

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT SYSTEM REVIEW

VIET NAM 2021

CONTENTS

Introduction.....	5
1. Context and system overview.....	7
1.1. Context.....	7
1.2. System overview	11
2. Coordination and Cooperation	14
2.1. Policy framework	14
2.2. Key civil society stakeholders.....	17
2.3. Promoting coordination, cooperation and good governance	21
3. Main services and activities.....	23
3.1 Education, training (TVET) and work based learning for youth	23
3.2 Unemployed support	27
3.3 Employed and learners in work contexts.....	28
3.4 Private and other civil society provision	29
4. Funding.....	30
5. Access	32
6. Use of Technology	33
7. Quality assurance	36
7.1 Standards	36
7.2 Staffing	37
7.3 Quality of data and information	38
7.4 Monitoring, evaluation and policy feedback.....	39
8. Policy Recommendations	40
References	46

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The report was prepared by Dr. Hoang Gia Trang, from – University of Education - Vietnam National University with the support of ILO team including Nguyen Thi Huyen, Tran Ngoc Diep and Nguyen Thi Thanh Hang, under the technical guidance of Dr. Pedro Moreno Da Fonseca, ILO expert on career development and lifelong learning, ILO Geneva and Dr. Raimo Vuorinen from Finnish Institute of Education. The report was presented at online expert meeting with country partners in June 2021, where the authors received valuable comments from delegates, including: representatives of Ministry of Education and Training (MOET): Dr. Phan Thi Duyen, Department of Continuing Education and MA. Bui Thi Kieu Tho, Department of Education for Ethnic Minorities; representative of the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs, Mr. Dao Trong Do, Director of the Department of Continuing Training under Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET); representative of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ms. Vi Thi Hong Minh, Deputy Director of the Office of Employers' Activities; and Dr. Truong Thi Hoa, Hanoi University of Pedagogy.

DISCLAIMER

National reports have not necessarily undergone proofreading and language editing.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian
APCDA	Asia Pacific Career Development Association
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DVET	Directorate of Vocational Education and Training
IS	Social Insurance
F&B	Food & Beverage
FYE	Fund for Youth's Employment
GSO	General Statistics Organisations
KRIVET	Korean Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training
ILO	International Labour Organisations
ILLSA	Institute of Labour and Social Affaires
ITC	Information and Technology Communication
PES	Public Employment Service
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
M&E	Monitor & Evaluation
NEET	No Employment, Education and Training
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NCGE	National Center for Guidance in Education
RPL	Recognition of Pre-learning
VCCI	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VVOB	Name of a Belgium NGO operating in Viet Nam
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Career development encompasses a wide variety of activities including career information and advice, counselling, work exposure (e.g job shadowing, work experience periods), assessment, coaching, mentoring, professional networking, advocacy, basic and employability skills training (through curricular and non-curricular activities) and entrepreneurship training. These activities are key for success in learning, effective career transitions, livelihood planning, and entrepreneurship and for increasing labour market participation. They are instrumental in promoting skills utilization, recognition (RPL), as well as in improving enterprise human resource management.

Despite its importance, Career Development is a pretty new concept in Viet Nam and people know more about career education or career guidance, which is most common understanding as a combination of the choice of occupation and the choice of courses of study and it stresses the interaction between learning and work based on one's strength.

Moreover, Career Development in general and career guidance in particular is fragmented across different ministries, at least the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) and Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) with the involvement of Youth Union. In Viet Nam, as the same in other low and medium income countries, there is insufficient career guidance coverage and no qualified staff working in career guidance which is far away from the ICT application. The informal employment in Viet Nam is quite high with around 70% out of the active labour force while 98% business are MSMEs which is the bottleneck for the adoption of career development activities in line with the lifelong learning approach.

In this report, Career Development is understood as including three key sets of activities:

- Career guidance and counselling: Services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers (career management skills). Career guidance and counselling can include a wide range of activities, such as skills assessments, advice, information, mentoring, counselling, and networking, among others and be delivered face-to-face, at a distance or in a blended setting. Delivery contexts include employment services, career guidance in schools, TVET providers, municipalities, youth centres, social security centres, as well as career development support in apprenticeships and work based environments.
- Career education: Organized and structured learning activities aimed at developing individuals' career management skills, including the capacities to identify and interpret labour market information, career opportunities, make career decisions and act upon them. Frequently career education follows a programmed and gradual approach to skill development, reflecting a curriculum,

and relying on a mix of classroom activities, networking with professionals and work experience opportunities.

- Career development support in enterprises: Staff/human resource management activities aimed at developing career management skills of employees, with the purpose of supporting individual skill development and training, skills utilization, productivity, innovation and smart specialisation and promoting strategic staff planning and development. This type of support is instrumental in aligning strategic business development with the career development for workers, and frequently relies on activities such as career talks, assessments, establishment of personal plans but also includes preparing a corporate, enabling environment for lifelong learning.

The national report therefore, aims to review all the three above mentioned set of activities in Career Development in Vietnam in which we have reviewed the career guidance practices and systems in education, VET system and employment services; the career education at school and promotion of career development activities in organisations and we also included the interviews to get information from personal or psychological counselling, and one social enterprises working in providing the career counselling services in Vietnam.

The report applies the data gathering through desktop research and key informant interviews using generic questionnaire tools suggested by the ILO expert and the international consultant. A consultation workshop and a validation workshop are convened to get the information from different partners for the draft report and final report.

The structure of the report follows the guidance from the international consultant and ILO expert in Geneva.

1. Context and system overview
2. Coordination and cooperation
3. Main services and activities
4. Funding
5. Access
6. Use of technology
7. Quality assurance
8. Policy and recommendations

1. CONTEXT AND SYSTEM OVERVIEW

1.1. CONTEXT

General Information

Population

According to the population and housing census in 2019,¹ Vietnam's population is 96.208.284 persons. Among them, male account for 47.881 061 and females 48 327 923. Urban populations are 33 122 548 and rural ones are 63 086 436. So people who live in rural areas are about two times higher than in urban areas. Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups in which the Kinh group represents 82.085.826 persons (approximately 85.32% population). It means that the rest of 53 ethnic groups account for only 14.7%. Among them, there are 6 ethnic groups having more one million persons: Tày (1.845.492), Thai (1.820.950), Khmer (1.319.652), Muong (1.452.095), Nung (1.083.298), Mong (1.393.547). Other groups have less than one million persons.

Moreover, the demography of Vietnam is previewed at the golden age nowadays and has the tendency of becoming old in 15 years. According to the GSO report about Population and housing Census 2019, in the period 2026-2039, Vietnam is still in the period of golden population structure, but the proportion of the population aged 65 and over has increased and will reach over 10% by 2026. This is the period when Vietnam enters the ageing population period. According to the medium variant, it is forecast that the population aged 65 and over will exceed 15% of the total population by 2039. It is forecast that this is the end of the period when the golden population structure has appeared and existed in Vietnam since 2007. The ageing population period will last for 28 years (2026-2054), corresponding to the proportion of the population aged 65 and over accounting for 10.2% to 19.9%. After that, there is a period of very old population structure (2055-2069) with the proportion of the population aged 65 and over accounting for from 20% to less than 30%.

All the strategies of Vietnam under development use the ageing of population as a driver and megatrend of changes, for example the Vocational Education and Training Strategy emphasizing the upskilling of workers as a key to catch up with the ageing population that helps replacing the economic growth model based on labour intensiveness.

Literacy and illiteracy

Proportion of out-of-school by statistics in 2019 was 8.3% of the population. By sex, there were 9.2% male and 7.5% female. By region, people who live in the city out of school are

¹ Completed results of the 2019 Vietnam population and housing census, Statistical Publishing House, 2020

5.7% and in rural areas are 10.5%. Thus, the number of illiteracy in rural areas is about twice higher than urban areas, which impacts the opportunities in their career development and the quality of human resource of the society.

Labour market highlights

According to the General Statistics Office, Vietnam has about 51 million workers aged 15 and over in the first quarter of 2021. Workers who have been trained account for 26.0% of the labour force. There is a significant difference in the proportion of trained workers between urban and rural areas. Specifically, this rate in urban areas reached 40.7%. It's about 2.3 times higher than in rural areas (17.8%), Vietnam's orientation to 2030 will have 35-40% of the trained workforce with degrees and certificates (2021)².

Among 49.9 million employed workers, the people who work in the service sector accounted for 39.5%, equivalent to 19.7 million people. Next, workers who work in industrial sectors, construction, accounting for 32.3%, equivalent to 16.1 million people. Labour in agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors accounted for 28.2%. The unemployment rate in the first quarter of 2021 is 2.42%, of which the unemployment rate in urban areas is higher than in rural areas (3.19% compared to 1.98%). Meanwhile, the rural population is nearly twice as large as the urban population (65.6% versus 34.4%).

Employment needs

To understand the employment need, the Labour Market Bulletin by MOLISA is the only official source of state-managed documents that allows to have the information annually from the demand side. For example, by the end of 2020 statistical analysis from a sample of 15,096 enterprises recruiting 82,816 workers. Among them, the recruitment need for both male and female represents 75,02%. According to the Bulletin, ten occupations have high recruitment demand in 2020 including: Finance, Consultation; Market development; Untrained labour; Electricity, Electronics; Business and management; Applied technology; Assessment; Secretary; Education. Based on the employment needs, teachers can help students make the career choice corresponding to their ability, interest and meet the current labour market. In career education, it is important to update information on human resource demand. However, it still lacks of synchronized data about skills anticipation and employment forecast in middle and long term.

² The 10-year socio-economic development strategy 2021-2030, Document of the 13th National Congress of Communist Party, National Political Publishing House, 2021.

Unemployment, underemployment and informal employment.

