



# **Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Vietnam 2002**

**Julie Yoder**



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***An AbilityAsia Country Study***

**Julie Yoder**

**International Labour Office**

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## Preface

*Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002* is part of the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series*. It was first published in print format by the ILO Office in Viet Nam in 2003 and is available in both English and Vietnamese.

The *AbilityAsia Country Study Series* was designed as a contribution to the end of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, and to mark the 20th anniversary of the International Labour Organization (ILO)'s Convention No. 159 Concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons).

One of the primary objectives of the series is to contribute to the knowledge base on people with disabilities in Asia and the Pacific. According to World Health Organization estimates, people with disabilities represent 10 per cent of the population of developing countries. Yet, in many countries people with disabilities are “invisible”. Little reliable data exists about their numbers, needs and achievements. While they are recognized as among the poorest of the poor, people with disabilities typically face barriers to the very services that might lift them out of poverty, such as education, vocational training, and employment and business development services.

Another objective of the *Country Study Series* is to provide baseline data about the status of education, training and employment for people with disabilities. This takes on greater significance in light of the ESCAP proclamation to extend the Asia and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, for another decade, 2003-2012. In October 2002, governments from across the region adopted the Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF) for Action towards an Inclusive, Barrier-free and Rights-based Society for Persons with Disabilities as the regional policy guideline for the new Decade of Disabled Persons. The BMF includes targets and actions in several priority areas, including training and employment. With regard to the BMF, *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002* should prove useful as an evaluation tool since it provides a baseline description of the situation in Viet Nam against which progress can be compared.

The BMF includes the ILO's principle of decent work – defined as, “productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity for women and men everywhere”. Further, the BMF's employment and training targets call upon countries to mainstream (integrate) vocational training programmes, collect reliable employment and self-employment rates for people with disabilities and consider ratification of ILO Convention No.159. The Convention, among other things, requires a national policy of vocational rehabilitation and employment based on the principles of equal treatment and equal opportunity for workers with disabilities.

*Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002* is descriptive in nature. When the ILO commissioned the researchers for the *Country Study Series*, each was asked to follow the comprehensive research protocol appended to this document. The resulting report therefore includes country background information, statistics about people with disabilities and their organizations, a description of relevant legislation and policies and their official implementing structures, as well as the education, training and employment options available to people with disabilities. While few countries have such information readily available,

researchers were asked to note the existence or lack of specific data points and to report data when it did exist.

Since the lack of information about people with disabilities contributes to their invisibility and social exclusion, the information itself is important. The protocol called for limited analysis and did not specifically ask for the researchers' recommendations. However, researchers were asked to report on existing plans and recommendations of significant national stakeholders.

Upon completion of the draft country studies in the series, they were shared with participants of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities, held in Bangkok in January 2003. The consultation was a regional meeting of governments and representatives of workers', employers' and disabled persons' organizations from across the region. Each country team was asked to review the country study reports and make comments with regard to accuracy, omissions and content of the report.

As noted, the main purpose of the series is to describe the employment and training situation of the country at a particular point in time. Since the data was collected in 2002, the information contained in *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002* may not be the most recent. In fact, there have been significant developments related to the employment services project funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and executed by the Viet Nam Assistance to the Handicapped in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, which is described in this document. Additionally, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry has undertaken activities to assist entrepreneurs with disabilities. Although there may have been subsequent developments since 2002, the report provides a comprehensive view of the employment and training situation of people with disabilities at a specific point in time and in the context of Viet Nam's progress and development.

The ILO wishes to acknowledge Development Cooperation Ireland, whose resources contributed to the research project that resulted in the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series*. Debra A. Perry, Senior Specialist in Vocational Rehabilitation for Asia and the Pacific deserves special recognition for her technical oversight and hard work in designing and coordinating the overall project. Julie Yoder, the consultant who researched and wrote *Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002* also deserves special thanks. Ms. Yoder interviewed many experts in the field of disability as part of her research and she has acknowledged them in an addendum to this paper. The ILO also extends sincere gratitude to the International Department of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, which reviewed the final paper for accuracy and completeness.

Members of the ILO support staff also made significant contributions, in particular Sugunya Voradilokkul who supported the project from its inception and Teerasak Siriratanothai, whose computer expertise made the Web publication a reality.

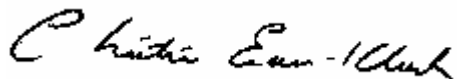
To the reader, whether you are an academic, researcher, policy maker, practitioner or an individual with a disability, we hope you will find the information you are looking for in these pages.

For more information about the *AbilityAsia Country Study Series* or to learn more about the

ILO, Convention No. 159 or other issues related to employment and training of people with disabilities in the region, please visit the AbilityAsia Web site: [www.ilo.org/abilityasia](http://www.ilo.org/abilityasia). To request a copy of this document in print format or Vietnamese, please contact the ILO Office in Hanoi: [hanoi@ilohn.org.vn](mailto:hanoi@ilohn.org.vn).

For more information about the ESCAP Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, visit [www.unescap.org/esid/psis/disability/index.asp](http://www.unescap.org/esid/psis/disability/index.asp).

Readers may also be interested in two recently published works by the ILO relating to employment and disability – *Moving Forward: Toward Decent Work for People with Disabilities – Examples of Good Practices in Vocational Training and Employment from Asia and the Pacific* and *Proceedings of the ILO/Japan Technical Consultation on Vocational Training and Employment of People with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific*. Copies of these and other ILO publications on disability in Asia and the Pacific can be ordered by contacting [abilityasia@ilo.org](mailto:abilityasia@ilo.org)



Christine Evans-Klock  
Director  
Subregional Office for Southeast Asia

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## Abbreviations

CPRGS	Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
DED	German Development Service
DOET	Department of Education and Training
DOLISA	Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
ICIDH	International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps
ILO	International Labour Organization
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
NCCD	National Coordinating Committee on Disability
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIES	National Institute of Educational Sciences
ODTA	Office of Disability Technical Assistance
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
SEED	Small Enterprise Development
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business
SSD	Strategy for Socio-Economic Development 2001-2010
SSHVO	Society of Support for Vietnamese Handicapped Orphans and Children
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDOL	United States Department of Labour
VGCL	Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour
VNAH	Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped
VND	Viet Nam Dong (currency)
WHO	World Health Organization

## Part One: Country Overview

### 1.1 Introduction

Viet Nam has undergone three significant transitions over the past decades: first from war to peace, then from a centrally planned economy to a market economy and finally from isolation to integration in the international community. Many of the improvements in the economy have resulted from the implementation of the *doi moi* (renovation) policy in the late 1980s that initiated the transition to a socialist market economy. These and other social and economic reforms over the past decade have resulted in marked improvements in the situation of the Vietnamese people in the ten years from 1990 to 2000, including a doubling of GDP, a halving of the population living in poverty and a significant increase in exports. The challenge for Viet Nam now is to continue economic growth without losing its commitment to social achievements and human development.

Some changes over this period have affected employment for people with disabilities. Before the implementation of reforms, many people with disabilities were members of agricultural cooperatives and would receive a rice ration whether or not they had worked formally. However, with the end of agricultural cooperatives, as well as the parallel restructuring and closure of other state-owned enterprises, it is much more difficult to find opportunities for secure income streams that are dedicated to people with disabilities.

Viet Nam displays a high level of social achievement, including education, literacy, and life expectancy. It continues to rank ahead of many nations with higher GDP per capita. Though still a low-income nation, Viet Nam is considered a country of medium human development. In the 2002 Human Development Report, Viet Nam had a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.688 and ranked 109 out of 173 nations.<sup>1</sup> Other human development indicators include life expectancy at birth, 68.2 years in 2000, an adult literacy rate of 93.4 per cent and combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrollment of 67 per cent. GDP per capita (purchasing power parity) was \$US 1,996 in 2000.

### 1.2 Geography

Viet Nam, with an area of 329,560 square kilometers, is a narrow country that extends north to south with the eastern coast bordering the South China Sea. Inland, western borders are with Laos and Cambodia, and the northern border is with China. The climate is tropical monsoon, and the terrain varies from mountainous in the north and west to coastal delta along the eastern seaboard. Viet Nam is a country dominated by water. Rice paddies, seafood and marine life pervade the land and feed the burgeoning population throughout the country. Both major cities are found in river deltas—the capital city of Hanoi, population 2.6 million, is in the northern Red River Delta, while the former Saigon, now Ho Chi Minh City, whose population is 5 million, is in the Mekong River Delta in the south. The other two major metropolitan areas are also on the water, and both are found on the eastern coast: Hai Phong,

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations: *Human Development Report 2002*, p.151.

population 1.6 million, in the north and Da Nang, population 722,826, in the centre of the country.<sup>2</sup>

### 1.3 Population

**Table 1.1: Population, with growth rates and gender divide**

Year	Population (mid-year) 000 people	Growth Rate	Male	Female
1996	72 541	1.61	35 857	36 684
1997	73 420	1.20	36 473	36 947
1998	74 884	1.92	37 090	37 794
1999	76 597	1.51	37 662	38 408
2000	77 635	1.42	38 166	39 469

Source: Viet Nam Development Report 2002, p. 110 (and update from Hoang Thanh Ha)

After the implementation of the two-child policy in 1993, population growth slowed drastically. The total population of Viet Nam is 78.5 million, growing at a rate of 1.37 per cent in 1999.<sup>3</sup> The population of Viet Nam is approximately 76 per cent rural and 24 per cent urban.<sup>4</sup>

Life expectancy in Viet Nam is presently 67.8 years for the total population, 70.2 for women and 65.5 for men. Viet Nam is a country with a young population, as 34.2 per cent of the population is under the age of 15, and just 5.3 per cent are over the age of 65.<sup>5</sup> Literacy is relatively high, with a 93.1 per cent rate for the total population. The rate is 91 per cent for women and 95.4 per cent for men.

Viet Nam is primarily a Buddhist country, though the central region has significant numbers of Catholics. Other minor religious groupings include animism, Islam and the indigenous religions of Hoa Hao and Cao Dai. The ethnic Kinh group dominates Viet Nam, but there are up to 50 ethnic minorities residing throughout the nation, primarily in rural and mountainous areas.

### 1.4 Government and general development plans

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam is a one-party, constitutional democracy led by the Communist Party. The Politburo, the most powerful body of both the Communist Party and the government, makes policy and carries out day-to-day government functions. The General Secretary leads both the Communist Party and the 15-member Politburo. The legislative branch, *Quoc Hoi* or National Assembly, is headed by the National Assembly Chairman, and is responsible for appointing the President and Cabinet. Elections held in the spring of 2002 elected 450 members to serve 5-year terms. Viet Nam has a significant number of women in the National Assembly, comprising over 25 per cent as of these elections. The judicial branch is made up of regional people's courts headed by the Supreme Court. Other government bodies include the executive branch, ruled by the President. The Cabinet includes the Prime Minister and several deputy prime ministers.

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of State Background Note: Viet Nam.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank Development Indicators Database, April 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations: *Human Development Report 2001*, p. 156.

Of the 17 ministries, those most directly involved in the coordination of people with disabilities include the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Training and Education (MOET).

The Communist Party and the central Government have significant influence throughout the country, with branches and members in each of the nation's 61 provinces. The 61 provinces are further broken down into districts, communes and wards. The Government has representatives at each of these levels. The central Government wields considerable power through the central administration of provinces and local authorities. Government ministries have direct supervision over administrative departments in most provinces. The central Government is also influential through services of mass social organizations, affiliated with the Government, which contribute at all administrative levels.

There are three main development plans in Viet Nam related to overall poverty alleviation, economic development and education and training.

- Strategy for Socio-Economic Development 2001-2010 (SSED)
- The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS)
- National Target Programme on Hunger Eradication and Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation

*The Strategy for Socio-Economic Development (SSED) 2001-2010*, the central strategic document for the Government of Viet Nam, presented to the Ninth National Congress on 19 April 2001, expresses a strong commitment to equitable growth to alleviate poverty. This is a general overview document that includes the aims of bringing the country out of underdevelopment, continuing the renovation process, and advancing the country along the socialist line.<sup>6</sup>

The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) incorporates views from United Nations agencies, the NGO community and the private sector. The Prime Minister in Document No.2685/VPCP-QHQT recently approved this plan 21 May 2002. The Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy (CPRGS) specifically includes:

- A general assessment of poverty in Viet Nam,
- A plan to create an environment conducive to growth, stability and poverty reduction,
- Sectoral policies and measures to create opportunities, reduce vulnerability and provide support to the poor,
- A strategy for mobilizing resources for poverty reduction, and
- A strategy for monitoring and evaluating poverty.<sup>7</sup>

The National Target Programme on Hunger Eradication and Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation, passed in May 2001, will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs. Further details of this plan are in Section 3.3.

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<sup>6</sup> Government of Viet Nam, *Strategy for Socio-Economic Development (SSED) 2001 -2010*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> World Bank in Viet Nam, *Viet Nam Development Report 2002*, p.1.

## 1.5 Economy

Viet Nam is a country of medium human development, according to the 2002 Human Development Report. Though the economy of Viet Nam consists of 41.4 per cent services, 35.4 per cent industry and 23.2 per cent agriculture,<sup>8</sup> most individuals still earn a living from agriculture and reside in rural areas. Viet Nam continues to experience moderate growth. In 1999, the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was US\$28.7 billion,<sup>9</sup> and was estimated at US\$31.1 billion in 2000.<sup>10</sup> GDP per capita in 1999 was US\$372, and real growth was 4.8 per cent. In 2002, growth is forecast to be 5.2 per cent.<sup>11</sup>

At a macro-level, Viet Nam was affected by the recent Asian crisis, though with a non-convertible currency (the Viet Nam Dong), the country was immune to immediate currency fluctuations and speculation of the sort which impacted nearby nations. Effects of the crisis are felt secondarily through reduced demand from Asian trading partners and increased competition through low-priced, higher-quality goods from neighboring nations who have a head start on Viet Nam in the industrialization process. Export growth has been further dampened by the global recession in 2001 and the first quarter of 2002. Loss of income resulting from this trend could reduce the rate of poverty reduction, though domestic consumption and foreign investment promoted by economic reform have prevented too precipitous a decline.<sup>12</sup>

The Government of Viet Nam continues to restructure state-owned enterprises and undergo the easing of regulations on new enterprise development. More than 21,000 private, small and medium enterprises were registered in 2001, up 50 per cent from 14,000 in 2000. What is more, these enterprises are creating capital at significant rates: VND 26.5 trillion (US\$1.8 billion) in 2001, twice that of 2000.<sup>13</sup>

While there has been some disagreement as to the measurements of poverty and the placement of the poverty line, all measures show significant reductions in poverty in the past decade. It is believed that 70 per cent of the population was living in poverty in 1990, while only 37 per cent was still living in poverty by 1998. Food poverty was reduced from 25 per cent to 15 per cent from 1993 to 1998. Government targets use a lower poverty line developed by MOLISA that show fewer households in poverty. Translating these goals to international figures would show that targets hope to once again cut the incidence of poverty in half over the next decade, from 32 per cent presently to 15 per cent by 2010.<sup>14</sup>

According to a Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report from April 2002, an estimated 94 per cent of Viet Nam's poor live in rural areas.<sup>15</sup> This is in part due to the low productivity of the agricultural sector of Viet Nam, as, in spite of significant increases in the production and exports of rice, coffee, cashews and pepper, world prices

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<sup>8</sup> *Economist Intelligence Unit: Country Report Viet Nam*, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Human Development Report*, 2001, p.180.

<sup>10</sup> *Economist Intelligence Unit: Country Report Viet Nam*.

<sup>11</sup> *Viet Nam Economic Monitor*, Spring 2002, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Viet Nam Economic Monitor*, Spring 2002, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>14</sup> *Viet Nam Development Report*, 2002, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> *International Economic Integration, Competitiveness, and Rural Livelihoods*, FAO, 2002, p. 2.

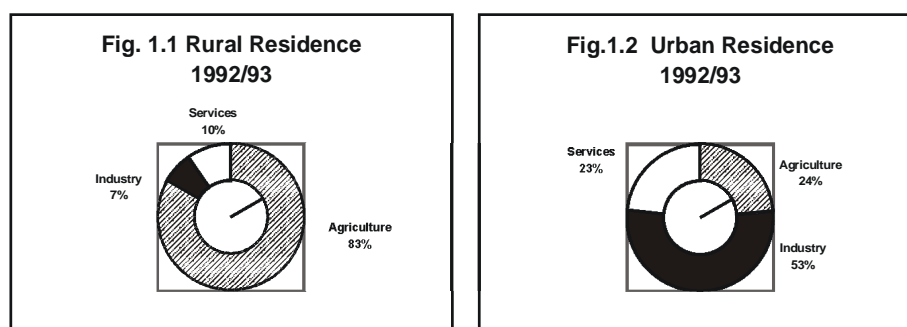
have declined, depressing rural incomes. The FAO report also concedes that there are many risks to sustained growth in agriculture and hence for the rural poor. Intensive farming procedures are unlikely to be sustainable in the long run, for example, and farmers are vulnerable to price fluctuations on the world market, as well as the poor quality of much of Viet Nam's perennial bushes, trees and vines.<sup>16</sup>

## 1.6 Labour markets

The majority of the population in Viet Nam, who live in rural areas, still earn a living from agriculture. The services sector is much more important in urban areas, and represents a growing source of employment opportunities and a chance to earn higher wages (see Figure 1.1). MOLISA estimates the labour force in Viet Nam to be 39.6 million people. Of this amount, 75 per cent are in rural areas and 51 per cent are women.<sup>17</sup> Gender profiles show that equivalent amounts of men and women are working in most sectors: 49 per cent of employees in services are women, 48 per cent in industry and construction.<sup>18</sup> Viet Nam will face continued difficulties in creating jobs in the future, as over 1 million workers will enter the labour force each year.<sup>19</sup>

In 1997 and 1998, as can be seen in Figures 1.1-1.4, agriculture declined modestly in importance of job provision in rural areas, accounting for 79 per cent of jobs in rural areas, down 4 per cent from 1992/1993. In rural areas, industry accounted for just 9 per cent of jobs, though this was a slight increase of 2 per cent over 1992 and 1993. Services account for 12 per cent of jobs, just 2 per cent more than in previous years. In urban areas a very different picture emerges. Jobs come primarily from the services sector, with 56 per cent of jobs compared to 47 per cent in 1992/1993. Jobs related to agriculture accounted for just 13 per cent in 1997/1998 compared to 21 per cent in 1992/1993. Industry jobs remained constant at 30 per cent.

