals at www.htyt.vn. The campaign, which links romantic love and friendship with gender equality and non-violence, is endorsed by Pham Anh Khoa, the well-known musician and outspoken advocate of gender equality.

"I do believe respect, trust, understanding, love, equality and non-violence are key principles of a healthy relationship. There is no place for force and violence in love. True friends listen to and respect each other's opinions. We (both men and women) should work towards making our relationship healthy," said Pham Anh Khoa.

The contest will award Ipads and trips to Bangkok for winning ideas that promote gender equality and non-violence in intimate relationships.

"The Love Journey takes a new approach to prevention of gender-based violence and promotion of gender equality in Vietnam. Instead of telling people to not perpetrate violence, we are focusing on encouraging positive, gender-equitable and non-violent attitudes among youth, who are still forming their ideas about gender relations and what it means to be a man and a woman. This activity will help young people to build relationship skills that they can take into adult life." said Benjamin Swanton, Joint Campaign for Prevention of Domestic Violence (JCC) Project Manager from Paz y Desarrollo.

The Love Journey social media campaign is supported by organizations dedicated to the prevention of gender-based violence and violence against women: Paz y Desarrollo (PyD); Partners for Prevention (P4P), a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional programme for Asia and the Pacific; the Spanish Agency for International

Development Cooperation (AECID); UNFPA Vietnam; and the United Nations Organisation on Drugs and Crime.

The Love Journey social media campaign consists of two parts, online photography competitions (a photography competition and “16 days of activism”) which will culminate in an offline event (music concert in Danang City on December 16).

Phase I of photography competition will begin on November 24, and contestants will be asked to form teams and submit photos essays on actions that are signs of a healthy relationship. Voting for the ideas in Phase 1 begins on December 7th with the first awardees to be announced on December 11th.

Phase 2 will begin on December 13th. Phase 2 will be open to the top 20 winners of Phase 1, and contestants will be asked to submit in-depth photos essays on what actions, small or large, are required to realise a healthy relationship. Voting for the ideas in Phase 2 begins on December 20th, with the awardees of two iPads announced on December 31st.

The “16 days of activism” competition will begin on December 12th, and is aimed at high school and university students. Contestants will be asked to develop and implement ideas for promoting violence free schools and community. Voting will begin on December 25th, with the awardee of one Ipad announced on December 31st.

At the end of the competition, two winners will be selected by a panel of judges consisting of Rocker Pham Anh Khoa, representatives of PYD, UNFPA, and P4P to travel to Bangkok, Thailand to present their ideas at the regional United Nations office.

To learn more, visit www.htyt.vn

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Notes to editors:

- In Asia and the Pacific Asia-Pacific there gender-based violence is pervasive. One in three of ever-married women report that they have suffered physical or sexual violence from their husbands at some time in their lives, according to the National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam, launched in 2010 by the Government of Viet Nam and the United Nations. In addition to physical, verbal and psychological abuse, specific and brutal forms of violence common across the Asia-Pacific region include: sexual violence, gang rape, human trafficking and sexual slavery, forced early marriage, sex selection, female infanticide, child neglect, bullying, corporal punishment, among others. Studies on domestic violence and youth in Vietnam have found that men are largely the perpetrators and women the victims. For more information, see: <http://www.un.org.vn/en/media-releases/107-un-press-releases/1643-new-study-shows-high-prevalence-of-domestic-violence-in-viet-nam.html>
- Paz y Desarrollo (PyD) is the organisation responsible for coordinating the Joint Communication Campaign for Prevention of Domestic Violence in Viet Nam (JCC) which it co-founded in 2008 with the Family Department of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. The objective of the campaign, the first nation-wide communication initiative for prevention of violence against women, is to prevent violence against women before it occurs. PyD is doing this through a primary prevention strategy by encouraging gender equitable attitudes among young men and women and involving them in efforts to prevent gender-based violence. Since founding the campaign, 25 organisations have joined including three United Nations agencies: UNWOMEN, UNFPA, and UNODC; three mass civil society organisations: The Viet Nam Farmer's Union, The Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, and The Viet Nam Women's Union; along with local and international NGO's alike. In addition, the JCC has built strong networks with students, media, celebrities and bloggers in Viet Nam.
- Partners for Prevention (P4P) is a UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV regional programme for Asia and the Pacific. Partners for Prevention focuses on primary prevention of gender-based violence, or stopping violence before it starts. The 'Love Journey' social media campaign is part of the 'Engaging Young Men

through Social Media for the Prevention of Violence against Women and Children' project,' which aims to connect and inspire young people to take action to end violence against women. Demand Media, a partner in this project, has provided pro bono technical support and the donation of contest awards. For more information, see www.partners4prevention.org.

- UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, is an international development agency that works with countries to protect and promote the sexual and reproductive health of women, men and young people. UNFPA Viet Nam provides provide technical assistance and financial support to the implementation of the "Love Journey" social media campaign.