According to the ILO's data about informal employment in 2021, unemployment is low in the country – in 2019, just 2 per cent of the labour force were unemployed. This compares to a global unemployment rate in 2019 of 5.4 per cent, 3.0 per cent in ASEAN countries and 5.3 per cent amongst all lower middle income countries. At just over 10 per cent of the youth population (aged 15-24), the share of young people who are neither in employment nor in education or training – the NEET rate - is also low compared to other ASEAN countries (18.3 per cent in 2019), lower middle income countries as a whole (26.7 per cent in 2019) or indeed the world where the NEET rate stood at over 22 per cent in 2019. Moreover, also in contrast to the global picture, prior to the COVID induced economic crisis, NEET rates had been falling in the country albeit slowly since 2015 marking some progress towards SDG target 8.6 to “substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training” by 2020³. And, again in contrast to other Asian countries as well as the global situation prior to COVID-19, the gender gap in the NEET rate was relatively low in the country (ILO, 2019). The limited decent job opportunities in rural and remote areas have been among the factors that accelerated domestic migration. People at working age, particularly young people, left their home villages behind to go looking for work in cities and exposed themselves to many risks and new forms of multi-dimensional poverty. Over three-quarters (70%) of all Vietnamese workers are employed in the informal economy. They are estimated to contribute from 20% to 30% of GDP in Viet Nam⁴. Workers in the informal economy form a highly heterogeneous group which faces different challenges, in type and magnitude, depending on factors such as gender, sector of occupation, skills levels, wage/non-wage status etc.

Young workers have a lower probability to remain either in informal or in formal employment than adult workers, indicating less job security and a higher job mobility of workers in the early stages of their career. Less secure forms of employment increasingly tend to dominate entry-level jobs available for young workers (ILO, 2020c). The boom in wage employment, which also Vietnam has witnessed over the recent years, has led to more casual and temporary wage employment for youth (ILO, 2017).⁵ Being jobless, young workers are more likely to remain in their current situation than adult workers. This can either be a sign of some labour market entry barriers for youth, but could also simply reflect the continuing attendance of education or increased importance of family responsibilities at youth relative to adult age.

³ <https://indicators.report/targets/8-6/>

⁴ ILO, 2021, Informal Employment in Viet Nam: Trends and Determinants

⁵ According to ILOSTAT, the share of wage employment in Viet Nam grew from 33.7 per cent in 2010 to 51.2 per cent in 2019.

Young workers have a higher probability to move outside employment than adults. The probability for a young informal worker to move outside employment is higher than the corresponding probability for a young formal worker – this is likely to be at least partially driven by young parents – often women – who, after childbirth, might be more easily able to keep their formal than their informal job. This is due to the maternity protection that is associated with formal jobs, but often absent from informal jobs (ILO, 2021).

Cultural aspects

In Viet Nam, the choice of pupils is traditionally influenced by the regional and ethnic culture as well as the factors of family. In detail, parents and families influence the “choice” of future work of their children and these choices lean a lot on the experiences and knowledge of parents and families who ultimately determine the allocation and rationing of wealth, power and status in societies. The values of each individual, their interest and aptitude are often skipped in the decision making process. Sometimes, parents give a career choice to their children so that they can find a job after graduation easily (ILO, 2020).

The notion of parents, families and society really influences the choice of work of their children. Traditionally, parents pay more attention to their sons than daughters. There are two very popular notions in Viet Nam: First, the girls should prioritize the family instead of profession. Girls are often expected to assume the care of siblings or their own family. Whereas, boys are responsible for elderly parents and they worship ancestors, so boys have more priorities than girls in studying. For example: In case of financial difficulties, girls are often asked to stop their studying and give the chance to boy⁶s. When a family owns a farm or small enterprise, the children, particularly sons, are often expected to enter the family business. Second, only living in cities need career guidance while rural work does not need to be prepared. Currently, Viet Nam does not yet have any programmes to support the transition to formality, instead, Viet Nam has some programmes in providing vocational training for rural workers for example, National Programmes 1956 for both agricultural and non-agricultural workers. Farmers are still not considered a profession and only for those who did not have any education and training; and many others working in agriculture is not consider formal workers⁷.

Moreover, parents normally use their own network and connections in securing positions or other occupational opportunities for their children. Many Vietnamese children follow their parents’ profession because their parents could find a position for them based on the network or relationship if they will do the same job as their parents do. The values of

⁶ Le Thuy Hang (2006), gender disparity in the investment of parents in the education of their children, *Journal of Sociology*, Volume 2, p28-35.

⁷ ILO, 2020, *Career guidebook for 14-19 years old*, a book for teacher

individual children normally are looked down upon unless the child performs very outstanding at schools with high prizes in the national award system.

Some changes have been recorded recently in the notion of the society for example, the career guidance for children used to focus only on university, but now, more parents have changed their mind and supports their children in vocational training, reflecting in the number of the enrolment in vocational education and training system which has increased up to more than 2 million students recently in TVET institutions⁸.

Vietnam is a country with 54 ethnic groups and has different regional cultures, however, at present, there has been no research on cultural factors affecting career guidance, so this report does not have data and information on that influence.

1.2. SYSTEM OVERVIEW

While the concept of a national career development system is quite new in Viet Nam, career education has been known for more or less 40 years since 1981 based on the below legal documents. According to those legal documents, career education has started in Vietnam in 1981 running until now and was implemented in different institutions mentioned below:

Career education in schools

According to Circular No 31-TT dated November 17 1981 of the Ministry of Education (now, Ministry of Education and Training, MOET)⁹ that provide the guidance for the implementation of Decision of Governmental Committee about career guidance in the schools and use reasonably the graduated from high schools, career education in schools is conducted in four patterns:

- Career education was infused in subjects

There are not career guidance counsellors in schools but the so-called career education requires that subjects need to integrate appropriate career education content and provide students with an understanding of professional opportunities. In detail, teachers select learning contents related to some occupations and they help students understand those works such as: writers, poets, famers, businessmen, etc.

- Career education was implemented by production activities

⁸ Information from the official website of Directorate of Vocational Education and Training Viet Nam, accessed 12 June 2021

⁹ DANG Danh Anh (2010), Career Education in Vietnam, Culture and Information Publishing House, Hanoi, Vietnam

This requires schools to organize production activities to educate students on career, for example, the pupils learn how to tailor, how to cook, etc. In the past many schools had the big garden for pupils to come and plant. Moreover, pupils need to spend time for “social activities” at schools such as cleaning classes, cleaning the community houses, etc. The idea was that through those activities, students could have a positive attitude and awareness toward real production activities and discover their interest and ability related to some occupations.

At high schools for ethnic minorities in mountainous areas, especially in boarding schools for ethnic minorities, and semi-boarding schools for ethnic minorities, students are allowed to participate in production labor such as nursery seedlings, growing vegetables, growing tea, planting flowers, growing sugar cane and raising pigs, goats, chickens, fish, rabbits....The idea is that through daily activities to help educate students about career guidance. Some schools, such as boarding schools for ethnic minorities, also teach students about tourism services and organize for students to practice at restaurants and hotels. At the same time, they are interested in ethnic culture education to serve for travel and tourism services in the community.

- Career education means occupational introduction

This requires school to help students understand different occupations and have an overview on socio-economic development at national and local level. Besides, teachers provide students necessary information on key features, requirements of each occupation in which students are interested. This kind of activities is normally conducted through the small project of pupils in searching information of some occupations. On the other hand, schools can invite businesses to introduce their production and business activities or talk about careers to pupils at school.

- Career education was implemented by extra-class activities.

Schools need to set up various extra-class activities that allow students to explore themselves and enhance their learning and career motivation. Schools often organize for students to have 1-2 visits to production facilities or vocational farms. Some ethnic minority boarding schools have piloted school models associated with local production and business such as: school model - tea farm, school - sugarcane farm, school - orange farm that help students understand the professions better.

Besides, the school’s youth union must organise discussions in order to help students choose the right jobs and meet the labour market’s needs. In these activities, parents are encouraged to get engaged in the career choice process of their children. Parents and schools make a chance for students visiting enterprises, companies or productive institutions to better understand their future jobs.

All activities mentioned above have the common goals of helping students to choose a career that is suitable to their interests, abilities and family circumstances, and to meet the development professional requirements of society. Frequently, form teachers (teachers manage all learning and educational activities of one class) are responsible for career education of her/his class. They are not trained in this field. Some of them participated in training courses and they are assigned to do this task.

In order to help teachers in career education, MOET has distributed the career education books. Actually, there are 4 teachers' career education books for 4 grades (9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th) in schools. According to the regulation, grade 9 has 9 topics with 4 sessions per month, grade 10 has 9 topics with 3 sessions per month, and grades 11 and 12 have 8 topics with 3 sessions per month. For grade 11 and 12, there were also visiting activities to help students have a better understanding of their future profession. All the career education content will be presented in the point 3.1.

Career education activities are usually undertaken by the classroom teacher and are combined with other class activities. As teachers do not have enough necessary career guidance information and lack motivations, this activity has not been implemented well, leading to low efficiency of career education in schools.

Career education in vocational training centres

After issues of the Circular No 31-TT dated November 17, the Ministry of Education required the establishment of vocational centers at the district and provincial level. At the beginning, 20 vocational centres were established funded by UNICEF. After that, more and more vocational centres existed nationwide. So, career education is also conducted at vocational training centres. Here, students can participate in learning and practicing a specific profession to better understand that profession. For example: students get to know professions such as: Electricity, Electronics, Informatics, Garment, etc. The teachers working at vocational training centres conduct the training for pupils some sessions per semesters. Similarly, they can compare their interests and abilities with requirements of these professions.

Career education in Employment service centres

Decree 196/2013/ND-CP dated November 21, 2013 of the Government stipulating "Establishing and operating employment service centres" states that one of the tasks of the Employment Service Center is to provide counselling services for employees on career choice, training level, and study place suitable to their abilities and aspirations. In reality, Employment Services centres have been established since the early 1990s. It is estimated

that there are 130 public service employment (PES) centres of the government under MOLISA and a hundred of private employments services in Vietnam (Nguyen T.C, 2017)¹⁰. Students can go to these centres for labour market information including: recruitment needs, quality and quantity requirements. Therefore, students consider how they can meet the labour market requirements.

Employment service centres organise different activities that permit students to approach the labour market easier such as: job fairs, job exchanges, labour market information support, etc. At employment centres, students may be consulted to choose a job, training level and training institution that correspond to their wishing and ability.

However, all these career education activities at school were quite less updated with labour market information and was not practical anymore where no school has implemented the career education regulated since 1981 in the reality. The less effective career education through all those activities requires many reforms: reforming in career education at schools; reforming vocational centres under MOET that merge with regular training of MOLISA at provincial and disappearance of vocational training at district levels and the reform of PES centres that will be described later in the review.