**Figure 1.1-1.4: Distribution of employment in main job in the 12 months prior to the survey by urban/rural residence 1992/93 and 1997/98 (per cent)**

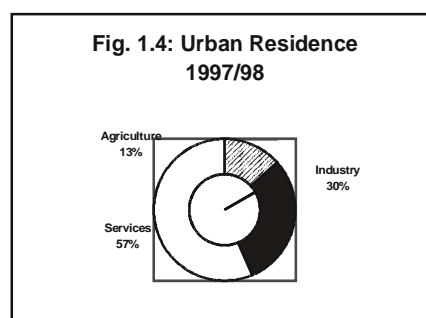
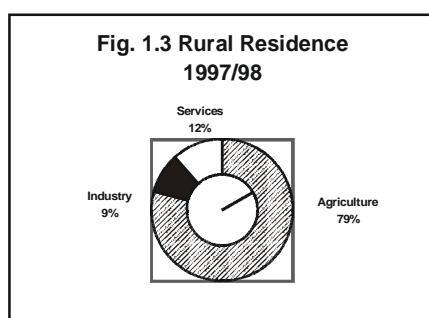


<sup>16</sup> Ibid. p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> Bales (1999) p. 26

<sup>18</sup> International Labour Organization, *Country Brief: Viet Nam*

<sup>19</sup> Hong, et al. (2002) p.4



Source: Data from Bales (1999), p. 5

Unemployment rates are slightly higher among women than men, and are much higher in urban areas than in rural areas (see Table 1.2). Youth in urban areas have the highest unemployment rates. The highest of all age and gender categories is 18.51 per cent for young urban women between the ages of 15 and 19. Rural men between the ages of 40 and 44 have the lowest unemployment rate, just 0.79 per cent. As will be discussed below, most employment is not wage employment and many rural inhabitants are idle part of the year.

**Table 1.2: Unemployment rate for preceding week by age group, 1999**

Age	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
15-19	16.47	18.51	5.46	7.03	6.71	8.29
20-24	12.40	13.08	3.53	4.34	5.31	6.14
25-29	6.63	6.66	1.81	1.95	2.98	3.08
30-34	4.64	5.80	1.20	1.54	2.06	2.57
35-39	3.51	3.89	0.86	1.10	1.54	1.80
40-44	2.72	2.75	0.79	1.04	1.33	1.51
45-49	2.90	3.13	0.91	1.24	1.47	1.74
50-54	2.50	2.26	1.15	1.32	1.49	1.55
55-59	2.07	NA	0.93	NA	1.20	NA
60 and over	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total	6.13	6.74	2.01	2.52	2.76	3.24

Source: *Statistical Data of Labour and Employment*, Viet Nam 2001, p. 468.

Note: (NA indicates no data available)

Underemployment is a significant issue in both urban and rural areas, and is as prevalent through the 40 to 44 age group as it is in the 20 to 24 age group (see Table 1.3). Both sexes have similar underemployment profiles, though women are slightly more likely to be underemployed. Underemployment rates are comparable in urban and rural areas and are higher among younger populations (see Table 1.3).

**Table 1.3: Percentage of economically active population aged 15 years old and over underemployed in the last 12 months<sup>20</sup>**

Age	Urban		Rural		Total	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
15-19	8.25	8.42	11.92	12.14	11.67	11.91
20-24	13.80	14.29	14.09	13.81	14.07	13.84
25-29	15.58	15.64	14.63	14.65	14.69	14.71
30-34	15.86	14.91	14.65	14.54	14.73	14.57
35-39	14.74	14.78	14.70	14.42	14.70	14.44
40-44	12.74	13.22	11.61	11.96	11.69	12.04
45-49	9.47	9.18	8.25	8.60	8.34	8.63
50-54	5.44	5.64	5.17	5.34	5.19	5.36
55-59	2.34	2.17	2.66	2.49	2.64	2.47
60 and over	1.76	1.69	2.32	2.05	2.28	2.03

Source: *Statistical Data of Labour and Employment*, Viet Nam 2001, p. 406.

Note: This table only included statistics for women and for the total.

Wages have continued to rise over the past decade. Productivity is still low in agriculture, and though falling commodity prices have led to depressed rural incomes, these incomes are still higher in 1997-1998 than in 1992-1993. Also in 1997-1998, wages in the service sector rose to be higher than in the agricultural sector in urban areas, though remaining on par in agricultural areas (Table 1.4).

**Table 1.4: Detail of Average hourly wage rates by industry and urban/rural residence (VND and US\$)**

	1992/93				1997/1998			
	Rural		Urban		Rural		Urban	
	US\$	VND	US\$	VND	US\$	VND	US\$	VND
Agriculture	1.42	2 140	1.51	2 290	1.87	2 840	2.20	3 330
Industry	1.35	2 050	1.32	2 000	1.95	2 950	2.24	3 400
Light Industry	1.22	1 850	1.31	1 980	1.80	2 730	2.11	3 190
Construction	1.57	2 390	1.43	2 160	2.11	3 200	2.41	3 650
Other Industry	1.70	2 570	1.27	1 930	2.05	3 110	2.99	4 530
Services	1.23	1 860	1.20	1 820	1.87	2 840	2.44	3 690
Hotel/Restaurant	1.43	2 170	1.16	1 750	1.63	2 470	2.44	3 690
Sales Services	1.20	1 820	1.21	1 830	1.89	2 860	2.54	3 840

Data from: Bales p. 18. (15,000 VND=US\$1 and 1000 VND=US\$0.066)

By far the majority of people in Viet Nam make their living from self-employment (see Table 1.4). In 1997 and 1998, close to 87 per cent of people in rural areas were engaged in self-employed farm or non-farm labour. There is higher wage employment in urban areas, but self-employment still accounts for over 53 per cent of employment (see Table 1.5)

<sup>20</sup> Note: No definition of underemployment was provided in the publication. However the International Labour Organization *Country Brief for Viet Nam 2001* states that this definition in 1999 is for people aged 15 years and over who worked fewer than 40 hours the week before the survey but were available to work more hours.



**Table 1.5: Employment type by urban/rural residence in per cent**

<b>Employment Type</b>	<b>1992-1993</b>			<b>1997-1998</b>		
	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Total</b>
Self-employed farm	78.02	17.95	66.35	74.24	10.46	61.67
Self-employed non-farm	9.82	40.35	15.75	12.61	44.27	18.85
Wage employment	12.16	41.69	17.90	13.14	45.28	19.48
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Bales, p.10

Viet Nam is living through a time of considerable change that is affecting the very economic foundation of the nation. The reforms of the past decade have encouraged growth in private enterprise and small and medium businesses have flourished, enabling Viet Nam to continue to meet the needs of a growing population. Growth continues, although it has moderated in the past two years because of the Asian economic crisis and the global economic downturn. The rise of domestic consumption is helping to spur on continued growth. Self-employment provides income to most of the population, and wages are keeping pace in the newer service sector as agriculture slowly declines in importance to the economy. Still, most of the population resides in rural areas and few Vietnamese have experience working for wages in the formal sector.

## Part Two: People with Disabilities-Definitions, Data and Situation

People with disabilities in Viet Nam are predominantly living in rural areas and attend school at rates far below those of the non-disabled population. Few people with disabilities have stable jobs and regular incomes. Environmental, economic and social barriers prevent most from fully participating in society. This section will review the overall situation of people with disabilities.

### 2.1 Definitions of disability

The official state definition of the Government of Viet Nam is found in the Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Article One:

*Disabled persons by definition of this Ordinance, irrespective of the causes of the disability, are defective of one or many parts of the body or functions which are shown in different forms of disability, and which reduce the capability of activity and cause many difficulties to work, life and studies.*<sup>21</sup>

### 2.2 Disability classification systems

The ministries that work most closely with disability issues include the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). These ministries have officially adopted the *International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps* (ICIDH) issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1980. These ministries use the classifications in formal documents, but there are no regular surveys carried out, nor is there a registration system for people with disabilities. These classifications distinguish between the organ or body-part level disability (impairment) the personal level (disability) and the societal level (handicap). The definitions of disability under ICIDH fall under seven categories:

- 1) Mobility impairment such as amputees, paralysis, cerebral palsy, polio, etc.
- 2) Hearing/Speech (communication) impairment
- 3) Visual/Seeing impairment including blindness, color-blindness, stigmatism, etc.
- 4) Learning (cognitive or intellectual impairment) impairment including Down syndrome
- 5) Strange behavior (usually as a result of schizophrenia or psychotic or other mental illness)
- 6) Epilepsy/ Fits
- 7) Other disabilities not mentioned above

Another classification of disability degree is outlined in Article 1 of Decree 81-CP, which stipulates that people whose working capacity has been reduced by certain percentages and certified by a Medical Examination Council are entitled to certain labour benefits.

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<sup>21</sup> See Section Three for more information on the Ordinance on Disabled People

The greater the level of disability, the higher the benefit paid.

**Table 2.1: Classification for purposes of government allowances**

Degree of Labour Disability	One-time allowance
From 5-10%	4 months of minimum wage
From 11 to 20%	8 months of minimum wage
From 21 to 30%	12 months of minimum wage
	Monthly allowance
From 31 to 40%	0.4 month of minimum wage
From 41 to 50%	0.6 month of minimum wage
From 51 to 60%	0.8 month of minimum wage
From 61 to 70%	1.0 month of minimum wage
From 71 to 80%	1.2 month of minimum wage
From 81 to 90%	1.4 month of minimum wage
From 91 to 100%	1.6 month of minimum wage

Source: Government of Viet Nam (1995) cited in Bierman, p.94.

## 2.3 Sources of disability information and statistics

Table 2.1 summarizes the variations in national prevalence of disability. This study was a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) funded report to attempt to meet some of the data needs of many USAID grant recipients involved in producing prosthetics and orthotics for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. The information in the (Table 2.2) include data from 5 studies:

1. MOLISA nationwide 1994-1994 (used for illustrative purposes only)
2. MOLISA/UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998
3. Ministry of Health, Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme study from selected provinces in 1999
4. Speeches of various officials from MOLISA, MOET and MOH
5. MOLISA statistics from authors Le Van Tac, Pham Kim, Nguyen Thi and Mai Ha in 1998

Data sources and estimates of disabilities vary widely in Viet Nam. Even those ministries that work most closely with people with disabilities do not collect in-depth national data on a regular basis. The most comprehensive survey was undertaken in 1994-1995. Due to methodological issues, however, this data is no longer used regularly. A further complicating factor is the lack of in-depth information on methodology of most surveys, thereby limiting the capability to judge their validity. Data is also collected by NGOs from participants in their programmes (some of this data will be shown in Sections 4 and 5), as well as from other service providers, including rehabilitation centres, the Ministry of Health Community-Based Rehabilitation programme, mentioned below, and by the Ministry of Education. Most data is collected through sample surveys or through house-to-house surveys, as in the case of the CBR programme.

From interviews with the Centre for Information and Statistics at the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, it was explained that data is collected through provincial authorities that interview people in person and tabulate data on paper forms. This data is then collected at the central level. The main function of the Centre for Information and Statistics is to conduct a labour survey in July of each year, but this survey does not contain any information on people with disabilities and their employment situation. There are two questions asked on the survey to establish whether or not a family member

is either disabled or a war veteran, but in-depth details are not provided about the employment status of this person.

**Table 2.2: Estimates of disability prevalence for the total population and for children from national surveys and from various sources (1992-1999)**

	Population of Total Area	Estimated Number of Disabled	Prevalence Rates
<b>MOLISA 1994-1995</b>	71 719 032	1 297 695 people with disabilities (severely disabled only)	1.81% severely disabled
<b>MOLISA/UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998-1999</b> Children Ages 0-17 Survey of 16 provinces	76 394 000 77 263 000  Children 0-17: 29 675 000 30 130 000	844 000 children with disabilities 1999	2.8% of children aged 0-17 have partial or severe disabilities  1.41% of children 0-17 have severe disabilities
<b>MOH CBR 1999</b>  Data from 730 communes in 70 districts of 29 provinces	76 394 000 77 263 000	4 033 100 disabled (1999)  1 000 000 disabled children (1998)	5.22% of total population is disabled 1.57% of total population or 30% of total disabled are severely disabled 3.60% of children ages 0-15 disabled in 1998
<b>National 1990-1999</b> Ranges cited in speeches and presentations by MOLISA, MOET and MOH officials	66 600 000 77 263 000	Range of 1.6 million to 7.7 million PWD implied by prevalence rates cited (most say 3.5 to 6 million)	Between 2-10% (Most speeches say 5-7%) Some use WHO estimates for region
<b>National 1992</b> Children aged 0-15 MOLISA statistics (See Le Van Tac, Pham Kim, Nguyen Thi, Mai Ha (1998))	69 163 500 (total)  25 245 000 Children 0-15	1 230 455 disabled children aged 0-15	4.87% of children aged 0-15

Source: Adapted from Thomas Kane, 1999, p. 20

Note: Severe disability is not defined separately in the Kane study.

The 1998 Viet Nam Child Disability Survey, conducted jointly with UNICEF, does include some methodological information. This study was also carried out by the Centre for Information and Statistics of MOLISA, from June 1998 to February 1999. A total of 23,040 households were included from both urban and rural areas of 16 provinces. This survey uses the classification mentioned in Section 2.1 above to categorize types of disabilities. The survey included 96 household cluster groups in eight major regions of the country. They were interviewed directly in order to establish rates and prevalence of disability, as well as to investigate other socio-economic variables. A separate institution-based survey, which included 230 disabled children, was also conducted, as was a community-based survey that included 1,148 children in sampled households.<sup>22</sup> An additional test survey was conducted that included 50 per cent male and 50 per cent female children chosen according to types of disability. These children were interviewed in depth, and resulted in 320 additional interviews.

<sup>22</sup> MOLISA Centre for Information-Statistics on Labour and Social Affairs and UNICEF, *Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998*, p. 11.

The following table, also from the USAID study, shows the varied estimates of types of disability in Viet Nam collected from all known surveys of people with disability. In addition to the reports listed above, this table also includes several surveys conducted on a more limited geographical basis. The survey title, year and geographical coverage are shown in the left-hand column. There was no further information on how these surveys were conducted other than that mentioned above. Neither definitions of mental illness nor any further definitions were provided other than those mentioned above (see Table 2.3)

**Table 2.3: Types of disability**

Survey title, Conducting ministry, year, geographical coverage and target group (if any)	Type of Disability (Measured as per cent of total population surveyed)									
	Mobility	Hearing	Speech	Hearing And Speech	Vision	Learning/ Intellectual	Strange Behavior	Epilepsy/ Fits	Loss of Sensation/ Leprosy	Other Disabilities
MOLISA Survey 1994-1995	35.5	9.1	7.9	17.1	15.7	9.1	13.9	(in SB)	NA	8.7
MOH CBR 1998 730 communes	38.0			22.0	11.0	23.0	4.0	2.0	With EP	0.0
MOLISA/UNICEF Survey 1998 16 Provinces Children Ages 0-17	22.4	9.7	21.4	31.1	14.6	3.6	16.2	W/ SB	NA	12.0
<b>Surveys on more limited geographic areas</b>										
NIES Surveys 1991-1993 187 communes Children Ages 0-15	19.6	11.2	17.0	27.2	15.1	25.8	1.2	NA	NA	10.1
MOH/AIFO 1998 Thai Binh Province 10 communes	28.7			23.0	26.8	5.4	12.4	4.9	0.3	2.4
MOH 1996 Special Survey Ha Tay Province, 8 communes	26.0			20.1	17.5	6.1	7.7	5.5	1.2	15.9
NIES 1996 Ha Tay Province 14 communes (Children Ages 0-15)	18.9	7.5	16.7	24.2	20.0	24.8	NA	NA	NA	12.1
NIES 1998 Vinh Phuc, 6 communes (Ages 0-15)	32.1			22.0	14.0	15.8	5.1	11.0	NA	0.0
MOH/RB 1998 Tien Giang Province, six communes (Children Ages 0-16)	22.7			19.4	21.6	35.3	0.4	0.7	NA	0.0
Ranges	19.6 to 38.0	7.5 to 11.2	7.9 to 21.4	17.1 to 31.1	11.0 to 26.8	3.6 to 35.3	0.4 to 16.2	0.7 to 11.0	0.3 to 1.2	0.0 to 15.9

Source: Kane (1999) p. 25

The following tables are from the MOLISA/UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998, which looked in-depth into the situation of children with disabilities in 16 provinces. Table 2.4 shows that greater numbers of males are disabled than females. In many developing countries this has been shown to be the case, while in developed countries there are often more disabled women than men.

**Table 2.4: Characteristics of Children with Disabilities from MOLISA/UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998**

Characteristics of Children with Disabilities	Community-Based Survey	Test Survey	Institution-based survey
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	55.6	50.0	55.2
Female	44.4	50.0	44.8
<b>Age Group</b>			
0-5	16.6	17.8	5.7
6-10	30.6	29.7	47.5
11-15	39.7	29.7	47.5
16-17	13.2	22.8	16.5
<b>Ethnic Group</b>			
Kinh	89.1	89.1	93.5
Tay	3.0	2.8	3.0
Others	7.9	8.1	3.5
<b>Region</b>			
Red River Delta	14.6	12.5	26.0
North East	17.7	18.8	14.4
North West	4.8	6.2	0.0
North Central	14.1	12.5	0.0
Central Coast	13.0	12.5	12.2
Central Highlands	7.6	6.2	0.0
South East	12.7	12.5	0.0
Mekong Delta	15.4	18.8	43.5
<b>Education Status</b>			
Illiterate (aged 6-17) (%)	45.5	51.7	12.4
Never attended school (%)	36.6	44.9	5.1
<b>Vocational Training Status</b>			
Aged 6-17 have had vocational training (%)	1.2	0.8	15.2
<b>Employment Status</b>			
Aged 6-17 who have worked (%)	19.0	14.4	3.7
<b>Other Data</b>			
Children seeking treatment for disability (%)	68.4	71.9	Not asked
Children with severe disabilities (%)	50.2	44.4	79.1
Mean number of disabilities per child	1.49	1.86	1.64
Total Percent (Number surveyed)	100 (1148)	100 (320)	100 (230)

Source: Table 3 page 63, UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998.

**Table 2.5: Per cent distribution of causes of disability among children aged 10-17 years, by age group**

Causes of Disability	Community Based Survey		Test Survey		Institution-Based Survey	
	% Reporting	% Distribution of all reported	% Reporting	% Distribution of all reported	% Reporting	% Distribution of all reported
Congenital	62.7	55.1	64.7	51.8	68.3	64.6
Diseases	33.1	29.1	38.8	31.0	24.8	23.5
Environment	4.1	3.6	2.2	1.8	0.4	0.4
Accidents	2.3	2.0	0.6	0.5	0.0	0.0
Toxic Agents of War <sup>23</sup>	7.2	6.4	15.0	12.0	7.8	7.4
Other Causes	4.4	3.9	3.8	3.0	4.3	4.1
Total %	113.8	100	125.1	100	105.6	100

Note: The total number of disabilities may add up to more than 100% as the some children have multiple disabilities and some have more than one reported cause of a disability.

Source: Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998, p. 68.

The following tables show clearly what kinds of jobs are of interest to children with disabilities and the methods through which they believe they will be able to achieve these positions.

<sup>23</sup> This refers to birth defects presumed to have been caused by the use of Agent Orange.

**Table 2.6: Job aspirations of children with disabilities (aged 6-17 years) and ways in which they expect to achieve them**

Future Job Aspiration	Total Children with Disabilities Aged 6-17)		Ways in which Children with Disabilities Expect to Realize Their Job Aspirations (Per cent Distribution Across)					
	%	Total	Hard work self study	With help from family	With help from community	With help from relatives /friends	With state/ govt assistance	Other ways
Tailoring	6.3	61	50.8	31.2	6.6	1.6	4.9	4.9
Agriculture	5.7	55	18.2	21.8	18.2	12.7	1.8	27.3
Teaching	28.3	272	38.6	25.7	20.2	7.4	6.6	1.5
Police	10.8	104	19.2	14.4	28.8	8.6	18.3	10.6
Medical Care	14.4	138	21.0	37.0	13.0	11.6	13.0	4.4
Secretary	0.6	6	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Engineering/Electric Repair	14.0	135	28.2	29.6	18.5	12.6	5.9	5.2
Trade or Business	3.6	35	31.4	8.6	34.3	5.7	20.0	0.0
Handicrafts Fine arts	10.3	99	25.2	21.2	13.1	20.2	18.2	2.0
Others	4.8	46	63.0	13.0	10.9	0.0	2.2	10.9
No Job Determination	1.0	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total % (N)	100	961	31.6	24.7	17.9	9.6	9.7	5.5

Source: Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998, p. 81.

The following profile shows similar responses from children with disabilities who live in institutions in Viet Nam.

**Table 2.7: Job aspirations of children with disabilities (aged 6-17 years) who live in institutions and ways in which they expect to achieve them**

Future Job Aspiration	Total Children with Disabilities Aged 6-17)		Ways in which Children with Disabilities Expect to Realize Their Job Aspirations (Per cent Distribution Across)					
	%	Total	Hard work self study	With help from family	With help from community	With help from relatives /friends	With state/ govt assistance	Other ways
Tailoring	28.1	61	57.4	13.1	21.3	3.3	4.9	0.0
Music	7.8	17	29.4	58.8	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0
Teaching	27.2	59	23.7	15.2	15.2	20.3	25.4	0.0
Police	0.5	1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Medical Care	13.4	29	75.9	10.3	3.4	0.0	10.3	0.0
Electric Repair	13.4	29	48.0	3.4	27.6	10.3	10.3	0.0
Trade or Business	0.5	1	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Handicrafts Fine arts	4.6	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
No Job Determination	4.6	10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total % (N)	100	217	46.5	14.3	15.2	7.8	11.5	4.6

Source: Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998, p. 81.

Another study showed that people with disabilities are most interested in loans for self-employment (see table 2.8).

**Table 2.8: Expectation of people with disabilities in respect to employment**

Expectation	Per cent
Having a job	13.56
Living in State-run social establishments	9.96
Being provided loans for self-employment	48.50
Being provided vocational training	4.08
Being rehabilitated	23.90

Source: Hong, et al. 2002, p.8

## **2.4 On-the-job injuries**

As can be seen in Table 2.4, work accidents were included in the 1994-1995 MOLISA survey as a category of causes of disability. Article 108 of the Labour Code 1994 requires reporting of occupational accidents and diseases. MOLISA, the National Institute of Labour Protection, the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) and the Ministry of Health (MOH) all agreed to establish the national Occupational Safety and Health information network in 1996. The network also includes the Viet Nam Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Non-State Economic Development Centre.<sup>24</sup> In 1998, MOLISA stated that 3,000 occupational accidents involving 362 fatalities occurred. Construction and mining were the most hazardous sectors. However, according to officials at MOLISA, there is no more current data on current workplace injuries or return to work rates. There are also no current questions on the new, annual labour statistics survey related to on-the-job injuries. However, one institute at the Ministry of Health does attempt to keep track of occupational accidents. Statistics show that 4,770 cases of accidents at work were recorded in 1997, in which 2,673 workers were injured, 56 per cent of whom were injured by trauma. Chemicals caused 11 per cent of occupational injuries, or 522 cases. The number of workers absent from work due to accidents totaled 1,805 (more than 3 days of absence from work); of these, 1,223 were absent from work for more than 15 days.<sup>25</sup>

## **2.5 Environmental factors affecting full social participation**

Viet Nam is replete with physical environments that are difficult for people with disabilities to navigate. Even in urban areas, many buildings are inaccessible to wheelchairs beyond the first floor. These include schools, hospitals, government buildings and workplaces. Multi-story buildings with elevators may have stairs between the front door and the elevator. The Ministry of Construction has unveiled a new set of codes and standards in May 2002 that will begin to address many of these issues.

Transportation options for people with disabilities are also difficult to acquire. There is little public transportation infrastructure—even new city buses are not accessible—requiring people with disabilities to be dependent on family members or others for rides to and from work or school. Sidewalks are rare and almost inevitably cluttered with people, motorbikes and food stands. International organizations, in cooperation with local authorities, provide wheelchairs for people with disabilities throughout the country. A few fortunate persons with disabilities can afford modified motor vehicles made for their use. One recent World Bank project to renovate streets in Hanoi included curb cuts, but this has not yet covered a wide area of the city and no plans are in place to upgrade existing infrastructure.

Pearl S. Buck International and other NGOs are in the process of developing a unified Vietnamese sign language with the input and participation of signers throughout the country after the model of development used in Thailand.

While the National Blind Association has made significant advances in teaching Braille

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<sup>24</sup> Asian-Pacific Newsletter, [www.occuphealth.fi/e/info/asian/ap300/vietnam07.htm](http://www.occuphealth.fi/e/info/asian/ap300/vietnam07.htm).

<sup>25</sup> Nguyen and Le, The Occupational Health System of Vietnam, Asian-Pacific Newsletter.



throughout the country, the use of Braille signage is rare. There are no guides on city streets and other accessibility aids are still almost unheard of.

After years of war, many persons with disabilities still do not have orthotic or prosthetic devices. According to one recent report, it is estimated that only 15 percent of demands for orthopedic equipment have been met while 68 per cent have not received any orthopedic equipment.<sup>26</sup>

## **2.6 Social factors affecting full participation**

The most significant obstacles to full social participation in Viet Nam are poverty and the overall low level of economic development. While persons with disabilities in developed nations can focus on advancing their rights on a more sophisticated level, most persons with disabilities in Viet Nam are simply struggling to survive. This is one reason why so many self-help groups focus first on employment issues for their own members (see Section 4.6). There is no broad-based insurance plan that covers the added medical, transportation or other costs associated with having a disability, and since many people with disabilities do not work, their family situations can be quite difficult. When asked why they did not seek medical treatment or did not attend school, more children stated that this was due to poverty more than any other reason.<sup>27</sup> Economic level should therefore be seen as a significant barrier to full social participation.

In Viet Nam, policies and programmes that aim to protect and care for persons with disabilities outnumber those aimed at full rights and participation. There is a saying that is often cited to illustrate this: “unbroken leaves protect torn leaves.” Many people still consider charitable acts to be the most that can be done for persons with disabilities. Also, in an environment where many people are unemployed and underemployed, authorities, employers, families and others do not often consider the finding of employment for persons with disabilities to be a priority. Accommodation needs of people with disabilities are sometimes seen as onerous obstacles to employment. Most people with disabilities live at home with their families.

One recent report cited numerous examples of officials and others stating the realities of prejudice in Viet Nam.<sup>28</sup> One education official said that parents of other children in integrated classes were not receptive to students with disabilities, fearing that their own children may somehow be affected by less attention from the teacher, or even that their children would adopt odd behavior learned from a disabled student.<sup>29</sup> The fact that children with disabilities are often in poor families, either as a cause or effect, adds to their difficulties.

In a meeting with a new association of university students with disabilities in Hanoi, several distinct attitudes about family and social expectations were evinced. Many of these students were proud to have very supportive, helpful families. A student from Hai Duong, outside of Hanoi, said that his family wanted him to be whatever he wanted. He is a first-year student at the National Economic University of Hanoi, studying

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<sup>26</sup> Hong, et al. 2002. p.13.

<sup>27</sup> Central Steering Committee of Child Disability Survey, 1998, pp. 27-29, 38-41.

<sup>28</sup> Hong, et al. p. 13

<sup>29</sup> Hong, et al., p. 25.

management. However, another student, a wheelchair user, mentioned that his family had not been too helpful to him and, due to their lack of assistance, as well as the difficulty of wheelchair travel in Hanoi, he often stayed at home by himself. Given these difficulties, it is quite impressive that he has been able to study English, computers and graphic design and was looking forward to a new job, found through a friend, as a graphic designer. Attitudes of the society at large were said to be onerous by several others—society does not expect persons with disabilities in Viet Nam to be able to do the same work as others, or discourages them by giving them “strange looks.” This kind of societal doubt caused one young woman to give up her plan to become a teacher for fear that her disability may prevent her from controlling the classroom. She was hoping instead to find a job in an office as a secretary.

The Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998 reported that the children with disabilities describe the majority of neighbors and local residents as having “positive and favourable attitudes” towards them, and they were treated “normally or with sympathy and kindness.” There was some variation according to region, with over 70 per cent of children with disabilities in urban areas of the Central Highlands reporting favourable treatment and just 40 per cent in the Mekong Delta. The Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998 also reported on participation rates of children in age-specific activities,<sup>30</sup> ranging from full to partial to no participation. Children with sight disabilities have the highest full participation rate (62.8 per cent) in age appropriate behaviors, while those with fits and strange behavior have the lowest, at just 18.8 per cent. Children with hearing and speech disabilities were both around 34 per cent (34.6 and 34.2 respectively). The average rate of full participation for all children with disabilities was 44.0 per cent, while children with disabilities engaged in partial participation 38.5 per cent of the time and no participation was 16.6 per cent.<sup>31</sup>

There is considerable awareness of the need to create a friendlier environment for people with disabilities, and several programmes aim at increasing positive images of people with disabilities. The state-run newspapers and television often relate stories of success of people with disabilities throughout Viet Nam.

## **2.7 Disabled Persons’ Organizations**

Viet Nam does not yet have a national organization, representative of all disabled people, that acts as an advocacy organization. There are, however, a growing number of small, self-help organizations in various cities and towns throughout the country, primarily, though not exclusively, in urban areas. These self-help groups tend to have, at most, a few dozen members. They are not necessarily formal organizations with full-time staff, offices and programmes, regular meetings or specific responsibilities. Most emerged from groups of friends who were acquainted at university or elsewhere, and they often concern themselves first with employment opportunities, as this is the most direct and immediate way in which to improve the lives of their members. Some of these organizations also attempt to broaden their scope and means of action and attempts at advocacy. Their activities are described more fully in Section 4.6.

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<sup>30</sup> Age-specific activities are not explicitly defined in the study.

<sup>31</sup> MOLISA Centre for Information Statistics on Labour and Social Affairs and UNICEF, *Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998*, Table 11, page 71.

Several of these groups include:

- Bright Futures group of Disabled Persons in Hanoi with approximately 30 members
- Ha Noi University Students Group
- Ha Noi Self-Help Group of People with Disabilities
- Culture and Sport Club for People with Disabilities of Hanoi (50 members)
- Ha Noi Deaf Club
- Ha Noi Sport Club for People with Disability
- Disabled Youth Association, Ho Chi Minh City
- Hoang An Group, Taan Binh
- Disabled Woman Association
- Disabled Youth Club for Job Orientation
- Hoaong Taam Disabled Group
- Dawn Club

The National Blind Association, founded in 1969, is the oldest and most widely established organization with official branches at many administrative levels (provinces, districts and even communes) and roughly 30,000 members throughout the nation. Though, as its name implies, this group works for the blind only, their substantive reach is broad, including work on literacy, integrated education, vocational training, self-employment and income generation in their many projects all for the blind. One laudable and apparently unique programme is to provide credit for those who graduate from their vocational training programmes. The Blind Association also borrows from the National Fund for Employment for Persons with Disabilities.

## Part Three: Legislation, Policies and Institutional Structures

### 3.1 International policies adopted

Viet Nam ratified the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Decade Declaration on 11 June 1993. Viet Nam has not yet ratified the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159). Viet Nam has, however, ratified 15 International Labour Organization Conventions, including three core Conventions (C. 100, C. 111 and C. 182). A fourth convention (no. 128 on Minimum Age) is currently under consideration by the Office of the Prime Minister.

Furthermore, Campaign 2001 was held in Hanoi in December 2001. Disability issues were discussed among people with disabilities in Viet Nam and throughout Asia. Attendees at this meeting adopted the Hanoi Declaration, seeking to extend the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002, for another ten years as “a regional mechanism to facilitate the elaboration and implementation of an international convention on the rights of people with disabilities.”

### 3.2 National legislation

The most significant piece of legislation in Viet Nam pertaining to people with disabilities is the Ordinance on Disabled Persons, passed in 1998. The Constitution of 1992 and the Labour Code of 1994 both mention protections for people with disabilities. Several laws pertaining to production workshops for people with disabilities have also been promulgated. Education laws mention people with disabilities and include special provisions for scholarships and other assistance.

**Table 3.1: Major Legislation including People with Disabilities**

Legislation	Content
1992 Constitution of Viet Nam	Rights and duties of citizens. No fees for primary school.
1998 Ordinance on Disabled Persons (No. 06/1998/PL-UBTVQH-10)	Covers all aspects of legislation pertaining to people with disabilities.
1994 Labour Code, No. 35-L-CTN	Covers wage laws, vocational training, occupational safety and hazards, and production establishments for people with disabilities.

### 1992 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

The 1992 Constitution of Viet Nam, Article 52, states: “All citizens are equal before the law.” The Constitution emphasizes that all citizens have both rights and duties that pertain to their place in society, including the right to receive training and instruction.<sup>32</sup> The only specific mention of people with disabilities is the following: “The State and society shall create the necessary conditions for handicapped children to acquire general

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<sup>32</sup> 1992 Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Article 59.

knowledge and appropriate training.”<sup>33</sup>

Also, according to the 1992 Constitution, Article 59, children shall pay no fee to attend primary school. According to a recent report, the revised Constitution 2001, Article 67 confirmed that “the disabled shall be supported by the State and the society.”

### **Ordinance on Disabled Persons (No. 06/1998/PL-UBTVQH-10).**

In 1998, the Government of Viet Nam passed the most comprehensive pronouncement of official state policy towards disabled citizens, the Ordinance on Disabled Persons (No. 06/1998/PL-UBTVQH-10).

*The State encourages and creates favourable conditions for disabled persons to exercise on an equal basis their political, economic, cultural and social rights and develop their abilities to stabilize their life, integrate themselves into the community and take part in social activities.*<sup>34</sup>

As in the Constitution, the Ordinance refers to both rights and duties of people with disabilities in family and society, including the “duty to overcome difficulties to integrate themselves into the community, observe laws and public order and respect social ethics.”<sup>35</sup>

Education for people with disabilities is covered in Chapter III of the Ordinance, including the right for disabled people to be considered for reduction or exemption of school fees and for full scholarships. Education can take place at home, in a specialized school for people with disabilities or in a general school. The State will also “create favourable conditions for organizations and individuals to open schools and classes specifically for disabled persons.”<sup>36</sup>

Job training and employment for disabled people are described in Chapter IV of the Ordinance:

*The State, job-training establishments, and economic organizations shall create favorable conditions for disabled persons to choose their trades, learn trades and find jobs for themselves or to work right at home in a way suitable for their health and their work capabilities.*<sup>37</sup>

Vocational training centres do not require people with disabilities to pay fees, and students with disabilities are entitled to social allowances. Organizations that train or employ disabled people shall “enjoy preferential policies as stipulated by labour legislation.”<sup>38</sup> Job-training establishments for people with disabilities are also entitled to: (1) borrow money at preferred rates for job-training projects, (2) lease land at convenient areas (3) receive financial assistance from the government to build schools and classes

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<sup>33</sup> Op Cit.

<sup>34</sup> Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Chapter I, Article 3.

<sup>35</sup> Op Cit.

<sup>36</sup> Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Chapter III, Article 17.

<sup>37</sup> Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Chapter IV, Article 18

<sup>38</sup> Op Cit.

and to purchase equipment. People with disabilities are exempt from fees. Employment service centres are instructed to “assist, reduce or exempt fees for disabled people who need vocational guidance or constancy, job training or job seeking.”<sup>39</sup>

Circular 23 TC-TCT 26 April 1996 from the Ministry of Finance states explicitly that production facilities<sup>40</sup> are tax-free, though the new Value-Added Tax Law, which came into effect in 1999, has no specific provision and has therefore led to some complications.

Self-employment of people with disabilities, also mentioned in Chapter IV of the Ordinance, shall be provided many of the same benefits as apply to job-training centres. There are provisions for (1) borrowing capital at preferential rates and (2) assistance by the local administration in technology transfer, production development and marketing. Any production facilities or businesses reserved for people with disabilities are also tax-exempt, can borrow at preferential rates and may also be permitted to borrow from the “National Fund for Job Settlement.”<sup>41</sup>

In Article 11 of the Ordinance, people with disabilities will be provided “necessary orthopaedic devices from specialized agencies along with the participation of the community.” Article 26 demands that construction and reconditioning of residential homes and public utility works should take into account “convenient use by disabled persons, first of all those defective in movement and eyesight” within the guidelines of present standards. The Ministry of Construction has also recently passed a new building code (May 2002) to create accessible buildings. The Ministry of Transportation is responsible for the development of plans for disability-related transportation options.