2. COORDINATION AND COOPERATION

Coordination and cooperation, general speaking, is quite a challenge in career development activities in the case of Viet Nam. Until now, there are no formal coordination mechanisms, no strategic leadership while governance and cooperation is quite weak among the ministries and stakeholders, and even within a ministry.

2.1. POLICY FRAMEWORK

As stated, there is no national strategy with the aim to support career development. So if we look at Career Development from the perspective of three types of activities: career guidance and counselling; career education and career development, we could find the relevant laws, policies, strategies linking to each type of activity.

+/- regarding career counselling and career education activities:

Decision 522/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated on 14th May 2018 goes together with the “Career Education and channelling orientation of pupils in high schools in general education in the period of 2018-2025” focusing on career education. The Decision regulates the career education activities for High Schools without providing any standards for overall service

¹⁰ NGUYEN Thanh Cong (2017), Development of Employment centres in Hanoi at present, Doctoral Thesis of Economics, Hanoi, Vietnam

provision or for professionalism and ethics code. The Decision only emphasizes on some indicators that the career education needs to achieve in 2025 such as: 100% of high schools in Vietnam need to have a teacher working on career guidance and education for the pupils.

Circular No. 31/2017/TT-BGDĐT on “Guidelines for the implementation of psychological counselling for students in high schools” has set out the requirement that schools need psychological counsellors and career counsellors for students. Currently, many schools have arranged a counselling office for students responding to the request of the Ministry of Education and Training, and at the same time sent teachers to participate in training and retraining classes to fulfil this task.

The new general school education programme issued together with the Circular No 32/2018/TT-BGDĐT dated December 26 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) identifies career education to be the task of each school in order that pupils could express their wishes, and able to approach their wishing career, prepare themselves for their education and labour market. The management of career education belongs to each school and no mention of quality assurance of data, information and information systems used in career development. Career education at general education schools focus on three types of activities: (1) career exploration activities including the visit to businesses in localities, participating in professional forum, learning some vocational skills, or conducting some researches about the professions, etc; (2) Quality and capacity training activities consistent with career guidance aiming at providing opportunities for pupils to capacitate themselves and enhance their strengths for their potential occupations for example, IT training for those who are interested in ITC; (3) Career-guidance selection activities and career-guidance study planning such as searching information of the VET and higher education system and available TVET institutions in the localities, consulting the teachers, family relatives and experts about career guidance, choosing the training institution for themselves in the future and preparing a study plan suitable for such a selection.

Career guidance activities for students are carried out right from the primary school level. The duration for this activity varies by grade level and is regulated as follows: Primary level is 10%; lower secondary school level is 20% and high school level is 30% of 105 learning sessions in experiential-career activities that are not work-based learning. 105 learning sessions in experiential-career activities regulated by the MOET include four types of activities: (1) experiment for oneself; (2) experiment towards society; (3) Discovery of nature and (4) career guidance. Thus, each school year, career guidance activities will have about 10 sessions for primary school; 21 sessions for secondary school and 31 sessions per year for high school to conduct activities for students. Literature review shows that all these activities are conducted by teachers at schools but there are not yet standards for professionalism and ethics code. The career education will be more formally integrated in the curriculum from

2021-2022 on for secondary school level and from 2022-2023 on for high school level as the plan of MOET. However, the question is still how it includes and introduces the labour market information, how to have opportunity to experience career in enterprises and production facilities to better understand the occupation of interest so that they can learn how to formulate employability skills as an explicit learning objective. To do so, it is necessary to have a mechanism to encourage businesses and companies to participate in training activities at schools to help students have better career guidance

+/- regarding career development activities

Decision 1956/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister approves the project "Vocational training for rural workers until 2020" with the goal of training 11,200,000 rural workers. Among them, about 30% are engaged in agricultural vocational training and over 70% are in non-agricultural vocational training. In addition, the goal is also towards training to improve professional capacity for about 1 million commune-level officials. The results of the project implementation are: nationwide, there are 10 million rural workers receiving vocational training (reaching 91.4% of the set target), of which over 5.03 million people are supported with vocational training according to the policy. Project 1956, reaching 71.4% of the 11-year plan of the Project (7,052 million people). Females accounted for 50.2% of the total number of rural workers receiving vocational training support; the number of agricultural apprentices accounted for 38.6%, non-agricultural vocational trainees accounted for 61.4% of the total number of people receiving vocational training support;

Decision No. 295/QĐ-TTg dated February 26, 2010 of the Prime Minister approving the project "Supporting women in vocational training and job creation in the period 2010-2015" with the target are of 70% or more labor women are entitled to propagate and disseminate laws and policies on vocational training and employment; the percentage of female workers in the total target of vocational training enrolment reached 40%, rapidly increasing the percentage of female workers trained at vocational secondary schools and colleges; the rate of female employees who have jobs after vocational training is at least 70%. Vocational training and job placement establishments under the Vietnam Women's Union and at all levels of the Women's Union provide vocational training counselling, job placement and job creation for about 100,000 women annually, of which 50,000 female workers receive vocational training. As a result, after 5 years of implementing the project, more than 1 million female workers have received vocational training (reaching more than 300%) of the set target; the employment rate after vocational training reached 81% (beyond the set target of 70%).

Decision No. 103/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated July 21, 2008 approving the Scheme to support youth in vocational training and job creation in the period 2008-2015 with the following objectives include: to support and create conditions for youth young people

borrow loans for vocational training, job creation and working abroad for a definite time in accordance with current policies of the State; Support investment in capacity building and modernization of 10 key job placement and vocational training centers of the Youth Union; training 60,000 turns of union officials at all levels in vocational training and employment counselling; the rate of young people accessing information, counselling and job placement will reach 50% in 2010 and 75% in 2015; 100% of young people who want to start a business are provided with business start-up knowledge.

Career Development activities are also reflected in the following Laws:

Chapter 4 of Labour Code allows more for the career development support in enterprises even though it does not directly mention the terminology “career development”. But the Chapter regulates the responsibilities and rights of each business in developing their staff capacity, reskilling or/and upskilling. The workers have the full rights to be developed further on their jobs and businesses are entitled to support the individual skills development for their own sake.

The Employment Law regulates the activities of Public Employment Services (PES) centres and the use of unemployment insurance in vocational training for their clients. Although there are no words in the Law mentioning either career development or career guidance, the article 5 of Decree 196/2013/ND-CP stipulates " the establishment and operation of employment service centres", which has the following tasks: Counselling on vocational training for employees on career selection, training level, and place to study in accordance with your abilities and aspirations. This Decree does not call the term “career development” for those whom have joined into labour market’, but it is commonly understood that career development for those who have joined the labour market is a part of the service of PES centres.

To sum up, all these current policies are limited at the regulations of career development activities without providing any standards for overall service provision, or for professionalism or ethics code. In the Vietnam context, there are neither centres for career development nor quality assurance of data, information and information systems used in career development. Although there are some centres that could provide job information such as National PES Centres or Centres of Strategic Forecast under some Research Institutes, there is still a gap to combine these efforts and have a mechanism to ensure the quality of information for career development.

2.2. KEY CIVIL SOCIETY STAKEHOLDERS

Although there is no national mechanism in coordinating the career development services or activities, many civil society stakeholders currently provide the activities of career development services at different levels. The desk review has a little information but the in-

depth interviews really help insights how the career development activities are provided to the young people.

The Ministry of Education and Training directs career education in schools nationwide. There are more than 27,000 high schools and around 237 of universities. The Ministry of Education and Training has a Center for Training Support and Human Resource Supply in charge of career education and information on the employment situation of students after graduation. According to the survey report on employment status of graduates, it shows that: 56% work as their training; 25% work related to the training industry and 19% not related to the field of study (Hoang C.D, 2021)¹¹.

The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs manages vocational training at vocational education and continuing training centres and a system of hundreds of technical intermediate schools and colleges across the country.

In addition to the two specialized ministries mentioned above, there are other specialized ministries; Associations and other organizations involved in career development such as: National Council for Education and Human Resource Development; National Steering Committee on training according to social needs; Sector business associations (Association of Small and Medium Enterprises; Vietnam Textile and Garment Association; Vietnam Leather and Footwear Association; Vietnam Tourism Association...); management boards of industrial parks and export processing zones; Organize trade unions at all levels, etc.

Interviews of employers and employers' organisations show different approaches. The employers especially from big businesses invest a lot in their human resource division with some staff in charge of retraining and upskilling for their employees. However, some employers, while investing in the development of the employees, are still concerned about the turnover rate in their sector, for example, tourism has a high turnover rate (ILO, 2015) which prevents the employers from developing career development activities.

The in-depth interviews of some organisations providing the career development for their workers show that:

+) The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) is the employers' representative organisation and they support career education as one of key activities promoting the business and schools collaboration. In many provinces, VCCI introduced the career guidance toolbox of the ILO to the schools and organised many career orientation days led by the business organisations with the participation of hundreds of young people from high schools. In the career orientation days, normally they also invite the TVET schools and universities in

11 Hoang Cong Dung, Report "The current employment situation of graduates in Vietnam" dated March 29, 2021, Center for Training Support and Human Resource Supply, Ministry of Education and Training, Hanoi, Vietnam

the localities to join. The young people could ask the questions about vacancy and about at-workplace code of conduct from business. The activity of career education provided by VCCI still stops at each provincial level and apart from promotion in career orientation fairs, they provide also the education for high schools teachers applied the ILO training toolbox in career guidance for the young people in the age range of 14-19 years old while they could not yet support the career development tasks for Human Resource Management within the business as well as the validation and recognition of skills for the workers who are already employed in business (so-called RPL process). All the activities in career education VCCI organise are free of charge from the source of funding by Norway Employer Federation (NHO) since 2018 up to present.

+) The quick interview with Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VGCL) shows that they do not yet have any activity concerning career development for their members who are employees and pay monthly the trade union membership fee. The reason is that career development is quite new in Viet Nam and VGCL does not yet understand what they need to do or what tools they must have to support their members in this career development. The social dialogues mention about the training for upskilling of the workers and the results could lead to some Collective Bargaining Agreement or in the case of the tourism sector, they have the Multi-Employer Collective Bargaining Agreement (MECBA) in which training for staff is a part. However, when these agreements are implemented, it is the job of businesses via their human resource department. VGCL does not provide any direct services in career development for their members.