### **Labour Code of 1994, No. 35-L-CTN**

The Vietnamese labour code covers a wide variety of issues that are often included in several separate laws on other nations. Social security, wage laws, vocational training, occupational safety and hazards, and production establishments for people with disabilities are all discussed in the labour code.

Chapter 3 of the Labour Code also contains the key pieces of legislation pertaining to vocational training. Article 20 states, “every person has a right to choose freely an occupation and place in which to be trained according to his/her employment requirement.” Article 21 includes tax provisions for organizations providing training for people with disabilities:

*Training establishments which cater for war invalids, injured military personnel, the disabled and ethnic minorities or are located in areas with high rate of underemployment or unemployment, and provide training in traditional trades through tutoring in factories or at home shall be considered for tax reduction and exemption.*

A potentially discriminating clause in Article 22 states that Trainees must be in good health in order to meet the requirements of the trade concerned, but no specific definition

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<sup>39</sup> Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Chapter IV, Article 20.

<sup>40</sup> Production facilities are places of work that can be run by persons with disabilities or organizations to employ persons with disabilities—they may recompense employees in cash or by paying room and board.

<sup>41</sup> Ordinance on Disabled Persons, Chapter II, Article 13.

of good health is provided. Trainees in these institutions, if engaged in production during the period of training, should be paid at a rate agreed upon between the two parties. Vocational training should require a training contract, which can be written or oral, between the trainee and the trainer or person representing the training establishment. Article 25 states: “All undertakings, organizations and individuals are strictly prohibited from making use of apprenticeship and training for profit and for the exploitation of labour, or to entice or compel trainees and apprentices to engage in unlawful activities.”

Chapter 6 covers the determination of wages. Article 56 states:

The minimum wage is fixed based on the cost of living to ensure that a worker performing the most elementary work in normal working conditions recuperates his/her basic work capacity and partly accumulates reserves for regenerating enhanced capacity. The minimum wage serves as a reference for calculation of the wage rates for other categories of work. The Government decides and announces for each period a general minimum wage rate, minimum wage rates for different areas and for various branches of trades, after having sought the views of the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour and of representatives of employers. When the cost of living index increases, entailing a reduction in the workers' real wages, the Government shall readjust the minimum wage rates accordingly to safeguard the workers' real wages.

Chapter 9 of the Labour Code covers occupational safety and hazards. Article 107 covers the injury or disability of a person at work:

1. Persons who become disabled as the result of employment accidents or occupational diseases shall undergo a medical assessment to determine their relevant degree of disability and the degree of reduction in their ability to work, and, shall receive treatment for vocational rehabilitation. In case of continuation of employment, they shall be assigned work adapted to their health basing on the recommendations of the Labour Medical Assessment Board.
2. The employer must bear all medical expenses incurred from the time of emergency first aid to that of completion of the medical treatment for the victims of employment accidents and occupational diseases. Workers are entitled to social insurance benefits for employment accidents and occupational diseases. If the undertaking is not yet covered by the compulsory system of social insurance, the employer shall pay the worker an amount equal to the amount provided for in the Social Insurance Regulations.
3. The employer shall pay compensation at least equal to 30 months' wage to the worker whose ability to work has been reduced by 81 per cent or more, or to the relatives of the worker who has died as a result of an employment accident or occupational disease which is not due to the fault of the worker. Where the employment accident or occupational disease is due to his/her fault, the worker or his/her

relatives shall still be granted an allowance at least equal to 12 months' wages.

Chapter 11, Section 3 of the Labour Code of 1994 addresses the employment of disabled persons using the policy tools of tax deductions and preferential loan rates to encourage employment.<sup>42</sup> A quota levy system, as outlined in Article 125 of the Labour Code, is the main mechanism for funding and ensuring job opportunities for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. The law provides for any enterprise to have 2 to 3 per cent disabled labourers. Those establishments not meeting this quota are required to pay a levy to a National Fund. According to MOLISA, this Fund is not yet fully operational. Article 126 outlines state responsibilities towards people with disabilities, including establishing vocational-training facilities and segregated production facilities. People with disabilities are not permitted to work more than seven hours per day or 42 hours per week.<sup>43</sup> Article 127 prohibits overtime, night-shift work and "hard, dangerous work or work exposed to harmful substances."<sup>44</sup> According to the Labour Code, the State is to set aside funds every year "to assist the disabled in achieving early recovery of their health and ability to work and have vocational training." Some groups interpret the restrictive nature of laws pertaining to hours worked and the inability of people with disabilities to work overtime as restrictive measures.

Chapter 12 of the Labour Code, in Article 143, discusses social insurance:

1. During the period in which the workers are on leave for medical treatment for injury due to an employment accident or occupational disease, the employer shall pay them the full wage and bear all medical costs incurred as stipulated in paragraph 2, Article 107 of this Code. After the treatment, and depending on the degree of reduction in capacity to work due to the employment accident or occupational disease, the worker shall be examined and his/her class of invalidity shall be determined for entitlement of a lump sum or monthly benefit paid by social insurance fund.
2. In case of death due to employment accident or occupational disease, the worker's relatives are entitled, in addition to survivors' benefit and funeral expenses as stipulated Article 146 of this Code, to a lump sum allowance from social insurance fund equivalent to 24 months of the minimum wage as determined by the Government.

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<sup>42</sup> Labour Code of 1994, Chapter XI, Section 125

<sup>43</sup> Op cit.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., Section 127.



**Table 3.2: Other Implementing Legislation**

<b>Implementation of the Ordinance</b>	
Decree no. 55/1999/ND-CP of 10 July 1999	Decree no. 55/1999/ND-CP of 10 July 1999 details the implementation of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons. Article 20 assigns responsibility for implementation to the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Finance, the concerned ministries and branches as well as the People's Committees of the provinces and centrally-run cities shall have to guide the implementation of this Decree. (See Section 3.5 for more on the duties of each ministry)
<b>Education Regulations</b>	
Law on Universal Primary Education 1991	Primary education (grades one through five) is compulsory for every Vietnamese child between the ages of six and ten years.
Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children 1991	State and society must assist disabled children so that they can integrate into the society and be admitted to school.
1999 Education Law	Chapter VIII of the 1999 Education Law specifies: "the State establishes and encourages organizations and individuals to set up schools and classes for disabled people while at the same time promoting inclusive education to assist disabled people in enjoying functional rehabilitation, basic education and vocational training." Education assistance to people with disabilities is also included in the Education Law of Viet Nam of 1999. The government encourages organizations and individuals to open schools and classes for people with disability.
Article 11 of Regulation 55/ND-CP	Outlines provisions for social support of students with disabilities—they shall receive a subsidy of 100 000 VND (US\$6.66 ) per month and should be provided school supplies and books.
Regulation 55/ND-CP	The Ministry of Education and Training has issued plans in Circular 20/GD-DT to develop the education of disabled children into a sub-branch of the national education system.
Decree 26/CP	The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has had official responsibility for the education of children with disabilities since 1995, when Decree 26/CP transferred this responsibility to MOET from MOLISA.
Resolution 121	Approved by the Prime Minister, this resolution pertains to scholarships for students with disabilities to receive 120,000 VND (US\$8.00) per month, and students in especially difficult economic circumstances should receive an additional 100,000 VND (US\$6.66) monthly.
<b>Employment related Legislation for People with Disabilities</b>	
Decree No 81/CP 1995	Resolution 81/CP of 1995 sets fee reductions for vocational training in relation to the percentage of loss of working capacity—50 per cent reduction in tuition fees for 31-40 per cent loss in working capacity, full exemption for 40 per cent or higher. There is also a provision to have 100 000 VND (US\$6.66) per month.  Article 5 of Decree 81/CP requires each province to establish a locally run Employment Fund for Disabled Persons funded with local budgets, National Fund for Employment Promotion, compensation fees, support from national and overseas organizations and individuals and other sources.
<b>Other Legislation</b>	
1989 Law for the Protection of Children's Health	States that the World Health Organization (WHO) approach to community-based rehabilitation would be the strategy for giving services for children with disabilities. Article 23 states that MOH and MOLISA are both involved in providing facilities for rehabilitation, and Article 47 includes MOET as another service provider.
Regulation on Social Insurance and Government's Decree No.12/CP of 26 January 1995	Labourers who become disabled due to labour accidents or occupational diseases shall be entitled to the social insurance regime under the Regulation on Social Insurance, issued together with the Government's Decree No.12/CP of January 26, 1995.
Enterprise Law	This 1999 law was developed to create an enabling environment for business creation through the country. The simplification of regulations has encouraged new businesses to apply.
Decision 37/CP	Strategy and orientation of public health in Viet Nam from 2000 to 2020.
Building Code and Criteria of Construction Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (QCXDVN 01:2002 and TCXDVN 264:2002)	All public utility buildings such as hospitals, administrative agencies, educational, sport and cultural buildings, public and residential buildings, roads and pavements must be accessible to be used by disabled people.

The Government of Viet Nam promotes the establishment of production units created expressly for people with disabilities—often run by and employing many war invalids. Legislation pertaining to their creation and strengthening includes many provisions related to tax advantages and provision of land or assistance in obtaining facilities. The following is a summary of other legislation pertaining to employment and people with disabilities.

**Table 3.4: Legislation pertaining to Production Units for People with Disabilities**

<b>Legislation</b>	<b>Content</b>
Decree No. 90/CP 1995	Implementation of Labour Code provisions on vocational training.
Directive 120 of the Secretariat on 11 April 1992	The direction and methodology to create employment (included a section on the disabled).
Decision 92 dated 25 July 1992	Strengthening production units for the disabled.
Decision no. 15/Ttg of the Prime Minister on 20.10.1992	Basic production teams for the disabled.
Order 6 of the National Assembly	Concerning disabled people has one chapter on skill training and work creation.
Directive 72 of the Government on 31.10.1995	Directs work creation (including a section on the disabled).
Circular No. 16/LDTBXH 1993	Implementation of Decree No. 72/CP Dated 31.10.1995 on recruitment.
Circular No. 34/LDTBXH 1993	Assessment of “disability degree” of people with disabilities working in establishments of their own.
Circular 23/TCT of the Ministry of Finance	Circular 23/TCT of the Ministry of Finance specifies sales, income, housing and agricultural land-use tax exemptions for segregated production units of people with disabilities.
Resolution 55/ND-CP of the Government	Resolution 55/ND-CP of the Government outlines the implementation of the service-fee reduction or exemption for people with disabilities requiring services of employment service centres. Article 13 of Resolution 55/CP condemns the refusal of positions to people with disabilities.
Government's Decree No.12/CP of January 26, 1995	Labourers who become disabled due to labour accidents or occupational diseases shall be entitled to the social insurance regime under the Regulation on Social Insurance, issued together with the Government's Decree No.12/CP of January 26, 1995.
Law on Value-Added Tax No. 57-L/CTN 22 May 1997	This value-added tax went into effect in January 1999 and contains no specific provisions exempting production units for people with disabilities from this tax.

### 3.3 Disability policies and regulations

Although training and development is considered a high priority of the government of Viet Nam in the coming years, according to the National Coordinating Committee on Disability there is no overall plan and no measurable targets pertaining specifically to training and employment of people with disabilities.

In 1997, the Ministry of Health issued a “Plan Proposal for the Development of Rehabilitation Towards the Year 2000-2020.” The rehabilitation plan remains focused primarily on physical, rather than vocational, rehabilitation. The overall strategies cited include the statement that “Every disabled (sic) are guaranteed on their education, economic status and job opportunity, improvement of quality of life.” Objectives towards the year 2020 are to set up rehabilitation departments in all general hospitals at provincial and city levels and to run comprehensively CBR networks. Targets include 100 per cent coverage by the rehabilitation network, 100 per cent of school-age disabled children to receive “the right forms of education,” 100 per cent of adults to integrate into society and 80 per cent to have a job.<sup>45</sup>

Several specific targets are outlined in documents relating to a new international project between the United States Department of Labour and MOLISA that will be implemented

<sup>45</sup> Government of Viet Nam, Ministry of Health, Plan Proposal and Targets for the Development of Rehabilitation Towards the Year 2000-2020, 1998.

by Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped. This project will aim to establish model training programmes and working relationships between employment service centres and employers with the aim of placing 80 per cent of trainees in permanent jobs. These centres will be trained in how to become more responsive to skills needed in local communities. Through a media and outreach programme, attempts will be made to increase the total number of people with disabilities seeking training by 20 per cent. In addition, ten centres will be renovated to be 100 per cent accessible for wheelchair users and for people with sight and hearing impairments. Furthermore, MOLISA is aiming to improve the overall level of the general vocational training system, including increasing the number of students who are enrolled and higher levels of technical skill of those graduating.

The following general development plans outline some of the major goals and targets for the future for the mainstream education and training systems, as well as for increasing employment opportunities.

The Strategy for Socio-Economic Development, introduced in Section 1.4, calls for an increase in training to ensure that 30 per cent of employees will be trained by 2005, compared to the present 20 per cent. However, this document fails to mention training and employment for people with disabilities. People with disabilities are specifically mentioned just three times, and always in regards to care by others. The first citation is from Section One, discussing goals achieved in the previous plan: “The charity activities for helping disabled people, war victims, childless old people, orphan and homeless children has brought many realistic results.”<sup>46</sup> Further, in a section on education, the following reference is made to “recovering ability for about 590 thousands disable children.”<sup>47</sup> And lastly, another goal included in the plan is, “Taking care, helping the elderly people who have no supporting, who are disable and war invalid.”<sup>48</sup>

Specific targets of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy are:

- Universal primary education (100 per cent enrollment) by 2005,
- Full day primary school by 2010, and gender and ethnic differences to be reduced in primary education by 2005 and secondary education by 2010,
- Improved maternal health by providing universal access to safe and reliable reproductive health care by 2010, and
- Reduced under-five malnutrition to 25 per cent by 2005 (from 41 per cent in 1997) and to 20 per cent in 2010.<sup>49</sup>

The National Target Programme on Hunger Eradication and Poverty Alleviation and Job Creation, which was passed in May 2001, will be implemented by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids, and Social Affairs. This plan includes requirements to meet demands for education, transportation, vocational training, culture and transportation, communications and other needs. Aims include enhancing investment in the infrastructure of poor communes including micro-irrigation work, schools, health clinics, transportation roads, electric power, fresh water, cultural activities, information and special policies to transfer technological advances to help to create employment and increase their incomes.

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<sup>46</sup> Government of Viet Nam, *Strategy for Socio-Economic Development (2001-2005)*, p. 20.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p.60.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p.61.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 12-13.

Provision of social services is also important including education, health care, family planning and fresh water. This is of special concern for minorities and women.

Specific aims related to education and vocational training include:

- Eliminate illiteracy in villages, and continue the illiteracy campaign and programme of compulsory primary education.
- Try to reach the objective of compulsory secondary education. Organize vocational training for children of poor households, especially the ethnic minority children, schoolgirls, and the disabled.
- Increase the investment rate and give priority to the primary education system. Ensure sufficient classrooms for primary and secondary education and reorganize the network of schools and classrooms to make it more convenient for school children in mountainous, border, and island areas.
- Renovate existing vocational centres, especially the ones providing training on the occupations serving agricultural production and rural areas (cultivation, animal husbandry and plant protection).
- Diversify teaching and learning forms and upgrade material facilities of existing boarding schools.
- Open new schools in some key areas for ethnic minority children. Oversee the establishment of special boarding schools for ethnic minority children, where students live with local people, as well as illiteracy elimination classes, with contributions from the students and community.
- Encourage local and international organizations and individuals to take part in free-of-charge educational activities for poor children, implement compulsory education for ethnic minority children (in ethnic language as well as Vietnamese language), re-open regular educational units, community educational units and supplementary educational classes.
- Improve teaching quality of the primary educational system in mountainous, border and island areas; ensure sufficiency of teachers, and ensure that the pupils from poor households are provided with free textbooks and get tuition and school fee reduction or exemption (including vocational training schools).
- Create conditions for all poor pupils in urban areas to go to regular primary schools.

Another set of goals relates to training of the poor on business skills, extension services (agricultural-forestry-aquacultural), technological transfer and occupational development, as follows:

- Equip poor with new knowledge, train them on applying technical advances and other suitable training methods.
- Build up and develop an extension service system (agricultural-forestry-aquacultural) suitable to poor people and poor communes.
- Build up models of application of new technological advances, models of sedentarization, migration to new economic zones, models of rearing aquatic products, trainings of the poor on business skills and extension services.
- Support the development of rural occupations, especially of processing industry, craft industry, other services for production and lives and handicraft and traditional occupations.

- Provide vocational trainings and trainings for after-harvest technology transfer (maintenance, processing of agricultural, forestry and aquatic products).

Inclusive education is the official strategy to be followed in order to educate children with disabilities. MOET undertakes to establish management and guidance, research, practice, training and support for staff and teachers. At a conference on integrated education in Vung Tau in 2001, the Ministry of Education officially declared it would pursue integrated education as their main policy. The Ministry has stated that, “Most children with disabilities in urban cities and the deltas should be guaranteed school attendance, health care and have vocational training (including pre-school and primary education).”

Goals to reach by 2005 include:

- Advantaged areas must mobilize 60-70 per cent children with disabilities to attend school, and
- Disadvantaged areas must mobilize 40-50 per cent of children with disabilities to attend school.

The Ministry of Health has also issued a plan, proposal and targets for the development of rehabilitation towards the year 2000-2020.

### **3.4 Evaluation and review of policies**

As there is no overall plan for vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities, there is also no formal evaluation mechanism. However, the National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD), described further in Section 3.5, is planning a conference in 2003 that will review the status of implementation of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons. Several NCCD members with disabilities will attend this review. This seminar will specifically aim to review and assess the condition of people with disabilities in the country before and after the implementation of the Ordinance, to examine what hindrances exist to full implementation and to provide solutions and recommendations. According to the National Coordinating Committee on Disability, there are not currently any measurable targets pertaining to training and employment for people with disabilities.

### **3.5 Institutional structures**

Viet Nam first developed policies for people with disabilities focusing on “war invalids”—soldiers who were injured in conflict. In 1987, the Ministry of War Veterans and Social Affairs merged with the Ministry of Labour to become the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs. Many regulations still mention and give preference to war invalids and their families, though the numbers of war invalids is decreasing as the last major conflict in Viet Nam ended in the 1980s. Vocational training centres were established during and after the wars that Viet Nam endured throughout the first half of the twentieth century to assist war veterans to regain their capacity to work. Today, these institutions are shifting their services towards younger citizens, often with mild mobility impairments. Emphasis remains on long-term training (18-24 months) in segregated facilities. The other major remnant of war veteran rehabilitation is the encouragement of production workshops for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. Originally established as

places for veterans to earn a living, these establishments have slowly remade themselves and opened to other workers with disabilities. These production units receive tax breaks and other preferential treatment (as outlined in Section 3.2 and 3.3).