VGCL totally supports Chapter 4 of the Labour Code and the Trade Union law states that workers have full right to learn for their career development pathway. However, how and in what to support their members are still questions for VGCL. VGCL is willing to learn more about the career development services and activities for their members.

+) Not-for-profit civil organisations in Vietnam include Vietnamese social enterprises and International and Vietnamese Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs). The study shows that only one social enterprise working on career guidance is Song An founded by Phoenix Ho, a career counsellor trained in the United States. The funding of their services come from the tuition of organising training courses for teachers and training for career counsellors; and also from career counselling services for the individuals. Some of the activities are provided free of charges such as their sources and quick online career counselling. Currently, the information from their websites shows that they have trained 665 career counsellors, career education teachers and parents with 397 career counselling sessions for individuals and families, especially the moment before the university enrolment. After each training, they could only issue the participation certificate rather than a validation and recognition of

skills. With their efforts, Song An Social Enterprise has just introduced the competency framework for the career counsellors, which is not still officially recognized by the government but this is the first-ever a competency framework for such kinds of jobs are produced in Viet Nam. This competence framework has been developed in cooperation with experts from APCDA, so it is equivalent with the international standards.

+) The NGOs working in education notably World Vision, ChildFund, Aide Et Action, Fund of Youth Employment (FYE) have worked in providing career education activities for high school teachers and career guidance for young people specially clubs in universities. The funding does not come from these activities but from their donors. In the case of FYE, they collaborate with TopCV, a head-hunter in Vietnam for sourcing labour market information and providing workplace and vacancy information. These NGOs also have promotion fairs in cooperating with businesses and schools for career guidance for young people. Until now, no record of any NGOs working for the career development support to the employees.

+) Industry business associations and professional associations in Vietnam also have some activities aimed at career development, for example, the establishment of HR clubs, or the Association's Training Committee to support members through training, skills improvement, or as the Association of Vocational Education and Social Work Profession in 2018-2019 also has a series of Career guidance workshops in conjunction with the Employment Department, but the activities are still no connection, lack of professionalism and consistency.

Some business associations are interested in career guidance such as Tourism associations in Quang Nam and Da Nang. The case of the Tourism Association is quite interesting when they organise many career days for youth in tourism but it aims to appeal to more young people to choose tourism for their career. In these activities, they provide many workplace and vacancy information and sometimes their HR department interviews the students and the young people for them to understand what a real interview happens in business. Concerning career development, those associations normally have their human research clubs (HR clubs) in which they organise training for their members focusing on core and technical skills in tourism such as front office, F&B, homestay operation, etc.

Therefore, the establishment of the association is meaningful because it could be relevant to how to support the practice and system development through the association and also could use the association in consulting the national future strategies. Unfortunately, practitioners associations in career guidance have never existed in Viet Nam. There are some networks of career counsellors for example: Song An Career counsellor Network trained by Song An or ILO career counsellor Network trained to use the ILO Toolbox, but they have not yet become associations.

+/Parents play an important role in career guidance for their children and some schools invite parents to join the career education sessions for their children, but not all parents have enough knowledge about career guidance to help their children. Sometimes, therefore, parents become the barriers in career guidance activities when they do not support their children's career choice, in this case career counselling requires more time to convince the parents. However, parents are also unexplored opportunities for career guidance when more and more parents want to learn about career education for their children or the parents seek and pay for the career guidance services for their children (Nguyen N.T et al, 2015)¹².

+/TVET institutions, colleges and universities also participate in career guidance. They often go to high schools to introduce their majors and admission conditions, training programs, tuition fees, and job opportunities... This also helps students better prepare for the career path in their future.

+/ Other civil stakeholders such as community leaders, religious leaders seem not so influential in Viet Nam context. The interview of some catholic religious leaders shows that sometimes their followers ask them about their children's choice in universities and they will seek the advice in their network.

2.3. PROMOTING COORDINATION, COOPERATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

It is quite difficult to find out an institution, organisation or bodies responsible for the definition, management and funding of career development services in Viet Nam because three key set of activities including career guidance and counselling, career education and career development support in enterprise, belong to different legislations, for example, the two first sets could be mentioned in Education Law and Vocational Education and Training (VET) Law while the third set should be mentioned in the Employment Law and Labour Code. While these Laws are under two different ministries: Ministry of Education and MOLISA, it seems impossible to have a common body responsible for the definition, management and funding of career development services in Viet Nam. Instead, each ministry under the scope of each Law will provide the definition of their scope of work that also refers to career development activities, responsible for the management of their part and funding for each part.

¹² Nguyen Ngoc Tai, Dao Thi Van Anh (2015), Solutions to positively impact parents and other educational forces to contribute to improving the effectiveness of career guidance through media, Scientific Journal, Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, No. 8.

Currently, the MOET focuses their work on career education and MOLISA concentrates more on the career development and any assessment for workers or RPL will be in the mandate of MOLISA. If the work is divided among the ministries, the common vision and goals should be kept very general within the framework of the development of Vietnam's human resources prepared well for the context of a lower middle-income country moving to the upper middle-income country. Any initiatives that aim to develop a common mechanism responsible for the definition, management and funding should be a formal cross-ministerial and inter-institutional coordination and cooperation for better organization, complementarity and delivery of services. However, it is not easy to achieve multi-level coordination and cooperation for some main barriers among which the legal status and funding is the most challenging. The reason is that the legal status for the mechanism needs to be regulated by the Laws. The mechanism could not belong to the government because the Government wants to reduce its staff. The mechanism could be either a company or an association, if this case, funding from the Government becomes difficult.

The national strategies and legislation should not be taken into consideration because there might be enough laws at this stage, including: Employment Law, Labour Code, VET Law, Education Law, etc. But an apex coordination body, or supplementing more functions for the sub-committee about vocational training of National Council about Education and Human Resource should be a better choice and more feasible to implement while currently there is no other existing form of coordination and cooperation about career development at the moment.

In both cases, forming an apex coordination body or adding more tasks for the sub-committee of the Council focusing on career development could link to the certification or life-long learning initiatives. This could be a good choice because it could promote for the definition of national frameworks for quality, monitoring, evaluation and resource management and it has a legal status to integrate career development in diverse policy field areas and initiatives (education, employment, TVET, WBL/apprenticeships, social protection, enterprise/productivity). Moreover, such a body could share initiatives between employment and education policies/ministries and coordinate diverse services, aiming at well integrated/coordinated delivery across different target groups or intervention stages. It also could help engage employers, workers or other civil society organisations for policy design and implementation and promote public-private partnerships for the development of infrastructure or setup/expansion of services in career development. In the context of the existence of the National Council as mentioned, adding more functions for its sub-committee should be a feasible option and avoid the overlapping of a new entity. If so, the Council will coordinate all the set of activities in Career development.

However, if the Council is the apex coordination body, it should need to be carefully discussed in order to best meet the national context. If it is this Council, or belongs to this Council, the legal status of this coordination is clear enough. However, how does this coordination mechanism work when it belongs to the Council? What is the financial mechanism? How to coordinate?

If the apex coordination body is an independent entity, what should be its legal status? If it is a governmental body, it could have funding but it is more difficult because in the context of reducing government officials of Viet Nam, it seems not feasible. If it is in a legal status of a civil society organisation, it should find the financing solutions via providing services or memberships.

3. MAIN SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

This session looks into main services and activities of career development provided to individuals. However, the review and interviews show that there are self-help digital and distance services; assessment and testing, some part of career information, and career education. Otherwise, the services and activities such as supporting in negotiating and networking with organisations and groups; work experience, work trials, learning tasters or peer 2 peer exchange on career development themes are quite new in Viet Nam and it will not appear in all the below parts.

3.1 EDUCATION, TRAINING (TVET) AND WORK BASED LEARNING FOR YOUTH

In this session, the main career guidance provisions are identified based on two types: 1) general education tracks; and 2) vocational or technical education tracks, including work-based learning such as apprenticeships.

- Frequency and nature of activities undertaken;

As mentioned in the previous part, career education is conducted in schools from the ninth grade to the twelfth grade monthly. Teachers need to have a teaching plan and teach one career session per month for their class. This work has often been done by teachers or vice principal who shares this responsibility in their to-do list. In 2010, MOET published a teacher's book on career guidance that allows them to perform their role.

In reality, they are not trained in career education but they have to be responsible for these activities for their students. So they meet difficulties to implement this work in which some of them are not very interested. Teachers need to spend more time on career lessons but they could not get anything for this extra-work. That's why they take this role as their responsibility. In other words, they are not very motivated.

According to teachers' guidelines books, student would learn lessons below:

At 9th grade:

Theme 1: The meanings and importance of choosing a future profession based on scientific evidence.

Theme 2: Tendency for socio-economic development of the country and the locality.

Theme 3: The professional world around us

Theme 4: Information on local occupations

Theme 5: Information on labour market

Theme 6: Understanding your own abilities and family's professional traditions

Theme 7: Vocational training and education systems at central and local level

Theme 8: Pathways after graduating from junior high school

Theme 9: Career counselling

At 10th grade:

Theme 1: What job do you like?

Theme 2: Professional ability and family's professional traditions

Theme 3: Understanding of teaching profession

Theme 4: Gender and career choices

Theme 5: Understanding some occupations in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fishery

Theme 6: Understanding medicine profession

Theme 7: Field trip to an industrial or agricultural production facility

Theme 8: Understanding some occupation in the construction field

Theme 9: My future job

At 11th grade:

Theme 1: Understanding some occupations in the fields of transportation and geography.

Theme 2: Understanding some occupations in the fields of business and services.

Theme 3: Understanding some occupations in the fields of energy, post and telecommunications, and information technology.

Theme 4: Understanding some occupations in the fields of security and national defense.

Theme 5: Meetings with examples of overcoming difficulties, typical of good producers and businessmen.

Theme 6: Occupation and the needs of the labour market

Theme 7: I want to achieve my dream

Theme 8: Field trip to local university (or college, professional, vocational school).

At 12th grade:

Theme 1: Tendency for socio-economic development of the country and the locality.