Article 16 of Implementation Decree no. 55/1999/ND-CP of 10 July 1999 outlines the following duties for the main ministries involved in providing services for people with disabilities.

The Ordinance on Disabled persons outlines the duties of each ministry, as cited below:

- The Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs shall exercise the State management over the protection of and care for the disabled throughout the country; study and promulgate or submit to the Government for promulgation policies applicable to disabled people on vocational training, job creation and social support; organize and manage sanatoriums and functional rehabilitation establishments for disabled people who are war invalids, diseased soldiers and preference beneficiaries like war invalids, and other social establishments.
- The Ministry of Health shall exercise the State management over the orthopedics and functional rehabilitation; coordinate with the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in classifying forms and grades of disability; work out and realize the community-based primary health care programme for the prevention of disability as well as functional rehabilitation programme for disabled people which are suitable to the country's capability and levels of economic, scientific and technological development; organize and manage sanatoriums, functional rehabilitation establishments, orthopedic centres for functional rehabilitation and functional rehabilitation systems in polyclinics and specialized hospitals.
- The Ministry of Education and Training shall have to train teachers, work out programmes, compile textbooks and teaching documents for disabled pupils, coordinate with the Ministry of Health in working out programmes for the training of personnel specialized in functional rehabilitation and compiling medical teaching documents on functional rehabilitation to be used in medical intermediate schools and universities; supply teaching equipment for teachers and learning aids for disabled pupils, suited to their respective disability; organize a network of schools and classes with necessary conditions for the admission of disabled children and educate them along the direction of integration; direct the opening of classes, enrollment of pupils, teaching and learning, as well as living conditions in the schools and classes reserved exclusively for disabled people.
- The Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Communications and Transport and concerned ministries and branches shall elaborate the planning and criteria on the construction of public works, hospitals, schools, working offices and facilities in service of the public transportation, thus meeting the disabled people's minimum demand therefore, first of all, those disabled in their movement or vision, especially in cities and important traffic hubs according to the provisions of Article 26 of the Ordinance on the Disabled.
- The Ministry of Communications and Transport shall prescribe the priority regime on public transportation and freight reduction and exemption for wheelchairs in service of the disabled people's movement.

- The Ministry of Culture and Information and mass media agencies shall elaborate plans on the propagation and popularization of measures for disability prevention, the State's regimes and policies for the disabled and support for disabled people at the community; work out and broadcast literary and art programmes and works of educational significance on the disabled and sign language programmes on television; and create conditions for disabled people to take part in cultural activities suited to their capability and health.
- The other ministries and branches shall have to organize the protection of and care for disabled people according to their respective functions, tasks and powers.
- The People's Committees of different levels shall have to exercise the State management over the protection of and care for disabled people in their respective localities; determine the number and categories of disabled people in the localities, organize the implementation of policies and regimes for disabled people and mobilize people to prevent disability and assist disabled people.

As described above, MOLISA is the key ministry involved in implementing policies and overseeing services related to vocational training. In MOLISA, the General Department of Vocational Training oversees the two major vocational training schools for people with disabilities in Viet Nam and also runs the vocational training system for the general population. Other people with disabilities can attend mainstream vocational training schools as well. MOLISA is also in control of nine clinics throughout the country that produce assistive devices, including prosthetics, orthotics and wheelchairs. Most of these centres are also rehabilitation centres. Furthermore, Departments of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA) run six orthopedic centres.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) has responsibility for the community-based rehabilitation programmes and other primary health and preventive care programmes. They are responsible for immunization programmes that have successfully reduced the incidence of such disability-causing diseases as polio. MOH is also responsible for eight orthopedic workshops throughout the country. The Ministry of Health also has a National Institute of Rehabilitation, which focuses on research in physical rehabilitation.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) oversees special education, education and teacher training. The Centre for Special Education at the National Institute of Educational Sciences (NIES) plays a significant role in addressing the development of a special education programme in Viet Nam. The NIES partners with a variety of international NGOs in developing teacher training materials and a curriculum for special education.

The Ministry of Construction and the University of Architecture of Hanoi Institute for Research have successfully passed new barrier-free access codes and standards in 2002. These will be used on new construction and reconstruction and include provisions on walkways, car parking grounds, entrances, exits and public activity areas.

The Viet Nam Society for Protection and Support of the Disabled maintains a "humanitarian aid fund for disabled persons" at the central level.

The National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD), officially established in February 2001, is housed at MOLISA and will be involved in developing national coordination and plans for programmes and policies related to people with disabilities. This group will be made up of representatives of MOLISA, MOET, MOH, Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Culture and Information, the Committee of Sports and the National Blind Association. New members were recently added from the Ministry of Finance and the Government Office of Personnel, General Department of Tax, the Ministry of Justice, Viet Nam Television and Viet Nam Radio. There are a total of 20 members and a standing committee<sup>50</sup> of six members. In addition to the representative of the National Blind Association, there will be two other representatives of the disability community, including one wheelchair user.

The four primary functions of NCCD are (1) employment and training promotion (2) instruction and guidance on the establishment of self-help groups, (3) accessibility compliance in buildings and (4) raising awareness through mass media. There is not yet a formal document outlining specific goals and plans of NCCD.

Mass social organizations, affiliated with the Communist Party, include the Farmer's Union, the Women's Union, and the Veterans Association. The worker's organizations are the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour and the Viet Nam Cooperatives Union. The employer's association is the Bureau of Employer's Activities of the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The employer's organizations and trade unions are not involved with the NCCD.

The Committee for the Care and Protection of Children often plays a role in providing charitable programmes for children with disabilities. This could include placing children into institutions, encouraging them to enroll in vocational training schools or informing parents about rehabilitation options. The People's committees at local levels are often involved in placing children and others with disabilities to the services provided by the government.

### **3.6 Other implementing organizations**

In addition to working through local administrations, the government of Viet Nam works in close cooperation with mass organizations such as the National Blind Association and an organization for disabled people, the Society of Support for Vietnamese Handicapped Orphans and Children (SSVHO), which operates primarily as a charity organization. SSVHO focuses on donating such items as wheelchairs, as well as food and supplies for holiday celebrations, rather than on helping to develop the vocational capacities of people with disabilities. The few small self-help organizations of people with disabilities also receive financial assistance from outside of the country in addition to the chance to travel to conferences and training seminars. They do not receive formal, on-going financial support from the government. The government provides funds for official organizations such as SSVHO and the National Blind Association.

The international development community in Viet Nam has also been involved in

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<sup>50</sup> Standing members are permanent and members involved in calling meetings and setting agendas of the NCCD.



coordination and planning on disability issues. For instance, through a variety of consultative processes, including the Poverty Policy Working group, representatives from UN agencies, the World Bank and international NGOs have contributed to the formation of the poverty alleviation and other strategic plans adopted by the government in Viet Nam.

International NGOs working on disability issues have their own organization called the Disability Forum, which is organized under the auspices of the Viet Nam Union of Friendship Organizations (VUFO) and the NGO Resource Centre. The Disability Forum aims “to promote cooperation, collaboration and better communications among NGOs, disabled people’s organizations and government agencies.”<sup>51</sup> Issues addressed include rehabilitation and health-care services, employment, inclusive education, consciousness-raising and barrier-free access to public places. As local NGOs of people with disabilities become more common, they are increasingly being welcomed into this coordinating body. The following table summarizes the activities of the Disability Forum members. In Viet Nam, all international NGOs must have a government partner, and these are listed in parentheses following the description of work undertaken.

**Table 3.6: Disability Forum and member organization activities and government sponsors**

NGO	Key Projects (Government Partner)
Disability Forum	Countrywide workshops are held every six months. Regular monthly updates are distributed via e-mail. A website will be established which may include postings of employment opportunities for disabled people. Information also available at: <a href="http://forum.wso.net">http://forum.wso.net</a> (VUFO-NGO Resource Centre)
Associazione Italiana Amici di Raoul Follereau (AIFO)	In Viet Nam since 1992, AIFO works in ten communes to develop a community-based rehabilitation programme that aims to make young disabled people self-sufficient. (MOH)
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	Focuses on inclusive education and early intervention. The overall objective is to improve socio-economic integration through the provision of educational and training opportunities. (National Institute of Educational Science)
German Development Service (DED)	DED supports the development of local partners with the provision of technical support education and health sector development. (MOLISA, DOLISA, NGOs)
Handicap International (HI)	HI develops a community-based rehabilitation network, training volunteers to provide basic physiotherapy exercises, homemade technical aids and advice. One part of this work pertains to developing provincial rehabilitation services including prosthetics, crutches and wheelchairs. HI is also supporting a central training centre in Ho Chi Minh City for rehabilitation staff. (MOLISA, Provincial Health Services)
Health Volunteers Overseas (HVO)	Since 1992, HVO has been working to improve capacity in the health sector through training for health professionals. HVO supports the development of groups of people with disabilities through networking and underwriting the umbrella activities of the Disability Forum. (MOH)
International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	ICRC provides prosthetics to war amputees through a Ho Chi Minh City clinic. (MOLISA, Viet Nam Red Cross)
Komitee Twee (KT)	KT provides medical care and treatment to young disabled children. They also work on the development of a special education programme for hearing impaired and intellectually challenged children. They are currently working on an early intervention programme for hearing impaired children. (Training and Development Centre for Special Education, National Institute of Educational Science, Research and Education Centre for Disabled Children, HCMC)
Medical Committee Netherlands Viet Nam (MCNV)	Main goal of programme is inclusion of people with disabilities at all levels. MCNV promotes community-based, comprehensive approach beginning with community-based rehabilitation. Their work has now extended to inclusive education projects and may begin work on vocational training in the future. (Local People’s Committees of Dak Lak and Cao Bang)
Netherlands Leprosy Relief (NLR)	NLR works on leprosy control programmes and provides technical and financial support to 34 provincial or regional programmes.

<sup>51</sup> Disability Forum, List of INGOs, Viet Nam, 2002. p. 1.

	(Bach Mai Hospital Rehabilitation Department, National Institute of Dermato-Venereology and National Institute of Hygiene and Epidemiology)
Office of Disability Technical Assistance (ODTA)  Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped (VNAH)	ODTA and VNAH are working on increasing mainstream employment opportunities for people with disabilities. A new project will assist the government in effective implementation of labour law and policy to promote the equal employment of people with disabilities. Training and promotion of policies related to implementing the Ordinance on Disabled Persons and Barrier-Free Construction Codes and Standards are of special importance as are programmes to assist the National Assembly, MOLISA and NCCD in programmes advocating for the implementation of the Ordinance. VNAH programmes include prosthetic and orthotic device delivery throughout Viet Nam, wheelchair manufacture of high-quality low-cost chairs, improved service delivery through provision of training and technical assistance to the Government of Viet Nam. (MOLISA)
Pearl S. Buck International (PSBI)	PSBI works with hearing-impaired children in selected provinces to provide them with hearing aids, and access to inclusive education. They are assisting in the development of Vietnamese sign language and working to train teachers in sign language. (MOET, National Institute for Educational Sciences)
Prosthetics Outreach Foundation (POF)	Prosthetics Outreach Foundation works to serve amputees in Hanoi, through mobile outreach elsewhere in Viet Nam and to train prosthetic and orthotic technicians. (MOLISA)
Rädda Barnen –Swedish Save the Children	Rädda Barnen does not implement programmes, but works with partner organizations to prevent exploitation, neglect and abuse of children-at risk. Children with disabilities are one target group for whom they are developing community-based models with inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream preschool and primary schools. They are also supporting training of teachers and development of a pilot pre-service programme at four teacher training colleges. (National Institute of Educational Sciences, Local People's Committees, Provincial Departments of Education and Training, Provincial Teachers Training Colleges)
Save the Children Fund/ UK	The Save the Children Fund works with a rights, not charity approach, improving access to existing resources in the community and increasing networking among government services. (Care and Protection of Children Committee—CPCC)
Viet Nam Training Centre for Orthopaedic Technologists (VIETCOT)	VIETCOT is the main training centre of orthopedic technologists including apprenticeship programmes.
Viet Nam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAf)	VVAf works on rehabilitation and landmine impact survey (in planning stages). They work to ensure continued orthotic and prosthetic services to people with physical disabilities in northern Viet Nam. VVAf has a new project on developing self-help groups of people with disabilities. VVAf will also work to develop communication and participation within a network of Vietnamese and external agencies to facilitate a coordinated approach to services for people with disabilities in Viet Nam (MOH, MOD)
World Concern Development Organization (WVDO)	World Concern is working with adolescents with disabilities to address their social, vocational and economic needs. Adaptive vocational training programmes are being developed and attempts to link to employment and income-generation programmes are under way.
World Vision International (WVI)	World Vision is working to improve skills and knowledge of service providers including local officials and volunteers as well as to provide rehabilitation services, including social, educational and mental rehabilitation. Physio-occupational therapists visit CWD homes to guide family members once a month.

Source: Disability Forum, List of INGO Members Viet Nam, 2002

Other than the NCCD, no other inter-ministerial groups or committees in support of employment and training activities for people with disabilities exist. Meetings with the Vietnamese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) revealed no disability and employment initiatives currently under way. Trade Unions belonging to the Viet Nam Confederation of Labour are involved in running some protected workshops in the north of the country. There are no known activities currently underway with the Viet Nam Confederation of Commerce and Industry or the Viet Nam Cooperative Union related to employment of people with disabilities.

## Part Four: Education, Vocational Training, Self-employment and Employment Services for People with Disabilities

### 4.1 Education system

Since the passage of the Law on Universal Primary Education (1991), primary education (grades 1 through 5) is compulsory for every 6-10 year-old Vietnamese child. The total student population in primary school in Viet Nam is 1,931,611.<sup>52</sup> Middle school follows with grades 6 through 9, and students may then attend secondary school (grades 10 through 12). While the enrollment rate of primary education is 91 per cent, grade repetition is common,<sup>53</sup> and only 61 per cent of the 6-15 year-olds complete their primary education.<sup>54</sup> As a signatory of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Viet Nam has committed to the universal completion of primary education by 2015. The number of hours of instruction in Viet Nam is also far less than children in some neighboring countries. Thai children, for example, attend school over twice as many hours.<sup>55</sup> School fees were introduced in 1989, although no fees are charged for primary school. Other associated costs such as books, supplies, and transportation puts the cost of schooling out of reach for many of the most disadvantaged families. Urban areas have greater opportunities for tertiary and preschool education than rural areas.<sup>56</sup>

Viet Nam has a gross enrollment in primary, secondary and tertiary of 67 per cent.<sup>57</sup> The division of public education expenditure on education in 1997, the first year data became available, is 43 per cent for pre-primary and primary, 26.0 per cent for secondary and 22.0 per cent for tertiary. The government of Viet Nam spends 7.4 per cent of the total federal budget on public education, equivalent to 3 per cent of the GNP.<sup>58</sup> Urban areas have greater possibilities for all students to study than rural areas. Poverty incidence is lower in urban areas as well, further contributing to the likelihood that a student will stay in school.

**Table 4.1: Expenditure on education by level**

	Grades	Per cent of government education budget
Primary	1-5	43 % (with pre-primary)
Secondary	6-12	26 %
Tertiary	University	22 %

Source: 2001 Human Development Report p.172

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<sup>52</sup> UNESCO 1996.

<sup>53</sup> Jones, p. 16.

<sup>54</sup> Ministry of Education statistics, in *Community-Based Rehabilitation*, p. 44.

<sup>55</sup> *Viet Nam Development Report 2002*, p. 7.

<sup>56</sup> *Human Capital of the Poor in Viet Nam*, p.17.

<sup>57</sup> *Human Development Report, 2001*, p. 143.

<sup>58</sup> *Human Development Report 2001*, p.172.

## 4.2 Educational opportunities for people with disabilities

Few children with disabilities in Viet Nam have the chance to attend school. A survey for UNICEF in 1998 estimated that only 3-5 per cent of children with disabilities attends school in Viet Nam.<sup>59</sup> Another report from Kommittee Twee, a Dutch NGO, estimates that 10 per cent of children with hearing impairment attend school.<sup>60</sup>

**Table 4.2: Estimates from various sources on numbers of children with disabilities in school**

	Estimates in Per cent or total numbers
Kommittee Twee	10 per cent of children with hearing impairments
MOLISA/UNICEF	3-5 per cent of total number of children with disabilities in Viet Nam
Chau, Nguyen Huu et al. Education of Children with Disabilities in Viet Nam: Status Quo and Solutions. National Educational Science. Ministry of Education and Training. 2001	32 000 in year 2000 6 000-7 000 in 90 special schools
People with Disabilities in Viet Nam Research Report 2001 (Hong, et al. 2002)  Ho Chi Minh City	12 of 23 special schools and research centres <sup>61</sup> have implemented early intervention programmes and are working with 85 children with disabilities including 45 hearing impaired children, 38 intellectually impaired children and 2 visually impaired children.
People with Disabilities in Viet Nam Research Report 2001 (Hong, et al. 2002.)  Ha Noi	70 per cent of Hanoi CWD attend school 2 030 children attend school in Ha Noi—most at the primary level
People with Disabilities in Viet Nam Research Report 2001 (Hong, et al. 2002.)  Quang Nam	2 316 children with disabilities aged 6-14 studying from grade 1-5 in 2001 and 290 children with disabilities are studying beyond this level. Of these, 275 are mobility-impaired, 300 with visual impairment, 183 with hearing impairment, 356 with language difficulties and 1 202 with intellectual impairment. The highest number of children with disabilities is in grade one—649 children representing 28 per cent of total children with disabilities. There are 363 children with disabilities studying at grade five or just 15.7 per cent of all children with disabilities.

Inclusive education programmes, in which children with disabilities join regular classes, have been conducted in 44 of 601 districts in 34 of 61 provinces with 11,000 classes and 10,000 teachers participating. In the year 2000, the programme received 32,000 children with disabilities.<sup>62</sup> These programmes include efforts to develop training materials and textbooks, organize training courses on teaching children with disabilities for current teachers and teachers-in-training and increasing awareness of disabilities and the unique needs of children with disabilities in the community.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>59</sup> MOLISA Centre for Information Statistics on Labour and Social Affairs and UNICEF, Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998, p. 17.