Theme 2: Key factors success in the occupation

Theme 3: Understanding the central and local professional and vocational training systems

Theme 4: Understanding the university and college training system

Theme 5: career choice counselling

Theme 6: Guide students to choose a career and make an enrolment application

Theme 7: Youth and career pathways

Theme 8: Field trip or exchange program on career guidance topic.

If fully implementing the above-mentioned career-oriented topics, students will be able to discover themselves and gain information about the socio-economic development of the locality and the country; finding out about specific occupations and training systems related to the profession you are interested in. But as mentioned above, normally, teachers are responsible for these themes. They rarely receive support from practitioners or experts on career education. Otherwise, they are not trained on career guidance and they are not interested in this work. Thus, they combine some themes and present them to students in one session. Instead of delivering one session of career guidance per month, they implement 2-3 sessions per year or even one session per year. That's why career education results are not quite effective.

In the coming time, career education activities will be carried out according to the new general education program. This will be an opportunity for students to get better career guidance.

In career guidance, some private schools invite practitioners, professionals to assess students' interests and abilities related to career orientation. They afford to pay fees for these activities, but it's not the case for public schools.

- Collaborative approach supported whole schools and parents' engagement

In Viet Nam, the parents' representative group exists in both levels: at classes and schools. However, interviews of high school teachers in charge of career education show that parents' representative groups do not too much support the career guidance for their children. They pay more attention to children's learning. Recently, some of parents' representative groups start to care for the career education for their children. For example, they invite career counsellors/ experts to come to help their children or organising some visits for their children to the businesses or hospitals or governmental agencies to learn what are the main tasks of the working position in practice. They could organise some training where they invite professionals or practitioners to come and share with their children and the school, or support visits of professionals or entrepreneurs to schools. It seems that more and more parents are interested in career education. They wish that their children can choose a right job to avoid unemployment as they graduate from university or college

- Work-based learning for youth

According to the report of VCCI (VCCI, 2019), apprenticeships at business in Viet Nam are not really as popular in Viet Nam as the internships¹³. All these activities require the cooperation between employers and schools in promoting career development for the young people. The interviews of Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) shows that all the VET institutions have the partnership with business in which internships, traineeship or apprenticeships are one content among the others. They normally inform about the work-based learning tracks in the cooperation cases. The modest cooperation level happens when VET institutions invite the business to come in their training activities to share their actual experiences or join in training for their students. It is not very popular but some cases show that VET institutions and business cooperates in the enrolment of students, for example, the business will give a list of requirements of their need in workers and VET will call for the enrolment of students based on such requirements. Universities have sessions to invite business and employers to come for some thematic talks or in the defence committee of the students' final papers. Indeed, all the collaboration between schools and business in this way really helps develop the career for their students but they are not yet seen from the

¹³ VCCI, 2019, Handbook to guide students to learn and practice at enterprises

perspectives of career development. Instead, it is an indicator of the learning outcome of the training programme of VET institutions for example: in the learning outcome, there are 6 months of working in business and they need to have the evidence from business to achieve that indicator in learning outcome or sometimes, it is a compulsory task of public schools.

All the descriptions could point out a big gap in the provision of career guidance and careers education in education and training, specially all the activities should start from the need of the students and the students become more proactive in all the process rather than something that needs to be completed in the compulsory training programme. Apprenticeship is another opportunity in Viet Nam context to promote more career development for the young while the Apprenticeship is mentioned in the Labour Code but the implementation is quite limited.

Another problem of young workers in Vietnam is the limitation of professional skills and soft skills used in their occupations. According to a research report by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), UNICEF and the Mekong Development Research Institute (MDRI) on “Assessment of occupational skills and good practices of enterprises to improve their professional skills for disadvantaged and vulnerable youth” (2020) shows that: enterprises believe that there is a gap between qualifications and the actual working capacity of employees. Young workers often have weak skills in foreign languages, advanced computer skills, management and communication skills. For disadvantaged groups, language and communication skills are limited. The report also shows that businesses seek creativity, teamwork skills and active listening from young workers in the future. Similarly, a study by the Center for Training Support and Human Resource Supply (Ministry of Education and Training) also shows that: 58% of enterprises believe that students lack or do not have practical skills; 41.6% think that students lack soft skills; 29.6% lack foreign language and computer skills; 22.4% said that students lack understanding of the labor market; 15.2% of students do not like/passionate about work (Hoang C.D, 2021)¹⁴. Therefore, it is necessary to provide career guidance for students in school. On the other hand, it is crucial to train students in soft skills so that they can participate in the labour market more effectively. Universities should set up Career Support Centers for students.

3.2 UNEMPLOYED SUPPORT

As indicated in the Section 2, under Employment Law, Public Employment Service (PES) centres provide some career development services and activities for the unemployed and

¹⁴ Hoang Cong Dung, Report “The current employment situation of graduates in Vietnam” dated March 29, 2021, Training and Human Resource Supply Support Center, Ministry of Education and Training, Hanoi, Vietnam

other clients such as vulnerable groups, low qualified workers, employed workers but wish to move to other jobs. Among these clients, many vocational training programmes are free for the vulnerable groups. However, the way of providing the career development services does not always link to the need of vocational training and is not yet professional enough for many reasons.

First, the career development is not yet named in the correct manner in the list of PES centres' services for the unemployed and other clients. The PES centres need to be entitled more in career development for their clients and rights and obligations involving career guidance linked to unemployment or social benefits because career counselling is one of the benefits regulated in their unemployment insurance. By this way, the career development services and activities will be a compulsory part of PES centres. When it is obligatory, the definition of career development will be clarified with the embedded concrete service and activities.

Second, the professionalism of the career development services for the unemployed and other clients are quite limited and modest. The interview of some current PES centres show that they could not provide the career counselling because they do not have enough staff professionalized for individual counselling services and they do not have any tool to help with assessment and testing activities or career information or short-term group counselling. If the services are requested by the clients, they will provide them only the vacancy information based on all the vacancies they have from the employers.

The opportunities for these PES centres to expand and improve career development services are quite high, especially focusing on the self-help digital and distance services; assessment and testing activities; career information and group counselling and career education. National PES Center under Department of Employment (DOE), MOLISA sent the request for the ILO to support a tool of career development for the young workers and DOE themselves have a plan to develop a digital platform to connect skills to jobs that help matching better the workers with their skills and the labour market need. The digital platform is under development, DOE does not yet officially adopt and introduce until the platform is ready for their clients.

The revision of Employment Law is another opportunity to discuss the reform of PES centre services and the updates of unemployment insurance, for example, the introduction of voucher policies in career development services. The voucher should be a mechanism to allow the unemployed to use the rights in using unemployment insurance for career development services provided by PES centre and other civil society organisations.

3.3 EMPLOYED AND LEARNERS IN WORK CONTEXTS

Chapter 4 of Labour Code allows the employers to retrain, and upskill their workers that connect closely with career development services and activities. It could be considered the legal back-up for the career development services and activities for their employees/associates. However, the role of trade unions is still a question mark specially the workers need to pay 1% from their salary used to pay for social insurance (and additionally, employers pay 2% from salary fund used to pay social insurance) for Trade Union of which the career development should be a part but the workers do not still receive back the services that they are deserved concerning their career development pathways. The upcoming Trade Union Law revision will be the opportunity to review this point among the services and activities for the members of Trade Union.

If the Trade Union Law entitles the career development for one of their services, it could be a change in terms of policies to stimulate the adoption of strategic staff management policies in private business, especially SMEs. Moreover, some other policies and measures could be regarded as incentives for SMEs to adopt the strategic staff management in their business such as: the reduction of 5% taxes if they could use 5% of their funding for the career development activities for their staff. Or there are some other incentives under the law such as "expenses for vocational education activities of enterprises are deductible when determining taxable income according to the provisions of tax law", or regarding businesses operating in the field of TVET, the tax rate of 10% is applied to the cost of building facilities, the cost of purchasing machines and equipment as fixed assets used to organize TVET activities, but in fact, whether or not enterprises have approached these privileges is not yet evaluated because the tax guidelines are still vague, so there are difficulties in the implementation process.

The employed people indeed are a good market for career development services especially in an uncertain and chaotic labour market as it is nowadays. This is a huge opportunity for the civil society organisations to jump in because to wait for the law changes and incentives from the government really takes time. Sector Skills Council is at the early stage of the development of VietNam with the piloting in Agriculture Sector but they do not yet have the career development activities in their work plan.

3.4 PRIVATE AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY PROVISION

As stated in Section 2, the services and activities that NGOs and the only one social enterprise Song-An provide in Viet Nam focus more on career education and a little bit about career counselling for individuals and families. They use the digital-based services in testing and assessing such as the free of charge Holland Test in the website of Song An¹⁵

¹⁵ <https://huongnghiepsongan.com/stnnholland/>

The interviews with some private companies show that they have the career counselling activities that are not independent but are a part of their services of studying abroad. This embedded career counselling and guidance activity is free of charge for those who register the consultancy services of studying abroad. However, it is more about career information and personalized services with the choice of colleges or universities in the country that want to apply rather than domestic labour market information. So to help students to make meaningful choices, the career guidance services in the companies use the assessment and testing for the students to understand themselves, specially the free Holland Test and after selecting the colleges and universities abroad that are suitable to them according to the career counsellors.

Recently, the coaching services are blooming in Viet Nam with many centres that provide the coaching services for clients at different ages, for example, transforming their personal and work lives or coaching competencies in order to apply coaching leadership, management and practice professional coaching. Interviewing some coaches show that career guidance is only a part of their services and it focuses more on personalised services. However, the number of individuals that use the coaching services are quite limited. The coaching services are more linked with career education activities.

The ILO Vietnam produced one free application of career guidance for 14-19 years old that could be free download from AppleStore and GoogleStore and during this Covid-19 pandemic, the numbers of more than 1370 users. Although this Apps only provides the assessment and testing activities with a list of occupations, this shows a quite emerging need of using the digital based services. The interviews of career counsellors show that since the pandemic, more career education and counselling sessions are organised on the digital platform and work well with a certain number of participants.

Currently, there are no services related to public contracting of careers services or the development of voucher and other quasi-market schemes and no public authorities or other bodies certify private services or there does not exist any quality standards for private service providers in career development. There is a big gap in the current system concerning career development in Viet Nam.

4. FUNDING

As the non-unification of career development in Viet Nam, it is difficult to look at the funding mechanism as a whole. Instead, looking into each of the key sets of activities in career development and following each stakeholder will provide more information about the financial resources for career development in Vietnam in the current situation.

Career education via the general education system in public schools currently is the only set of activities that are funded by the government. The Decision 522/QĐ-TTg as mentioned in above session forges each province to produce a plan to support career education at school levels within a locality. The financial support comes from the budget of the Provincial People's Committee, so it quite depends on each province about the amount. However, this is the only one programme that allows public funding for career education but it is quite depending on each province for the fund allocation. For example, in Vinh Phuc, a province next to Hanoi, the provincial programme is to support 5 million VND per year for each school to conduct the career education while another mountainous province Lao Cai could not allocate any fund yet for the Career education in the high school system.

All the NGOs that provide career guidance, and career education are financed by their donors and they report following their system where they are fully responsible for accountability, effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of fund management. However, the limitation of these organizations is that when the funding ends, they cannot maintain the existing career education activities that have been implemented during the projects.

All the private service providers and other civil society provision get their funding from their activities and services, especially from the career education and career counselling services. Parents and learners have to pay for these services. Currently, in big cities like Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, parents could be affordable to cover fees for counselling and career guidance activities for their children.

For companies, organizations and businesses, they also have activities to support career development for employees. The interview with a representative of IBM Vietnam showed that the activities include training knowledge and professional skills for employees; at the same time training soft skills such as communication, negotiation, etc. Financing for these activities will come from the source of capacity development for their employees. In addition, if employees want to participate in training courses based on their individual needs, they will pay themselves.

No institutions are responsible for financing and managing the funding of career development services in Viet Nam. Recently, two levies that have been discussed very much are 1% of membership for the Trade Union and some other 1% for unemployment insurance¹⁶ that could be used for PES centers mentioned above. During the Labour Code revision, many people talked about these two levies in the consultation workshops for Chapter 4 on skills development. They argued that these two levies should be used for the professional development of workers in their career pathways. The voucher schemes were

¹⁶ Viet Nam Social Security (VSS): <https://ebh.vn/ngghiep-vu-tong-hop/tong-quan-ve-bao-hiem-xa-hoi-va-cac-che-do-bhxh-tai-viet-nam>

discussed very much during the development of Employment Law in 2012 and would be repeated again in 2023- 2024 when the Employment Law will be revised, and also recently in the draft of the National Vocational Education and Training Strategy developed by DVET. The key argument is that the voucher schemes will provide the flexibility for the unemployed to use the voucher for what services they find useful for themselves that could be provided by all the authorized service providers. And if this voucher scheme could be applied from the unemployment insurance fund, it is under the responsibility of MOLISA.

5. ACCESS

The accessibility of the current career development support is quite limited because the majority of career education activities happen at public schools under the educational reform programmes. The career counselling and guidance occurs more easily in the big cities such as Hanoi and HoChiMinh city because of the real need coming from the clients who are ready to pay fees. The national metropolitan areas with many industrial zones normally have more vacancy opportunities and become hubs to appeal the workers to come and find a job.

In contrast, in the countryside where there are less occupational choices and the lower level of education of parents, parents have less information and could not pay for counselling services. They usually ask teachers for advice related to their children's career orientation. Some of parents could decide themselves the future jobs of their children based on their relations or the family's relations in order that their children could find a job after graduation, avoiding the unemployment. Others let their children choose their careers freely because the parents themselves are not able to guide their children's careers and because they are busy making a living.

If the PES centres improve their services in career guidance, it would be better for the accessibility of more people in career development services and activities, including also the vulnerable groups such as long-term unemployed, inactive, older workers, migrants and women, people with disabilities. The workers in the informal economy could access the PES centers without any limitation for all the services except for the unemployment insurance, for example, job matching is a service that informal economy workers could use including career counselling but unfortunately, the current career counselling services at PES centers are only about vacancy information.

Moreover, the direct contacts might be difficult not only because of the pandemic situation but also the other reasons such as the geographic isolation or lack of infrastructure. In this case, the development of multi-channelled distance services should be a good choice because the internet in Vietnam is quite developed with some very impressive data: 145,8

million mobile phone connections (of 150% population), 68,17 million internet users (of 70% population) and active social media users 65 million (of 67% population)¹⁷. Therefore, to use a distance digital services in career development is a good choice to promote more the accessibility of services and allow tailor-made support. The distance services could include the self-help digital but also the personalized service from distance where some career counsellor could work online to provide the specific support for those who have difficulties in accessing standard career development support such as people in geographic isolation, inactive or individuals working in informal sector.

The distance services could be a good opportunity to improve the accessibility but the problem is the payment for the career counsellors. If the services charge a fee, it will be an obstacle in accessibility of the people in geographic isolation, inactive or individuals working in the informal sector. If it is free of charge, who pays for the career counsellors who provide the services from a distance? Therefore, the accessibility really links to the funding mechanism for the career development services and activities. Funding indeed might be the key factor apart from the forms of service delivery.

6. USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Kettunen and Sampson (2019) note that problems that commonly undermine effective implementation of technology include poor planning, lack of practitioner participation in decision making, poor integration of new technologies in service delivery organisations, inadequate staff training, poor evaluation and staff anxiety and resistance. Technology has the potential to act as an integrative factor if ministries and agencies that share the responsibility for career services have a commonly agreed framework for the role and use of technology and communicate this to stakeholders

In Viet Nam, since career guidance education is starting to be interesting, some organizations and individuals get involved in career guidance for students with the application of technology to this activity. They build websites to provide career guidance information and help students take the online career test. Recently, a number of domestic and international organizations have developed applications to help students self-assess their own abilities and interests and better career orientation such as: career applications of the International Labour Organization (ILO), of the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), of private organizations such as Jobways, of student groups such as career planning. The application of digital technology in career guidance helps to reach more students in Vietnam. It is estimated that Vietnam has about 70% of the population using the internet and mobile phone. So career guidance service through the internet is an effective approach for youth.

¹⁷ <https://vnetwork.vn/news/thong-ke-internet-viet-nam-2020> (accessed 21 May 2021)

The application in career guidance is absolutely free and students can access it easily. However, they need a smartphone and download the career guidance application and conduct the test and search necessary information. Therefore they can understand themselves such as: their interests, abilities related to future occupation. Besides, they also have information on the labor market such as: recruitment needs and professional sectors in which students are interested. The MOLISA issue information named "*Labor market bulletin*" quarterly that will help professionals to understand more the employment and unemployment rate, the number of skill - trained workers, the lack of employment, income, and recruitment needs in the short term, etc.

From the ILO experience, in addition to developing tools (such as Applications), it is necessary to carefully plan the implementation of tools by carefully training teachers and career counsellors how to use the tool, including the use of technology in career education. Otherwise, there is a risk that students may be interested only in the careers the tool suggests without thinking about how the tools produce such results. Using these tools presents multiple options for students to see the reasoning behind the questions they are answering. There should also be a few more options students need to think about why and why some potential career options that are not suggested results when taking the quiz on the app. Self-assessment tools like Applications require a high degree of student readiness and understanding of career guidance.

As mentioned above, some governmental organisations (GO) and non-governmental ones (NGO) support career guidance services but the quality of digital services is not very high level. In other hands, students may not know these services well or they have difficulty in approaching them because of internet quality.

In Vietnam we don't have the standard for career development services. Otherwise, there is not much training on career education to work in this field. The people who are working in the career service are trained overseas or have participated in some training courses implemented by several organisations such as ILO Vietnam, VVOB (Education for Development), MOET, MOLISA, VCCI, etc. Then these trainees have to improve their knowledge and skills on career counselling. In order to help students to choose a future job, we conduct some surveys on students' needs. The results showed that most of them (making up 90%) wish to be supported with information on how they can understand their interest and ability, labor market information or employment opportunities, training institutions and information of training faculties, etc (Hoang Gia Trang, 2014).

Recently, Vietnamese people pay more attention to the career guidance field. But the number of practitioners possessing a diploma in the career branch is limited. At university, the modules on career counselling are integrated in training curricula at both bachelor and master degrees. The digital technology is presented to the students that permit them to

practise during their studying period. In some next year, Vietnam will have more competent practitioners on career counselling at schools. According to the Decision 522/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister that is mentioned above, 100% schools need to have teachers working on career guidance and education for the students by the year 2025.

Although Vietnamese people recognise the importance of career guidance and more and more civil organisations and social enterprises get involved in this field but until now, there is no professional association. Thus, it is difficult to gather everyone to share information and help each other. However, some international organisations such as ILO Vietnam and VVOB have disseminated their publications on career guidance on the internet that permit professionals to approach online resources easily. Besides, some groups of teachers trained on career guidance in the provinces/cities such as Hoa Binh, Lao Cai (in the Northern of Vietnam) and Khanh Hoa (Nha Trang) regroup in order to share online knowledge and skill as the result of working with their students by social network (Zalo, facebook).

Technology also impacts young people's job search opportunities. The search for career information is also becoming more popular among young workers today. Job information sites help connect employers and job seekers, and provide necessary information and skills such as CV writing skills, interview skills. Some job portals with a large number of visitors include¹⁸:

+/ Vietnamworks - 3.1 million visits/month

+/ Careerbuilder - 2.7 million visits/month

+/ Timviec365 - 2.5 million visits/month

+/ Timviecnhanh - 2.2 million visits/month

+/ Jobstreet - 2.1 million visits/month

+/ TopCV - 2 million visits/month

The number of people looking for jobs online tends to increase. According to the labor market bulletin in the fourth quarter of 2020, the number of workers looking for jobs online is nearly 40,000 people, among whom many people are with technical qualifications, specifically, university degree or higher accounts for 60.4%; college degree accounts for 22.4%; intermediate level accounts for 9.74%. In addition, many businesses also put

¹⁸ Source: <https://resources.base.vn/hr/danh-sach-cac-trang-web-tuyen-dung-hang-dau-viet-nam-194>, accessed 10/06/2021

recruitment information on the internet (76% of surveyed enterprises) and recruitment information on their portals (accounting for 64.8% of surveyed enterprises)¹⁹.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE

In a perfect situation, the quality of provision in career development needs to be ensured, including the definition of standards of service and ethical treatment of personal information, professionalization and training of practitioners and other staff, quality of tools, methodologies and information. However, the context of Vietnamese situation is far away from this quality insurance.