<sup>60</sup> Op cit.

<sup>61</sup> There are two research centres pertaining to children with disabilities, one in the north at the Pedagogic University of Hanoi and one in Ho Chi Minh City.

<sup>62</sup> UNESCAP 2002 Questionnaire on Achievements

<sup>63</sup> Ryan, Ph.D., Evaluator for Catholic Relief Services Mid-Term Evaluation, 2000. p.5.

According to the MOLISA/UNICEF Viet Nam Child Disability Survey in 1998, of 961 school-aged children with disabilities surveyed, 47.6 per cent were currently in school, 36.6 per cent had never attended school and 15.8 per cent had dropped out.<sup>64</sup> Children who had never attended school stated reasons ranging from:

1. Family poverty (51.7 per cent)
2. No special school available (32.7 per cent)
3. Do not like school (7.1 per cent)
4. Learning at home (2.6 per cent)
5. No transportation (2.3 per cent)
6. Ashamed (1.1 per cent)
7. Other reasons (2.6 per cent)

The following are reasons cited for dropping out of school:

1. Ashamed (20.4 per cent)
2. Family poverty (11.2 per cent)
3. “No ability to learn” (9.9 per cent)
4. “Does not like to learn” (3.3 per cent)
5. No school programme for CWD (1.3 per cent)
6. Other reasons (23.9 per cent)

In urban and rural areas, the rates of non-attendance were comparable, at about 45 per cent and 20 per cent.

The comprehensive study by Hong et al reports on education statistics in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Quang Nam (see Table 4.2). Hanoi DOLISA reports that 2,030 children, or 70 per cent of Hanoi children with disabilities, attend school—most at the primary level.<sup>65</sup> Ho Chi Minh City DOLISA states that 1,870 children are studying there in 689 classes. In school year 2000-2001, 12 of 23 special schools and research centres have implemented early intervention programmes and are working with 85 children with disabilities, including 45 hearing impaired children, 38 intellectually impaired children and 2 visually impaired children. Quang Nam has the best statistics of the three cities covered by this study. Quang Nam DOLISA reports that there are 2,316 children with disabilities aged 6-14 studying from grade 1-5 in 2001, and 290 children with disabilities are studying beyond this level. Of these students, 275 are mobility-impaired, 300 have visual impairment, 183 have hearing impairment, 356 have language difficulties and 1,202 have intellectual impairment. The highest number of children with disabilities is in grade one, with 649 children representing 28 per cent of total children with disabilities. There are 363 children with disabilities studying at grade five are just 15.7 per cent. According to the Deputy Director of Quang Nam DOLISA, the higher numbers in earlier years has resulted from efforts by provincial authorities to bring more students into the classroom. Teachers are also being trained about teaching methodologies for children with disabilities.

Specialized schools often have courses on occupational and vocational training. Blind schools have courses on sewing, tailoring, embroidery and painting. The Nguyn Dinh

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<sup>64</sup> Central Steering Committee of Child Disability Survey (1998), Background paper on Viet Nam Child Disability Survey 1998.

<sup>65</sup> Hong et al, pages 21-23.

Chieu school for the blind also has courses on handicrafts such as the making of brooms, brushes and mats. Intellectually impaired students may be involved in “hygiene work” for classes and for the school. Female students are taught to go to the market, as well as cooking and baking.

The National Blind Association also offers education courses, particularly to teach Braille (75 days). One challenge to those learning Braille is to be able to maintain these skills through practice.

A Special Education Faculty was established in August 2001 at Hanoi Pedagogic University to deliver teacher-training courses to teachers from throughout the country with the intention of developing a national special-education system. Work on this area began in earnest at the Training and Development Centre for Special Education at Hanoi National University, established in 1995. Teachers in training, attending the Pedagogic University, will teach at all levels in the education system. This includes kindergarten through high school, and even university. The Training centre works in partnership with the Komitee Twee of the Netherlands on two major projects: (1) a project to develop early intervention and educational programmes for hearing-impaired children, and (2) the first national teacher trainer course for education of intellectually-impaired children.

The teachers-in-training all have practical classroom experience during their training. Furthermore, short courses are established that will give the possibility of skill enhancement to teachers already in the field. Teachers are also provided with allowances for work in specialized schools and classes for general and vocational training. The German Development Service (DED) also runs a programme in Thua Thien Hue Province in cooperation with the Office of Genetic Counseling and Disabled Children of Hue City. This model programme, expected to last five years, began in April 2001. It will develop training materials and teaching aids, run courses for kindergarten and preschool teachers in cooperation with DOET and will also support awareness and training activities. The World Bank also has plans to include disabled children in their new project in Viet Nam on the least advantaged children.

One recent study carried out as an evaluation of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) integrated education programme encouraged greater accuracy in identification and assessment of children with disabilities. It was shown, however, that considerable impact had been indicated in the communities where the programme had been implemented including:

- An impact on the lives of children with disabilities,
- Improvements in the quality of teaching in schools,
- Strong community infrastructure,
- Strong support to and for families, and
- Strong collaborative partnerships.

Areas of continued improvement include: (a) expanded and in-depth training for teachers; (b) implementation of academic/individualized educational services for children with disabilities; and (c) identification of the levels of supports that children with disabilities need in order to be successful in inclusive classrooms.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Ryan, Ph.D., Evaluator for Catholic Relief Services Mid-Term Evaluation, 2000.

### **4.3 Mainstream vocational training system**

MOLISA is the ministry responsible for vocational training systems throughout Viet Nam. Minister of Labour, Nguyen Thi Hang, announced that Viet Nam would be striving to increase the numbers of skilled labourers through increased spending on vocational training centres throughout the nation. Authorities are hoping that by 2005, there will be over 1 million students in vocational training schools and a training centre in each province. Enrollment in long-term formal vocational training schools nationwide in 1999/2000 was 134,652 in training programmes with certifications. Close to three times as many students (394,673) were enrolled in short-term courses (with no certification). Areas of training include information technology, telecommunications, machinery, biotechnology, petro-chemicals, textiles and garments and aquatic product processing.

According to the General Department of Vocational Training of MOLISA, there are 164 vocational training schools throughout the country. These include schools under MOLISA as well as those guided by other ministries (all ministries have at least one school that trains people to work in that ministry or in that field). There are only seven private training schools in Viet Nam. There are also 137 colleges or universities that offer vocational training of some form. There were 130,000 students trained in the formal system in 2001. Certificates are granted to graduates from the formal, long-term (one year or longer) vocational training system. Formal training is available for any one of 226 choices from a list of occupations chosen from research from all ministries and all provinces throughout the country. There are 750,000 students being trained in short-term courses of less than one-year duration. These skills are also taken from the list, but provide only select skills for a trade, not mastery of all aspects of the trade. Over 70 per cent of graduates are employed or self-employed at graduation.

There are also over 40 training centres, run by state-owned enterprises, from which over 90 per cent are given placement in these enterprises. This includes the coal, steel and electricity companies, Viet Nam Airlines and other companies in paper, rubber, telecommunications, television, radio and gas and petroleum. These programmes also provide apprenticeship possibilities, which are not available in all long-term training schools. In addition, most ministries have a school to train people to work in that field, including the Ministries of industry, transportation, fishing, trade, construction, agriculture and rural development and health, among others.

Few private vocational training centres exist. These are primarily in urban areas, but their growth has not been tremendous due to some examples of fraud and a lack of regulatory controls. MOLISA is considering developing licenses for private centres.

### **4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities**

People with disabilities in Viet Nam are permitted to enroll in state-run vocational training centres at reduced or no cost. However, meetings with the General Department of Vocational Training estimated that only 1,110 people with disabilities are trained in all vocational training programmes year in mainstream programmes. Roughly 80 per cent are self-employed upon graduation and 20 per cent are employed in other establishments

when they finish school.<sup>67</sup> These statistics are quoted quite regularly, but there are no known studies that investigate incidences of people with disabilities in mainstream vocational training programmes in more detail.

#### **4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities**

The General Department of Vocational Training runs two official schools for vocational training of people with disabilities—one in Son Tay town, Ha Tay province in the north of Viet Nam, and the other in Thu Duc, near Ho Chi Minh City in the south. A total of 4,000 disabled people have graduated from these schools since 1984.<sup>68</sup> There are 1,200 students attending these schools each year—600 in each school. MOLISA has required that 70 per cent of trainees in these institutions be people with disabilities. Curriculums are developed through consideration of the labour market, and include the following courses:<sup>69</sup>

- Civil electronics (24 months)
- Civil electricity (14 months)
- Civil tailoring (10 months)
- Industrial tailoring (3 months)
- Office informatics (5 months)
- Automobile mechanic (18 months)
- Motorbike mechanic (6 months)

A trip to the school in the north revealed significant details about the school's operation and training programme. Originally established as the Viet Nam-Poland Friendship school, funded by the Polish government to train veterans, in August 2001, the school was reorganized and renamed the Technical and Technological School Number 1. For eight years, from 1993 to 2001, the school was known as the Centre for Vocational Training College for Persons with Disabilities. Its task is to train people with disabilities from northern provinces that want training. Members of families of war invalids are also eligible to attend, and are often counted as disabled for quota purposes. The school now also accepts able-bodied students alongside the students with disabilities. Though there are funds for training 500 students, just half of these are people with disabilities; the other half consists of non-disabled individuals. The non-disabled students are also from poor families—possibly from families of veterans, so they are also exempt from fees. For one student with a disability, the school is reimbursed 5, 400,000 VND (US\$360) per year. This amount will need to cover all expenses, including not only tuition but also food and housing in a nearby dormitory. Since the founding of the school, the number of students has continually increased while funding has decreased. Students with disabilities also receive 120,000 VND (US\$8) a month in scholarship. The school has recently begun a programme of outreach with ten contracts to neighboring provinces to provide skills training. These courses, catering to 30 students in each province, also last 18-24 months.

Most graduating students from the Technical and Technological School Number 1 get

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<sup>67</sup> Interview with General Department of Vocational Training, MOLISA.

<sup>68</sup> Viet Nam News, 21 June 2001

<sup>69</sup> AIFO, VINAREHA, Community-Based Rehabilitation Programme Viet Nam: Direction, Approach, Achievements, Constraints p. 36



jobs in enterprises in Hanoi and Dong An, including some sewing factories. It is estimated that 75 per cent have jobs or are self-employed upon graduation, while 25 per cent do not. Among the 25 per cent are many who were described by the school staff as “too severely disabled” to work. The school also has a relationship with Viet Cot programme in Hanoi that supplies many students with assistive devices, and their experts visit at least once a year. The difficulties the school faces remain financial obstacles, attracting students (as many students for convenience can stay in the vocational training schools of their own provinces as these are developed) and acquiring new equipment. The government-sponsored programmes do not provide supportive devices beyond the simplest supply of assistive devices, as mentioned above, or the provision of ramps on the first floor of schools. Additionally, the students attending these vocational training centres appear to suffer from mild physical disabilities in most cases. As all trainees have completed the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, there is not a need for remedial assistance. No blind or deaf students or students with mental illnesses have ever attended this school.

Technical and Technology School No. 2 is the second major segregated training school in Viet Nam. It is in Thu Duc, a town in the south of Viet Nam. Short-term courses include sewing, woodworking, welding, basic information technology and motor repair. Long-term training courses are also available and generally last 24 months. These courses include: industrial electronics, vehicle repair, home electronics, wood working, industrial electronics, home appliances, industrial sewing, refrigerator engineering and information techniques. Students from other provinces who attend the school stay in the dormitories on the premises. Some graduates work in industrial zones in the Ho Chi Minh City areas.

There are a variety of specific programmes established by non-governmental organizations, associations, unions and other charitable organizations as well.

The Hoa Sua School in Hanoi, founded by several retired teachers in 1995 with the assistance of the Association of Floating House of France, trains deaf children in embroidery. This is a programme that claims to be “the first programme where the primary curriculum, communication skills, Vietnamese language and job training are combined in order to enable people with hearing impairments to live independently.” The project on Vocational Training for people with hearing impairments has an objective of providing an educational background, vocational training and creating stable jobs. Hoa Sua aims to meet two goals:

1. Provide training and employment to the adolescents who have difficulties in life within Hanoi.
2. Set up a model of a training school that can operate a budget and run a business independently, in order to create a budget for free training, which can be applied to the other parts of the country.

The students are 18-25 years of age, are from Hanoi in most cases, and receive free training. Though most students are hearing impaired, they may also be children of war dead or war invalids who live in Hanoi, orphans and street children or children from poor families, recommended by the People’s Committee of communes, districts or DOLISA. Students who graduate will earn a minimum of VND 500,000 (US\$ 33.33) per month and the maximum of VND 2,000,000 (US\$ 133.33) per month. Statistics from 2000 show that of the 865 students who have studied at the school, 450 (52 per cent) have jobs, and 90 students (10 per cent) failed at training and obtaining employment.

World Concern runs a programme specifically for adolescents with disabilities in several provinces in the North of Viet Nam. They teach skills such as motorcycle repair, electronic repair, sewing and embroidery.

The vocational opportunities outlined above are far more accessible to students in urban areas, except in the cases where these schools may be in rural areas such as the school in Son Tay. There is no data on outcomes by gender or by disability type. There are no known studies on the effectiveness of training of the two segregated schools run by the government.

No comprehensive evaluations have been done of the segregated vocational training system.

#### **4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities**

Viet Nam has a strong tradition of developing self-help groups that are able to collaborate on employment issues. In a recent conference on the occasion of the National Day of the Disabled Person, April 18, 2002, several Hanoi groups met together and presented ideas on employment and training and establishment of self-help groups.

The Hanoi Self-help Club of Persons with disabilities works on self-employment issues, either through their classes on foreign-languages and information technology or by meeting and exchanging information about people with disabilities issues. They have also set up small service and production groups. The Culture and Sport Club for Persons with Disabilities of Hanoi also states that one of their main objectives is “to help one another with the capital in doing business, learn from the experiences in doing business, having vocational training and getting employment.” They also encourage their members to “develop their abilities and creative power, live an independent life and support their families as much as they can.”<sup>70</sup> In 2001, a new Club for the Deaf in Hanoi was established. They meet weekly and share experiences, play sports and also talk of employment opportunities for one another. The Hanoi Sport Club for People with Disability also proposes employment opportunities as the first priority “in order to mitigate their difficulties.”<sup>71</sup>

Bright Futures group is a dynamic group of people with mobility-impairments in Hanoi. They have four objectives:

1. To encourage persons with disabilities to live independently,
2. To remove bad attitudes and prejudices towards persons with disabilities,
3. To exchange information and promote society’s interests in creating a barrier-free environment so that persons with disabilities can integrate into the community’s life, and
4. To run vocational training programmes to assist persons with disabilities to find

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

employment.<sup>72</sup>

There is no data on the numbers of people reached by these groups and their employment status. It is assumed that these groups are more common in urban areas than in rural areas, where levels of education are lower and possibilities for activities beyond subsistence activities less frequent.

#### **4.7 Mainstream employment services**

Viet Nam has an extensive system of 150 employment service centres run by MOLISA, local labour organizations and some government-sponsored social organizations. All are required to report quarterly to MOLISA. These centres collect information about the labour market, register job seekers, provide counseling and training options, operate vocational centres with short-term training courses, operate small production facilities bridging vocational training and the labour market. Some have also operated skill-training centres for people with disabilities, though no data is kept on people with disabilities who have gone through these mainstream systems. Two-thirds of job placements in 1997 were to organizations legally compelled to use their services, including state-owned enterprises, joint ventures, public sector and foreign employers.<sup>73</sup>

Several international projects to develop the centres have been key to their improved functioning. One is a French programme that operated in 1994-1995, and another is a recently concluded ILO Japan Project. Another project is run by the United Nations Development Programme in cooperation with the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) and the affiliated Labour Centre of Viet Nam Trade Union (LACETU), also in cooperation with the ILO. Now, with a higher-skilled staff, improved infrastructure and the introduction of information technology, most are providing additional advisory services, increasing job placements and aiming to have a more client-service approach to their work. Some centres have even begun visits to schools to advise students on job searching, and others have strengthened linkages with provincial and national planning initiatives.

The three-year ILO Japan project, concluded in 2000, focused on strengthening centres in Hai Duong, Phu Tho, Nghe An, Ho Chi Minh City and Dong Nai. One centre acknowledged that before this project they acted as an administrative rather than a service organization. One particularly successful component was the introduction of job bazaars, introducing how “labour markets could be made more active in a practical way.”<sup>74</sup> MOLISA has since budgeted funds to hold 80-100 job bazaars in the next five years. The ILO project also included input from the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the VGCL and the Ministry of Planning and Investment—the key organizations in the reshaping of the labour market in Viet Nam.

Many of these employment services also have production units, which will be mentioned below. There is no unemployment insurance programme in Viet Nam.

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<sup>72</sup> Reports on the Seminar to Promote Conversation Exchange among Persons with Disabilities in Hanoi, p. 8.

<sup>73</sup> ILO and MOLISA. National Workshop on Employment Services, 1998. p. 3.

<sup>74</sup> International Labour Organisation-Japan MOLISA Employment Services Project Terminal Report, p. 13.

#### **4.8 Mainstream employment-services opportunities for people with disabilities**

People with disabilities are permitted to enter mainstream systems, however, this is not common and there are no guarantees that additional support services will be available. At the conclusion of the ILO-Japan project mentioned above, centres conceded that they must further strengthen their capacity to play a major role in the placement of disabled people in employment, including training, advice on job opportunities and “above all, convincing employers that disabled people can be trained and are highly productive and reliable workers.”<sup>75</sup>

A new project funded by the United States Department of Labour through the Office of Disability Technical Assistance (of Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped) cooperating with MOLISA will aim to make the national system of employment service centres accessible and appropriate for people with disabilities. The specific target is to make ten centres 100 per cent accessible for wheelchair users, and blind and deaf people. This programme also aims to establish model training programmes and working relationships between employment service centres and employers with the aim of placing 80 per cent of trainees in permanent jobs. This project will also work to make these centres responsive to skills needed in local communities. Through a media and outreach programme, they also aim to increase the total number of people with disabilities seeking training by 20 per cent.

#### **4.9 Special employment and employment-support services for people with disabilities**

In 1998, the Ho Chi Minh City People’s Committee established the first employment assistance programme in the nation for people with disabilities. This Centre for Vocational Training and Job Creation for persons with disabilities is run by the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (DOLISA). Since beginning operation in May 1999, the Centre has organized medical examinations for 745 people with disabilities, placed 152 people with disabilities into jobs, and organized vocational training for 330 people with disabilities.