7.1 STANDARDS

There are no available national or service standards for qualifications, skills and knowledge of the diverse types of career development practitioners in Viet Nam. All the career professionals are certified after their graduation in a pedagogy university but their faculty does not name “career guidance” but call “school psychology” or “school counselling” instead in the Education University, so the majority of career development practitioners are the psychology graduates. This is the official recognition of the professionals who are working also as career counsellor now if they graduate in Viet Nam.

Many practitioners who are working as career counselling own only a participation certification after a short course training provided by some training service providers that are not enough standards to certificate as professionals in career counselling and guidance. For example, Song-An Social Enterprise has many activities in training for career counselling or career education, they apply their standards regarding quality and ethical delivery of services, for example: they introduce 6 ethical principles: autonomy, no-maleficence, beneficence, objectivity, accountability and veracity²⁰. They have also produced for themselves a competency framework of career counselling in which they require the competencies and ethics that a career counselling professional need to have and follow and this has been launched in April 2021. This is the unique competency framework for career counselling professionals until now in Viet Nam.

Until now, there are no national frameworks or administrative regulations, nor any quality assurance mechanism for the development of tools and methodologies used by careers practitioners. According to the new educational reform programmes, by 2025, 100% high schools will have teachers in charge of career education activities and this is the condition

¹⁹ <https://vnetwork.vn/news/thong-ke-internet-viet-nam-2020> (accessed 21 May 2021)

for them to get the governmental funding. However, there are no quality assurance standards for these teachers.

7.2 STAFFING

As described, the career education happening at schools is charged by the teachers who normally function many tasks at the same time of which career education is a part. They could be the teacher in history or geography cum career education, or they could be the school psychologist cum career counselling and guidance. Their roles are organising the career education activities at school by group or by class, rather than providing career counselling for individuals. Among some private schools, they have the career counselling teachers who could provide individual services and also could organise more activities for pupils and also some information career fairs. The indicators for their work are how many students they provide the counselling and how many events concerning career guidance they could organise. This is totally an absence of the qualitative data on outcomes such as the quality of career guidance sessions or how the career counselling session could help students, etc.

Among the VET institutions or universities, the staff working at the enrolment department normally are in charge of career guidance activities, they could come to high schools, provide the free career counselling for the pupils and introduce the faculties of their VET institutions. The results of their career guidance activities attach with the number of enrolment of the new students into their institutions so this measure is quite pressure.

Centers and organizations working on career guidance provide career counselling for students based on the requirements of schools. Usually around March and April every year, schools invite career experts to present a session to students of the whole class or the whole school about career guidance. These activities are often difficult to help students make career decisions but only help them with some basic information.

Media agencies are also involved in career counselling. Television stations with career counselling programs or newspapers such as Tuoi Tre, Youth also have career counselling and enrolment counselling activities nationwide. These activities also contribute to helping students better understand their future careers. Career guidance should emphasize the development of transferable competencies and not just focus on short-term career or study choices.

The staff in PES centres function to provide career information to their clients who visit the PES centres but the career information normally is job advertisements coming from companies' recruitment. They do not have any concrete indicators for their performance and

in the list of public services, the indicators could not tell about the quality of career guidance services such as number of people coming for job information. As they are governmental officials, they are paid monthly in the state wage system.

Currently, in order to implement the 2018 general education program, there were regular training and retraining courses for teachers working in career guidance for students in schools, but the question is still whether this training will lead to a professional qualification or this kind of training is a part of their professional upskilling. From 2022-2023 on, the textbook on career education will be piloted in high schools and these questions will be clarified during the implementation. The training for career teachers will focus on career education with many collective activities rather than individual career counselling skills.

The ILO is supporting PES centres as a tool for the employment adviser and it is advised to focus more on career information. However, as the tool is under development, there are still many debates and sceptical ideas about the efficiency of the tool.

The interview of career services staff shows that they require some skills development needs such as: the understanding of all the classic career development theories; the different tools in career development and skills to deliver the individual career counselling and guidance; the knowledge about labour market information, etc. However, who could provide these training is still the question in the context of Viet Nam.

7.3 QUALITY OF DATA AND INFORMATION

In Viet Nam, there is not yet a common database or a portal including: occupational information, training and skills development opportunities, work contexts information, information about vacancies, skills forecasts. Quarterly, the Institute of Labour Science and Social Affairs (ILSA) under Ministry of Labours, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) produce a labour market information bulletin including normally four pages; page 1 about general information of labour market with concrete indicators such as monthly average income of salaried workers; page 2 about labour supply and demand focusing on the recruitment status, status of job seekers and the gap between supply and demand; page 3 about an in-depth topic by quarter that could be about skills, about occupations, etc. and the last page, page 4 about the information of social insurance, unemployment insurance and forecast of short-term trend. All the data used for this Labour Market Bulletin is abstracted from the Labour Force Survey quarterly collected by the General Statistics Office (GSO). For this reason, the data is considered quality and adequacy and it is collected quarterly by GSO, it is up-to-date, reliable and accurate.

However, this bulletin is still general and it only provides some tendencies of the labour market in Viet Nam as a whole, it is not customized for any provinces or areas or go details in some career information while it mentioned the most occupations in need of the

recruitment or the industries with the most increasing rate of employment. This information is collected based on all the businesses posting their recruitment information/advertised vacancies, for example, in the fourth quarter of 2020, the sample is more than 15 thousands of businesses posting their recruitment information with the need of more than 82 thousands of labour. The ILSSA have a plan to improve their Bulletin in 2021 with more sources of information from the PES centre system.

The Employers provided the information through their recruitment information. However, in the Provincial Competitiveness Index (PCI) conducted annually by VCCI, among the questionnaires for business, they have the questions about the quality of workers about the skills and some specific areas such as technicians, accountants, supervisors with the rate of graduation from vocational training and the investment of business in labour skills. Although PCI is not yet a source of career guidance to use so frequently, at provincial level, it might be the unique official source of information that could be used for career guidance.

The data of ILSSA and VCCI are available for citizens, training providers, employers, system developers and policy makers. For career education and counselling, Vietnam standards classification of Occupation (VSCO) could be used as a list of occupations. Although Vietnam does not yet have the official list of the most common occupations, the ILO has developed a dictionary of nearly 200 most common occupations used for career guidance based on the GSO's data. This is considered a valuable "Occupation Dictionary" today to help students orient their careers with a more scientific basis.

The head hunters companies such as Vietnamwork or TopCv, produce their books about the occupations in some most wanted sectors such as occupations in economics, in finance, etc. These kinds of information comes from their own operations and they could be the free of charge information sources for occupations.

From the information of education and enrolment for the education, it is available in all the websites of universities', and TVET institutions'. The information about policy and support could be seen more in the website of Directorate of Vocational Education and Training (DVET) and Ministry of Education and Training (MOET).

7.4 MONITORING, EVALUATION AND POLICY FEEDBACK

There is no any mechanism to monitor the operation of the diver services and activities such as:

- Data on inputs, including expenditure, number of practitioners

- Data on service outputs, such as number and type of interventions, number and type of clients
- Data on outcomes including learning outcomes, changes in employment status, transitions in training and education, transitions in employment status

Song-An Social Enterprise operates as an enterprise and they have their own monitoring system based on the number of their training and their trained counsellors and teachers. Otherwise, there are no assessments of the services needed by diverse client groups and level of coverage of the existing services.

The network of career counsellors such as Song An career counsellors Network is new-born, so even though they have the initiatives to measure the social or economic impact of career development support activities, it is quite difficult for them at this early stage of development.

The government might focus only on their career school educators and seem to provoke more initiatives to improve the activities among the school system but no information about monitoring and evaluation of career development support activities is recorded during the interview or desk review. Although career guidance is a teacher's task, which has been specified by the Ministry of Education and Training in the professional title standards, there is no mechanism to evaluate this task of teachers.

8. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis about coordination and cooperation, funding, access, use of technology and quality assurance, below recommendations can consider the development of critical capacities at three levels with the distinction of the long-term and short-term goals. The consultations show that it is necessary to have a comprehensive plan or a roadmap for career development in Viet Nam instead of separate interventions.

- **Institutional level:**

In the long term, the National Human Resource Strategy (NHRS) approved by Prime Minister for 2011-2020 was over and if it has a new one for 2021-2030, it should include career development as an important part with the objective of developing of a skilled labour workforce for VietNam in the vision of becoming an upper middle-income country. However, the implementation of the NHRS will require cross-ministerial and inter-institutional coordination and cooperation, at least the close collaboration between MOET and MOLISA. A mechanism or an agency could be set up to coordinate the implementation. While this mechanism could belong to the National Council of Education and HRD, it should consider the model of public-private to be a good approach for consideration with the involvement of the Central Communist Party in Viet Nam's political context.

In addition, it should also be considered whether the National Council has a mandate to carry out the task of career development and, if so, it is necessary to formalize that function. If such a mechanism could work, it could help with quality assurance frameworks, monitoring and evaluation systems or professionalism standards for organisations and practitioners with national research programmes. Some international experiences could be learned from Scotland where Skills Development Scotland is the main national level body in charge of this, or from Norway where Skills Norway has a similar role.

Another option should be the development of a national framework for career management skills which would be used in defining learning objectives for these modules. This has implications for the pedagogical solutions used in career education and how to extend the learning setting also outside of the formal school settings.

In a shorter term from now on until 2024, Employment Law revision is also a good opportunity to improve the service in employment counselling for the PES centre system and the use of the unemployment insurance fund for career development for the unemployed. The PES centre staff as employment advisers need to be trained with more professionalism and a good source of career information to function their tasks better. It could link closely with the Labour Market Bulletin of ILSSA because the Labour Market Bulletin currently uses two sources of information: Labour Force Survey and Business recruitment's advertisement but they could integrate the data source for Employment Services' Information Portal (ESIP) to improve their Labour Market Bulletin. Moreover, if the Department of Employment could have a platform to match jobs and skills including career development with assessment and testing activities, it would be more useful.