#### **4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation**

The main focus of self-employment promotion in Viet Nam is the encouragement of the development of small and medium enterprises through loans of the National Fund for Employment Promotion and easing of regulations on creation of new businesses (through the Enterprise Law 1999). The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and many other international organizations have had programmes promoting small and medium enterprise development. Thousands of new enterprises have been registered in the wake of the implementation of the new enterprise law. In 2000-2001 over 300,000 new family businesses were also registered.

MOLISA employment service centres aim to develop their capacity to encourage and support self-employment activities, including the suitability of potential entrepreneurs to the risks of creating a new business, providing skills in business management and giving information on availability of support services such as credit.

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

The Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry has a small and medium enterprise division that has recently been working to develop an enabling environment for private sector development. The ILO assists Viet Nam in developing small and medium enterprises through promoting a policy environment amenable to business development, providing business development services and through enhancing public-private partnership. The ILO also has a programme called the Start and Improve Your Business Programme (SIYB) which develops the capacity of entrepreneurs in areas related to basic business skills. The programme recently worked with Radio Sweden and Radio Can Tho to produce a programme that reached out to study groups. The ILO project, Small Enterprise Development (SEED), is providing assistance and fostering public-private partnerships that enable micro-finance projects. The World Bank Mekong Project Development Fund is also working in this area to provide assistance in terms of developing financial institutions to provide credit, marketing, finance and management skills for entrepreneurs, and other programmes to develop the capacity of local institutions to develop a vibrant private sector.

#### **4.11 Mainstream support for self employment and income generation for people with disabilities**

Staff from various mainstream employment service centres received an introduction to the International Labour Organization's Start and Improve Your business programme (SIYB) in May 2000 with the distinct purpose of using this programme as a guide to facilitate the establishment of new businesses by people with disabilities. There is no information as to the on-going implementation of this programme at the individual centres. It is not known if any microfinance programmes have specific provisions to encourage the inclusion of people with disabilities.

#### **4.12 Self employment and income-generation support services for people with disabilities**

The National Blind Association has the most well developed programme to assist people with visual disabilities in establishing income generation activities. From 1991 to 2000, Hong et al. reported that the Blind Association has lent a total of 58 billion VND in 49,000 loans to blind and visually impaired individuals for an average of 1,178,000 VND. The origin of these funds is from the National Employment Fund, and lending takes place through a special programme in cooperation with the National Blind Association.<sup>76</sup> This is the only known successful lending programme specifically for people with disabilities originating from the national government. The National Employment Fund for Persons with Disabilities has not yet been successfully implemented. This is a high priority for the Department of Labour and Employment policy at MOLISA.

Localities still have not implemented the requirement of Decree 81/CP to establish local funds for employment promotion for people with disabilities.

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<sup>76</sup> Hong et al., p. 32.

#### **4.13 Poverty alleviation**

Poverty alleviation programmes were introduced in Section 1.4, and covered more fully in Section 3.3. No policies or practices to date ensure inclusion of people with disabilities in the poverty alleviation strategy for the nation. However, the NCCD intends to advocate for such regulations with the World Bank and other large donors.

#### **4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation**

According to the Dean of Technical School Number One in Son Tay (see Section 4.5 for a thorough description of this segregated vocational training centre), just four colleges in Viet Nam prepare vocational training instructors to teach in the general and segregated vocational training schools. Most teachers come from schools in the provinces of Nam Dinh and Hun Yen, though some come from the Hanoi Polytechnic University. Teachers should receive a 35-per cent supplement for working with students with disabilities. However, the state subsidy provided to the vocational training schools does not take this into account, which leaves less to be spent on room and board for the students as well as infrastructure and other expenses. Just twice in the past few years, teachers were provided seminars on the psychology of working with students with disabilities. Most students have mild physical disabilities, and as there have never been blind or deaf students, the teachers are not instructed in Braille or sign language.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) has developed programmes for training occupational therapists in national level schools. Programmes emphasize orthopedic technicians, physical rehabilitation and speech therapists. According to their statistics, approximately 40 per cent of community-based rehabilitation workers are doctors, and the remaining 60 per cent are physical therapists. MOH is also attempting to establish rehabilitation departments in colleges for university-level training.

#### **4.15 Barriers and gaps**

Lack of complete implementation of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons leads to continued gaps in services in education and vocational training and employment services. Gaps between the aim of legislation and the actual programmes implemented are significant. Provincial and local authorities of the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs and the Department of Education and Training lament the fact that few specific instructions have been disseminated on the implementation of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons.<sup>77</sup> Budget constraints are just one issue—without the appropriate technical know-how, as well as a sincere commitment to these issues, little work will be done.

As stated earlier, poverty is one significant barrier in school attendance, as many families cannot afford the associated costs of sending a child to school. More efforts will need to be made to facilitate the funding and provision of scholarships for school costs such as books and papers, and should also include assistive devices for children and assistance in transportation to school. Expanding the training of teachers will need to be continued, especially as inclusive education is the adopted strategy—all teachers should have some

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<sup>77</sup> Hong et al. (2002) pp. 25-26.

training in special education issues.

Barriers to creating an effective education system, either inclusive or segregated, still exist in Viet Nam. One education official stated that there are no budget allocations to develop programmes, and another lamented that with the current slow state of implementation it would take 50 years to develop a proper system. However, another official stated that with appropriate policy mechanisms, localities could mobilize resources to create appropriate possibilities for education for children with disabilities.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, policies to encourage teachers to work on disability issues are skewed in favor of specialized schools, with a 70 per cent increase over basic pay for these teachers compared to a negligible 0.4 per cent allowance for those in integrated classrooms.<sup>79</sup> Education and vocational training services need to be made accountable for meeting the needs of disabled children. Primary schools should be required to submit information on enrollment and advancement of children with disabilities. The stated goal of MOET to educate 60 per cent of children with disabilities in advantaged areas and 40 to 50 per cent in disadvantaged areas is still a long way off.

In terms of vocational training, efforts should focus on high placement rates or self-sufficiency of graduates to determine if courses are appropriate and effective. Group studies could be conducted with graduates of vocational training centres to see what additional skills could be added or how skills could be enhanced to suit the needs of the economy.

As Viet Nam is just beginning to develop its mainstream employment services, it is an ideal time to reiterate the importance of including people with disabilities in all service centres. The joint VNAH/MOLISA project funded by the United States Department of Labour will assist in developing the capacities of ten centres as a beginning towards this effort. More important will be aims to make all centres accountable for their ability and commitment to addressing needs of people with disabilities.

Including employer's organizations and trade unions in future efforts on employment for people with disabilities would also be a step forward, as their expertise pertains to the overall labour market and the development of jobs in the future.

There should be some emphasis placed on creating opportunities for underrepresented disability groups. Education and vocational training programmes should be certain to include those classified as having fits or strange behavior. Programmes for people with hearing and visual impairment are not presently included in the segregated or mainstream vocational training centres, and therefore few options for them exist.

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<sup>78</sup> Op cit.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid p. 27.

## **Part Five: Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities**

### **5.1 Open employment opportunities for people with disabilities**

While most people with disabilities may be self-employed, the Hong et al study mentioned earlier did attempt to count the numbers of people with disabilities working in businesses, though it is not clear what the definition is of the businesses in which these employees are working. The study, covering a little less than half of the provinces (28 of 61) found that of 605,941 employees, there were 17,296 employees with disabilities, or 2.83 per cent. Some provinces showed higher percentages—for Nam Dinh the number was 12.44 per cent, for Thai Binh, 6.9 per cent and Quang Ngai, 4.2 per cent.<sup>80</sup> However, the study also stated that many of these employees may be war invalids and workers injured on the job returning to work in the same enterprise, so they are not necessarily people with disabilities who were employed from the open market. The differentiation of war invalids is important, as many are not, in fact, disabled but do receive preferential treatment due to their status as veterans.

The quota system is not well developed or well enforced. It is a priority for MOLISA to develop the National Fund for Employment for Persons with Disabilities in the near future. It will be necessary, however, to find an effective enforcement mechanism to ensure contributions to the fund from employers who are not actively hiring people with disabilities.

Some decreases in employment may have occurred over the past years due to the transition from a socialist economy to a market economy. No statistics exist to show clearly the evidence of such a change. No examples were identified of teleworking or employment opportunities that have developed due to advancements in information technology.

### **5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments**

Production units are still quite prevalent, especially in the north of Viet Nam, where they constitute one of the most visible means of employment for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. The Prime Minister also promulgated Announcement No 92/TB/Ttg in July 1992 and Decision No 15/QT/Ttg in October 1992 to encourage the organization of production business units for people with disabilities. Just 17 provinces implemented this decision, which provides loans to people with disabilities from the National Employment Fund. As of March 2000, the fund provided 45.37 billion VND (US\$3 million) in loans to production units of people with disabilities.

Anecdotally, people with disabilities remain outside of formal employment systems. With a low level of education and training, most people with disabilities depend on family networks for jobs.

According to Hong et al (2002), there are over 360 production units where 51 per cent and above of workforce are people with disabilities or war invalids. Thai Binh province has close to one third of the total, with 109 units. The government manages just 27 of the production

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<sup>80</sup> Hong et al., p. 32.



units. Others are managed by social organizations, trade unions and independent organizations. These production units have created a total of 15,406 jobs, of which 12,331 are for people with disabilities.<sup>81</sup> Below is an assessment of production units for the city of Hanoi.

**Table 5.1: Production Units for People with disabilities in the city of Hanoi**

Type of ownership	Number of units	Employees	Invalid Employees	Disabled Employees	Gross Production Value (Billion VND)	Average income per capita per month (thousands VND)
State-run	6	338	143	66	72.0 (US\$4.8 million)	350-700 (US\$23-46)
Collective	13	373	92	206	3.8 (US\$253,000)	100-700 (US\$6.66-46)
Private	3	86	43	14	29.0 (US\$1.9 million)	400-700 (US\$26.66-46)
Total	22	797	278	286	104.8 (US\$6.98 million)	200-700

Source: Hong, et al. 2002, p. 33. Note: Invalid employees are people injured during war.

Ho Chi Minh City has just two production units for people with disabilities. They employ 172 workers and the average monthly wage is 700,000 VND (US\$ 46.67).<sup>82</sup>

Production units do not evidence clear transition strategies to move people with disabilities to full wage employment. No statistics are kept to show the success of moving people out of the production units. There are no examples of set-aside job programmes that are especially for people with disabilities.

### **5.3 Self-employment opportunities for people with disabilities**

The National Blind Association has been the primary borrower from The National Fund for Employment Promotion. From 1991-2000, the National Blind Association awarded 49,000 loans, averaging 1,178,000 VND, to their members, for a total of 58 billion VND. Loan repayment rates are not available. This programme is likely to continue in the future.

### **5.4 Other segregated or protected employment opportunities for people with disabilities**

Other instances of employment for people with disabilities include the apprenticeship possibilities available at various vocational training centres and employment services centres. These centres offer what should be transitional opportunities to people with disabilities as they seek more permanent positions. It appears, however, that these centres become de facto production units and many people with disabilities stay in these positions longer than originally envisioned.

<sup>81</sup> It should be noted that war invalids may be counted as disabled whether or not they suffer from a disability and that family member of war invalids are also given employment in production units as a benefit to their family.

<sup>82</sup> Hong et al p. 33.

## **5.5 Barriers and gaps**

Of course, a significant and continued difficulty to assess and overcome barriers for employment of people with disabilities at a policy level is the lack of sufficient data on the current employment status situation throughout the country. Considering the data presented throughout this paper, it is quite clear that the majority of people with disabilities receive little education, few attend vocational training programmes of any kind and a small minority has formal jobs. This leaves the majority of people with disabilities in Viet Nam working in rural areas in agriculture, and relying on family or household businesses within the informal economy.

The most significant barriers to employment at a macro-level for people with disabilities in Viet Nam relates to the same barriers faced by the population at large, which is the continued underdevelopment of the country and the lack of opportunity for the entire population. This is the most often cited reason for the high unemployment for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. The need to compete for very few positions against other people without disabilities is a significant barrier.

As mentioned under Section 4.15, whereas the Ordinance and Labour Code may be well intentioned, significant gaps exist in implementation. The quota levy system is not enforced, and no fines are committed. This means that the National Fund for employment promotion for people with disabilities can have no significant resources in order to carry out much of the stated commitments of the government to improve the situation for employment of people with disabilities. Guidelines for borrowing capital at preferential rates, outlined in Chapter IV of the Ordinance, are not well understood by potential borrowers among people with disabilities or available. Tax regulations are also complex and inaccessible to most.

Lack of education is another significant reason that people with disabilities in Viet Nam have difficulties finding work. As can be seen above, a very small proportion of people with disabilities in Viet Nam receive formal schooling, even at lower levels. Vocational training opportunities are also limited, and hence few people with disabilities in all of Viet Nam have education or vocational skills that would enable them to find work.

Difficulty attaining tax advantages and lack of clarity and consistency in government directives on tax incentives for people with disabilities to create their own businesses have prevented many people from benefiting from this policy. Apparently, one policy on value-added tax from 1/1/1999 directly contradicts the tax breaks that are offered to production units.

In general, rural areas and certain ethnic groups will have less access to any of the current programmes than urban residents of the majority Kinh ethnic group. Furthermore, most programmes that do exist will first include people with mild disabilities and some education, leaving out those with more severe disabilities and less education. There is rarely mention of people with mental or intellectual disabilities.

## **Part Six: Employment-promotion Activities Involving Social Partners**

### **6.1 Government or NGO employment-promotion activities directed at employers**

Raising awareness of the needs and issues of people with disabilities and employment among potential employers will be a goal of the new Office of Disability Technical Assistance project of Viet Nam Assistance for the Handicapped, which is funded by the United States Department of Labour (US-DOL). Another component of the US-DOL project will be to address labour relations. An advisory committee has been established that will address these needs. NCCD also includes this as in their Action Plan detailed in Section 7.3.

World Concern has conducted a number of awareness activities in the past, including printing calendars and other images that addressed all aspects of awareness of people with disabilities issues. Employment was often mentioned, but this was aimed at the general public, not specifically at employers.

### **6.2 Government or NGO employment-promotion activities directed at trade unions or workers' organizations**

There are no known programmes by the government or NGOs to educate, raise awareness or provide support to trade unions or workers organizations involved in the training and employment of people with disabilities.

### **6.3 Employer, trade union or workers' organization employment-promotion activities**

The Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour operation of production units was mentioned earlier. There are no current employer activities aimed at promoting employment of people with disabilities

## **Part Seven: Summary and Future Directions**

### **7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1993-2002**

The passage of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons in 1998 is the most significant policy development in Viet Nam in the past decade. The inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour code has also been an important step forward. Another sign of progress related to policy and governance is the creation of the new coordinating body, the NCCD.

The decade has brought significant economic change for the whole of the country. Economic growth has reduced the incidence of poverty from 70 per cent of the population in 1990 to only 37 per cent in 1998.<sup>83</sup> However, moving away from socialist production has also reduced the stability of jobs for people with disabilities who may have formerly been able to rely on opportunities within cooperatives.

It is difficult to report on the exact situation of employment of people with disabilities in Viet Nam without solid statistics. With regard to training, people with disabilities have access to mainstream training programmes, but few accommodations are made. Additional disability-specific training programmes exist, but their remit is limited to people with mild disabilities. Furthermore, few innovations in training courses have been made over the past years. In most vocational training centres, the training is limited to embroidery, motorcycle repair and so on.<sup>84</sup> However, the new VNAH-MOLISA project has set up ten employment service centres that include a media outreach programme with the aim of increasing the number of people with disabilities seeking training by 20 per cent. Other employment services for people with disabilities include A National Employment Fund for the Promotion of People with Disabilities and production facilities for disabled people. The former has not been officially established, however, and the latter may prove difficult if the quality outputs of these workshops prove inferior to that available on the open market. However, significant improvements in infrastructure have included the development of the community-based rehabilitation network, the enhancement of production of assistive devices and the extension of the inclusive education programme. These changes have been concentrated in urban areas or in a few select provinces where pilot projects have been conducted.

### **7.2 Looking forward**

A recent survey conducted by The Committee on Social Affairs of the National Assembly reports that 44 per cent of people with disabilities in Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Da Nang who were capable of work could not find jobs.<sup>85</sup> Of course, providing jobs to the over 1 million new entrants to the labour force per year will remain a challenge for Viet Nam at this stage of development. In light of this, in order to encourage higher employment among people with disabilities in the future, some new approaches should be encouraged.

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<sup>83</sup> (Statistics cited earlier) *Viet Nam Development Report 2002*, p. 7.

<sup>84</sup> Report on the Blind Association.

<sup>85</sup> Hong et al., p. 42.

At the macro-level, the following should be considered:

- Addressing the inconsistencies between policy and practice,
- Adding questions about people with disabilities to the annual labour survey,
- Ensuring primary school enrollment and completion for all children with disabilities,
- Matching vocational training and employment programmes with the demand for skills in the marketplace,
- Simplifying means of getting tax advantages for production and self-employment programmes,
- Raising awareness among people with disabilities and their families about the programmes policies created to meet their needs,
- Assuring access to credit for entrepreneurs with disabilities,
- Enhancing the collection of data to more accurately describe the situation of people with disabilities and employment,
- Providing skill training to include opportunities for people with disabilities to compete for more advanced jobs, perhaps more frequently in urban areas than in rural areas, and
- Developing special programmes in rural areas that meet the needs of this under served population.

These ideas are discussed in further detail in many of the plans and in-country recommendations below.

### **7.3 In-country plans and recommendations**

The NCCD has the most developed plans for the future of employment for people with disabilities in Viet Nam. These are listed more completely in Section 3.3. The National Coordinating Committee on Disability agreed on a 2-year working plan at a meeting held in May 2002. The main areas of work will be:

1. Employment and production establishments for people with disabilities
2. Establishment of self-help groups for people with disabilities
3. Accessibility of people with disabilities to public buildings
4. Public awareness on disability issues

A meeting with the NCCD revealed that their approach to employment for people with disabilities in Viet Nam would be to continue encouraging production units. Specifically, NCCD has plans to develop a draft policy to be presented to the Prime Minister by December 2002. The draft will advocate for establishing associations and business production units to help production workshops to apply for tax reductions and to increase their membership. Another plan is to produce an easy-to-understand booklet with detailed guidance on establishing self-help groups that would be disseminated in the disability community.

The Government of Viet Nam continues to promote the use of production workshops as the primary means of meeting employment needs of people with disabilities. A December 2000 workshop on policy for manufacturing enterprises of people with disabilities suggested the following ideas, which are supported by the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs and the Office of Disability Technical Assistance:

1. Strengthen and develop production or business establishments reserved for people with disabilities, implementing policy on credit, ensuring tax exemption (especially value-added tax).
2. In rural areas, assign or lease land and provide credit at low interest rates, developing handicraft operations and teaching production methods to people with disabilities.
3. Mobilize, encourage and provide useful policies for charitable vocational training programmes.
4. MOLISA, Ministry of Planning and Investment and Ministry of Finance should guide an integrated set of measures in order to implement Decree 81/CP to speed up employment procurement for disabled people.
5. A proportion of the National Employment Fund should be set aside for funding production units.
6. Every two years, MOLISA should summarize experiences and review implementation of policy for enterprises.
7. The government should enforce the quota levy system.

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# **Research Protocol**

## **PART ONE: COUNTRY OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 Introduction**

- Brief history and current events.
- Brief introduction to level of development and UNDP Human Development Index.

### **1.2 Geography**

- Area in square kilometers.
- Topography and climate.
- Rural/urban configuration.

### **1.3 Population**

- Total population.
- Geographic distribution, including rural/urban.
- Annual growth rate (total and by gender).
- Life expectancy (total and by gender).
- Age composition (total and by gender).
- Literacy levels (total and by gender).
- Unusual demographic patterns (e.g. declining birth rate affecting workforce, etc.).
- Primary religious groupings.

### **1.4 Government and general development plans**

- Form of government.
- Political system and stability.
- Structure of government, including number of ministries.
- Administrative structures (i.e., central and local, including number of provinces/states and description of local government structures).
- Influence of central government vis a vis local structures and influence.
- Socio-economic/development objectives and strategies (e.g. 5-10 year plans), especially in relation to training and employment and/or people with disabilities.

### **1.5 Economic composition and status**

- Economic sectors such as the size and significance of the country's primary agricultural, manufacturing and service industries.
- Relative sizes of the formal and informal sectors of the economy.
- Current annual GDP, GDP per capita, and annual growth rates.
- Percentage of people below the international poverty level.
- Impact of recent current events on economy, if appropriate (e.g., impact of the Asian economic crisis, political instability, etc.).
- Economic projections.

### **1.6 Labour markets**

- Labour force participation (total and by age and gender).
- Unemployment rates (total and by age and gender).

- Underemployment rates defined as less than 35 hours per week (total and by age and gender).
- Relative levels of open employment, multiple employment (individuals holding more than one job), and self-employment (total and by age and gender).
- Levels of employment in the formal and informal sectors (total and by age and gender).
- Wage levels for the primary occupations in the formal and informal sectors.
- Identify and describe any special issues that impact the country labour markets (e.g. importing labour, high rates of youth unemployment, ageing workforce, etc.).

## **PART TWO: PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES---DEFINITIONS, DATA AND SITUATION**

- 2.1 Identify and describe the most common definition(s) of disability used, especially the legal definition(s). If multiple definitions exist, describe them and reference their sources.
- 2.2 Identify and describe the primary disability classification system(s) used for official government purposes. If multiple classification systems exist, cite their sources, describe them and explain how they are used.
- 2.3 Identify and describe the major sources of disability information. For each, specify the
  - Nature of the source (e.g., Census, national database, survey, registration for services, study, etc.).
  - Definition of disability and classification system.
  - Data gathering procedures.
  - Scope (e.g., aimed at all disabled persons, a disability subgroup, a geographic part of the country, etc.).
  - Primary demographics and findings to include, as available, the number of and types of disabled persons, principle causes of disability, gender, literacy level, education, employment status, and income levels.
  - Problems that may have existed in collecting information or that affect the validity of the available data (e.g., unclear definitions, etc.).
- 2.4 Cite and describe national data sources and statistics related to the number of people disabled by on the job injuries and cite return to work rates, if available.
- 2.5 Describe the environmental factors affecting the full social participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of life, especially their direct participation in training and employment. Note those specific to certain disability groups. For example:
  - Environmental accessibility/barriers.
  - Communication accessibility barriers (e.g., sign language development/use, signage, use of Braille, etc.).
  - Transportation accessibility/barriers.
  - Others.
- 2.6 Describe social factors that may also affect participation including

- Prevailing cultural attitudes toward disability (including religious beliefs).
  - Negative attitudes or misconceptions (note disability specific attitudes).
  - Societal and family expectations for people with disabilities by gender, if appropriate.
- 2.7 Identify and describe the primary advocacy organizations of (not for) disabled persons and their advocates. In particular, note
- If the organizations represent a single disability group or all types of disabilities.
  - Number of members and geographic scope.
  - Objectives, influence and services, especially those related to employment and training.

### **PART THREE: LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES**

- 3.1 International policies adopted
- Has the country ratified the Asia Pacific Decade Declaration? If so, when?
  - Has the country ratified ILO Convention No. 159? If so, when? Describe any supervisory comments.
- 3.2 National legislation, official decrees, etc.
- Describe reference to equal rights, especially of disabled persons in the Constitution.
  - Cite and describe any global disability rights or disability-specific legislation.
  - Cite and describe legislation that currently influences persons with disabilities in relation to (include name, date, purpose, and disability provisions or lack thereof):
    - Education, vocational training and/or human resource development.
    - Employment, wage, and labour issues.
    - Income generation, self-employment and enterprise development.
    - Transportation, housing and building codes, assistive devices, other.
  - Cite and describe in detail any employment promotion legislation or provisions to promote employment of people with disabilities, such as quotas, levies, employer incentives, laws protecting employment rights, etc.
  - Cite and describe any national legislation that discriminates against disabled persons, for example, with regard to employment in certain professions, etc.
  - Cite and describe vocational rehabilitation provisions contained in the country's workers' compensation, social security and/or employment injury laws.
  - Cite any other legislation that promotes or hinders the training and employment of people with disabilities.
  - Describe any draft or impending legislation that deals with disabled persons.
- 3.3 Disability policies and regulations
- Cite and describe the national development plan as it relates to training and employment or includes the mention of people with disabilities.
  - Cite and describe significant existing regulations or policy statements to implement the legislation described in 3.2.
  - Cite and describe the national plan regarding vocational rehabilitation, training and employment for disabled persons, or a general rehabilitation/disability plan that includes these issues. Include the date developed, when and how the plan was

developed, who was involved in its development and if workers' and employers' organizations and people with disabilities were included, the process for developing the plan, and its significant contents.

- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to the availability of vocational rehabilitation staff and their competency and training.
- Cite and describe any policies and/or regulations related to vocational rehabilitation research activities.
- Cite and describe any other policies and regulations that relate to the training and employment of people with disabilities, their equal treatment, and their access to support services to enable them to secure employment and training.

#### 3.4 Evaluation and review of policies

- Are there measurable targets with regard to the training and employment of people with disabilities? If yes, describe these targets, including gender dimensions and requirements for joint action by all ministries (such as those responsible for employment, training, small enterprise or rural development).
- Describe methods of reviewing and evaluating national plans or policies.

#### 3.5 Institutional structure for policy and service implementation

- Briefly describe the historical evolution of vocational rehabilitation and other strategies to foster the employment of people with disabilities.
- Identify and describe the activities of the key government ministries or semi-autonomous organizations involved in implementing the policies and overseeing the services related to the vocational rehabilitation of disabled persons.
- Identify and describe any national coordinating body [ies] in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons, including the composition, structure and functions.
- Identify and describe any inter-ministerial groups or committees in support of employment and training activities for disabled persons.
- Describe the role of local (state/provincial) government in implementing disability policy.

#### 3.6 Other implementing organizations

- Describe the relationship between the government, the private sector and the NGO community regarding the implementation of disability policies and vocational rehabilitation services. In particular, note the funding relationship between government and NGOs, including organizations of/for disabled persons, and how they cooperate to implement policies or deliver services in response to policies (e.g., funding arrangements, policy implementing roles, partnerships, collaborations, etc.).
- Describe any policy implementation or service provider roles for employers' groups and trade unions.



## **PART FOUR: EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL TRAINING PRACTICE AND EMPLOYMENT**

### **4.1 General education system**

- Describe the structures of the primary, secondary and post-secondary education systems.
- Is schooling compulsory, and if so, to what level?
- Are fees charged, and if so, how much and to what level?
- Provide enrolment data for each level of schooling (total and by gender).
- Describe any urban/rural differences in educational systems and opportunities.

### **4.2 Educational opportunities for persons with disabilities**

- Cite data or estimate the proportions of the disabled population that receive primary, secondary and post-secondary education (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in the country's mainstream educational systems, and estimate the numbers of disabled persons enrolled at each level (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe NGO sponsored educational opportunities for disabled persons, and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
- Identify and describe the educational opportunities for disabled persons in other systems that may exist (e.g., community based rehabilitation programmes) and estimate the numbers enrolled (by gender and disability type).
- Estimate the retention rates for persons with disabilities in each of the above systems.
- Describe the availability of appropriate teaching aids, assistive devices and facilities for promoting successful educational outcomes for persons with disabilities.
- Describe the nature and extent of disability related teacher-training programmes for teachers in the mainstream and special educational systems.
- Describe differences in availability and/or quality of educational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability or gender variables.
- Cite data, evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality of education services for students with disabilities.

### **4.3 The mainstream vocational training system**

- Describe the formal vocational training system (i.e., certificate, diploma or qualification based), including oversight bodies, ministry or ministries involved, institutional structures, and types of training courses offered.
- Describe the informal vocational training system (i.e., provides skills training that does not result in formal qualifications), including ministries involved, institutional structures and types of training courses offered.
- Identify and describe programme[s] to provide vocational training through distance learning.
- Identify and describe work based and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Identify completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
- Describe the availability of NGO or commercial vocational training programmes and their importance to the overall human resource development system.

- 4.4 Mainstream vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled trainees in the mainstream formal and informal vocational training systems.
  - Identify disabled persons enrolment and completion rates (by gender and disability type) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
  - Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.
- 4.5 Segregated vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing segregated government and NGO-sponsored vocational training systems and programmes for persons with disabilities, including those providing formal and informal vocational training and any distance learning or apprenticeship opportunities.
  - Describe special accommodations or special support services offered to students, including follow-up.
  - Describe prevocational, remedial or other specialized training that may be offered.
  - Describe the types of occupational skills taught, and discuss their relevance to labour market and self-employment opportunities.
  - Describe the nature and extent of disability related instructor-training programmes for those in mainstream and segregated systems.
  - Identify (or estimate) completion rates (total and by gender) and outcome data (percentage who are employed or self-employed after training) that are available for the different types of training.
  - Discuss differences in availability and/or quality of mainstream vocational services related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.
  - Cite evaluation studies or other authoritative sources to describe the quality and responsiveness of the vocational training system to people with disabilities.
- 4.6 Self-help and peer vocational training opportunities for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe any existing self-help or peer vocational training programmes.
  - Estimate the number of disabled persons enrolled, graduated and employed as a result of their participation by gender and by disability type.
  - Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of self-help and peer vocational training related to urban and rural areas, type of disability and gender variables.
- 4.7 Mainstream employment services
- Identify and describe the government sponsored employment services system (i.e., providing assessment, vocational guidance and job placement services), the responsible ministry or ministries involved and particular groups targeted.
  - Describe the institutional service delivery structures (e.g., schools, employment offices, and outsourcing to NGOs) and nature and extent of services provided.
  - Identify significant NGO-sponsored employment programmes, the services that are offered, and the target groups (e.g. youth or women) served.
  - Discuss any differences in availability and/or types of employment services based on urban/rural or gender dimensions.

- 4.8 Opportunities for people with disabilities in mainstream systems
- Identify and describe any existing opportunities for mainstreaming and/or special support services for disabled job seekers in the mainstream employment services.
  - If mainstreaming occurs, provide data or estimate the proportion of disabled persons who use the mainstream system (s) and their success rate in terms of employment outcomes.
- 4.9 Special employment and employment support services for people with disabilities
- Identify and describe special employment and employment support services available to people with disabilities through government agencies, NGOs, schools or other sponsoring institutions.
  - Describe the structures for delivering employment and employment support services (e.g., employment offices, work oriented rehabilitation centres or sheltered workshops, special vocational schools, etc.).
  - Describe the services offered, especially disability specific employment support services (e.g., vocational assessment, peer group counseling, work experience or adjustment services, supported employment, job analysis, selective placement, etc.)
  - Note if these services focus entirely on open employment, or include placement in sheltered employment, enclaves or other protected environments.
  - Identify the number of persons served by gender and disability type and the number placed in employment (open employment, protected employment or self-employment) by gender and by disability type.
- 4.10 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation
- Identify any government sponsored self-employment and income generation services and the responsible ministries.
  - Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit. etc.) and target groups.
  - Identify any NGO sponsored self-employment and income generation programmes.
  - Describe the services offered (e.g., business planning, business development training, access to credit, etc.) and target groups.
- 4.11 Mainstream support for self-employment and income generation for disabled persons
- Describe opportunities for inclusion of people with disabilities in self-employment programmes by identifying mainstreaming policies and special outreach and support services.
  - Describe the extent to which people with disabilities are included in such programmes by citing or estimating participation and outcome rates.
- 4.12 Self-employment and income generation support services for people with disabilities
- Identify support programmes for self-employment and income generation for people with disabilities sponsored by governments, NGOs or special schools and training facilities.
  - Describe the services offered and target groups.
  - Identify the participation and outcome data (number starting businesses) by gender and by disability type.
- 4.13 Poverty alleviation programmes
- Describe any major poverty alleviation programmes and their sponsors and related

ministries (if not identified in 4.11 or 4.12).

- Identify policies and practices related to the inclusion of people with disabilities.
- Identify or estimate the participation rates of people with disabilities in such programmes.

#### 4.14 Staff training for vocational rehabilitation

- Identify and describe training programmes for professionals providing vocational rehabilitation and training and employment services for people with disabilities.
- Describe the availability of competent trained personnel related to vocational rehabilitation practice (e.g. trained rehabilitation counselors, vocational assessors, vocational counselors, job placement specialists, etc.) Cite data, if available, and estimate the proportion of disabled persons.

#### 4.15 Barriers/gaps

- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from educational, vocational training, employment and self-employment and income generation services, both mainstream and segregated (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services, availability of assistive devices, trained instructors, policy support, etc.).
- Note gaps in services that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
- Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

## **PART FIVE: EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

### 5.1 Open employment

- Identify and describe open employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the public, for profit and not for profit sub sectors.
- Estimate or provide data related to the number employed (by gender and by disability type) especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits, and career advancement potentials in the open labour market.
- Identify and describe any teleworking, home-based or other non-traditional employment structures in the open market.
- Identify and describe employment opportunities that have developed because of advances in information technology, the Internet and the computer industry.
- Identify and describe any decreases in open employment opportunities, especially related to employment of disabled persons, such job loss due to technology, trade or globalization issues, the impact of transition economies, etc.

### 5.2 Employment opportunities for people with disabilities in protected work environments

- Describe the available employment opportunities in protected work environments designed for people with disabilities including the following:
  - Government set-aside job programmes (i.e., jobs that are set aside or give priority to people with disabilities, such as sale of lottery tickets in Thailand).
  - Sheltered Workshops and Work Centres for people with disabilities.

- Supported employment programmes.
  - Enclaves (segregated work setting for people with disabilities within larger companies).
  - Other.
- For each type of protected job opportunity, provide data or estimate the number of people employed (by gender and by disability type), especially in relation to the types of jobs, wages, benefits and rehabilitation services that are available to participants in these protected work programmes.
  - Explain and describe opportunities and specific services for transitioning workers with disabilities from protected employment to open employment.
  - Cite data or estimate the numbers or proportions of people with disabilities who transition from protected to open employment.
- 5.3 Self-employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in the formal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the formal sector.
  - Identify and describe self-employment opportunities for disabled persons in the informal sector, and estimate the numbers of people employed and the incomes of self-employed people with disabilities in the informal sector.
  - Identify any special government or NGO programmes to support or assist people with disabilities in self-employment, such as special marketing schemes, tax breaks, etc.
- 5.4 Identify and describe other segregated or protected employment opportunities that may exist, such as disabled persons cooperatives, welfare enterprises, etc. and estimate the number of persons employed, types of job opportunities, wages, and number and types of disabled persons served.
- 5.5 Barriers/gaps
- Identify specific barriers that people with disabilities face in accessing or benefiting from employment opportunities including those in open, formal, informal and protected environments (e.g., related to accessibility, transportation, support services, availability of assistive devices, discriminatory practices, lack of policy support, etc.).
  - Note specific gaps to accessing employment opportunities that may exist (e.g., such as for those with certain types of disabilities, age, ethnic or gender groups, those residing in certain geographic areas, etc.).
  - Whenever possible, identify data or a rationale to support the identification of these barriers or gaps.

## **PART SIX: ACTIVITIES INVOLVING SOCIAL PARTNERS**

- 6.1 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to educate, raise awareness in, or provide supports and encouragement to, employers who are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.
- 6.2 Identify and describe any government or NGO initiatives specifically designed to

educate, raise awareness or provide supports and encouragement to trade unions or workers' organizations that are involved in the training or employment of people with disabilities.

- 6.3 Describe any employer or trade union initiated activities, partnerships, or liaisons with government or NGOs that are specifically designed to promote the training and employment of people with disabilities.

## **PART SEVEN: SUMMARY AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

### **7.1 Looking back over the past decade 1992-2002**

- Describe significant changes in policy and practice over the past decade.
- Describe specific progress or lack of progress in meeting the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons Employment and Training Targets for Action.

### **7.2 Looking forward**

- Describe major barrier needs related to policies and practices for equal opportunity and treatment of people with disabilities in regard to training and employment.
- Describe major strengths or opportunities related to policies or practices in regard to training and employment of people with disabilities.

### **7.3 Plans and recommendations from in-country**

- Cite and describe goals, directions, and targets from official government planning documents related to training and employment policies and practices and specify time frames.
- Cite and describe any current recommendations made by advocacy or disability organizations related to the future of employment and training policies and practices.
- Cite and describe any other recommendations, studies or analyses within the country that pose specific recommendations about the future of policies and practices for the training and employment of people with disabilities.



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