The Trade Union Law revision is another opportunity to insert career development into services and activities for their members that has never appeared before in the current law while career development is important enough for the meaningful support for their members from the percentage of their trade union levy. This task will need a process to convince and negotiate with the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour (VCGL) and show them the experiences of the other countries in supporting their members.

Last but not least, concerning the monitoring and evaluation, in many countries M&E has not been developed properly, because the monitoring has been discussed after the other parts of the national guidance system are already in place. It would be relevant to start developing the feedback mechanism as a parallel process with the overall system development or integrate monitoring also in the development of the digital services from the beginning. How to obtain data which could be used in monitoring the key features of the services

automatically? The application of technology could help the M&E tasks become more effective and quicker.

- **Organizational level:**

In a short-term goal, if there exists a national mechanism that could coordinate among ministries about career development, it would be the perfect scenario because it could have a clear organisational mandate with adequate human resource, financial resources, tools, methodologies, researches, etc. Of course, this mechanism as an apex coordination body needs to be carefully discussed to best meet with the national context. Attaching to the function of the National Council for Education and Human Resource Development is one option, but it is necessary to study more specifically the feasibility and issues that may be a limitation if attached to this Council.

In this context of Vietnam, to be feasible for the time being, the organisation should belong to different governmental agencies or civil society organisations. Each organisation working in career development will have their clear mandate, human resources are trained with their self-financial resources, tools, methodologies and infrastructure. Each organization will decide their services to offer to the needs of their clients and use the current labour market information for their work. When these organisations are strong enough, an association could be a good idea to provide and agree together the ethic code for the career counsellors or exchange the information of career with the initiatives to gather the resource of information about career and vacancies, or advocate for the policies.

Moreover, it should be carefully compared with international experiences because there is international research and evidence of pros and cons for different types of coordination. One major issue is agreeing which organisation has the mandate to follow-up the implementation of jointly agreed goals and how to promote sustainability for continuous development of the policies and practices. The coordination is crucial also in the enhancement of the use of technology. According to research one major challenge for effective use of technology is inadequate integration of technology to national overall services. In order to use the full potential of technology it is necessary that the key sectors have a common understanding of both long-term and short-term goals and also technical interfaces which are needed for a well-functioning and effective digital ecosystem.

The case of NCGE in Ireland or KRIVET in Korea are quite interesting because they are the coordination bodies that include production of supporting materials and online resources for

teachers to promote career education. So if the potential national coordination in career development in Viet Nam would be established, one of the tasks should be both for the training of professionals and the curriculum development, and also for the need to train the school management, especially of local school management and principal/sectors/leaders. Plus, if there is a national coordinating body, one of the tasks of this entity would be looking for options on how to promote professionalism in partnerships with not-for-profit organisations, such as the applications of the development of the competence framework that has been in cooperation with experts from APCDA, so it is equivalent with international standards.

The school counsellor and career education in the school system could be easier in organising their activities and services with financial resources, tools and methodologies provided by the MOET. The infrastructure and professionalism standards for career counsellors might be issued easier because of the management of MOET. However, instead of focusing solely on assessment and testing, the modern model should emphasize career education as a learning process. Therefore, career guidance is not only about helping to make short-term choices, but the main goal is to learn how to always have transferable skills, constantly learn and always plan for yourself.

In the middle- term, the establishment of a Club of the practitioners in career guidance will be meaningful and the cooperation with APCDA would be one way to promote this. In establishing the association it would be relevant how to support the practice and system development through the association, but also use the association in consulting the national future strategies. The association could also play a role in implementing future ICT applications as an intermediary.

In addition, an important task of the association should be the advocacy of recognizing the competency framework of the career counsellors. The Vietnam CDP (Career Development Practitioners) Competency Framework, initiated by the Vietnam APCDA team, sponsored by Song An Career Development Social Enterprise, was published in Vietnamese at the end of April 2021.

The main difference between Vietnam CDP Competency Framework and the others is that the former one provides the “Observable Behaviours” for each listed competency. This part was specifically requested by the local career practitioners. The project team plans to receive ongoing feedback from the users for further development of this framework one year from now. However, to be officially recognized by the education system, it requires the

competency framework to align with Vietnamese regulations. It could be the job of individual institutions but an association or such a similar form that could help.

Concerning the technology, it would be important to progress parallel in defining the framework for the career services and the use of technology in accordance with the overall transformation of the services. So in addition to the development of online tools, it would be relevant to think about how to utilise technology in bringing together the key features of the national career guidance system.

In this case, Vietnam could avoid the mistakes in other countries which have started to develop online tools only for separate guidance functions. This has led to even more fragmented services and huge costs on maintenance of parallel systems without interoperability. The systemic development might be perceived as a too slow approach, but according to research has turned out to be more successful. The application of technology in career guidance will also help disadvantaged groups such as ethnic minority students to access career guidance more easily. Because the internet now covers most of the localities in Vietnam, bringing technology to guide students' careers will bring great benefits.

Also, it would be important to pay attention to ICT skills among both practitioners and end users. The use of online resources and presence in social media could be included in the career education programmes in different levels of education.

Currently, Decision 522/Ministry of Education and Training QD-TTg dated May 14, 2018 of the Prime Minister sets goals that each school to have a counselling room to help students overcome their difficulties including those in career choice. Thus it is important to organise training courses to achieve the goals that 100% schools have career education teachers by the year 2025. To do so, it is necessary to develop the themes to upskill the teachers about career education following standards. Similarly, it must assure the training quality and the motivation of participants. Therefore, students will benefit from an effective career service.

In the long term, it is necessary to develop bachelor's training programs in career counselling at universities to meet current needs. At the same time, there should be job positions for career counsellors at high schools. This position can be combined with the school counselling department in schools.

Last but not least, an immediate goal should be the involvement of parents in the career guidance. Given the cultural aspects of Vietnam as we explained in the above parts, parents need to learn more about career guidance and how it is important for their children, the children need to decide their life and plan for their own future and parents are the facilitator for them in the whole process. All the support from family and parents influence their children. In order to effectively engage parents, the school needs to coordinate with the

school's Parent Representative Board to develop a plan for counselling and career education for pupils from the beginning of the school year.

- **Individual level:**

The individual level depends very much on the two above mentioned levels indeed, because the certification or qualification for skilled practitioners, access to professional development opportunities, and core capacities should rely on the institutions. Each individual practitioner needs to improve their competencies, knowledge in career development by themselves but to assess their capacities, a competency framework of career counsellors, school career counsellors, and employment advisers should be developed as the baseline for the assessment.

Career counsellors can work together to form a Career Club to exchange information related to the labour market, career guidance tools such as quizzes, checklists, etc.; support career counselling skills. Currently, there are a number of different career testing tools in use to advise students. Career counsellors select the right tools to perform or may combine tools to compare and best guide students.

In order to improve the capacity of career guidance workers, it is essential to have an exchange with international career guidance experts to access new career guidance tools, updated materials and participate in international conference and seminars on career guidance to exchange experiences. This requires career counsellors to be active and proactive in building a network of domestic and international career counsellors.

Finally, the development or collection of the labour market information is out of the capacity of each individual, they need to know how to assess those sources of information and apply the information during their activities and services. If they provide career counselling for the individual clients, they need to follow the ethics of a practitioner.

REFERENCES

DANG Danh Anh (2010), *Career Education in Vietnam*, Culture and Information Publishing House, Hanoi, Vietnam

NGUYEN Thanh Cong (2017), *Development of Employment centres in Hanoi at present*, Doctoral Thesis of Economics, Hanoi, Vietnam

PHAM Tat Dong, Ha De, PHAM Thi Thanh, Tran Mai Thu (2012), *Career Education for Grade 9, Teachers' book*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi – Vietnam

PHAM Tat Dong, Dang Danh Anh, Nguyen The Truong, Tran Mai Thu (2010), *Career Education for Grade 10, Teachers' book*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi - Vietnam

PHAM Tat Dong, Dang Danh Anh, Nguyen Duc Quang, Nguyen The Truong, Tran Mai Thu (2010), *Career Education for Grade 11, Teachers' book*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi - Vietnam

PHAM Tat Dong, Dang Danh Anh, Nguyen The Truong, Tran Mai Thu (2010), *Career Education for Grade 12, Teachers' book*, Education Publishing House, Hanoi - Vietnam

Hoang Cong Dung, Report "The current employment situation of graduates in Vietnam" dated March 29, 2021, Center for Training Support and Human Resource Supply, Ministry of Education and Training, Hanoi, Vietnam

Le Thuy Hang (2006), *Gender differences in parents' investment intentions for their children's education*, Sociology magazine No. 2 (94), pp. 28-35, Hanoi – Vietnam

Nguyen Ngoc Tai, Dao Thi Van Anh (2015), *Solutions to positively impact parents and other educational forces to contribute to improving the effectiveness of career guidance through media*, Scientific Journal Ho Chi Minh City University of Education, No. 8.

Hoang Gia Trang (2012), *Construction du projet de vie chez les adolescents âgés de 15 à 17 ans scolarisés au Vietnam*, Doctoral thesis in Psychology, University of Picardie Jules Verne, France

Hoang Gia Trang (2014), *The career counselling's needs of middle school students*, research report, National Institute of Educational Sciences, Hanoi - Vietnam

Circular No 31/1981/TT-BGDĐT dated August 17 of the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET)

The 10-year socio-economic development strategy 2021-2030, Documents of the 13th National Congress of Deputies, National Political Publishing House, 2021, Hanoi - Vietnam

General Statistics Office (2020), Population and Housing Census Report 2019, Statistical Publishing House, Hanoi.

Labor Market Newsletter, MOLISA, 2020, Hanoi - Vietnam

Decree 196/2013/ND-CP dated November 21, 2013 of the Government on “Establishment and operation of employment service centers”

Decision 522/QĐ-TTg dated May 14, 2018 of the Prime Minister promulgating "Vocational education and student stream orientation in general education in the period 2018-2025"

Decision No: 1956/QĐ-TTg dated November 27, 2009 of the Prime Minister approving the Project “Vocational training for rural workers until 2020. Hanoi - Vietnam

Decision No. 295/QĐ-TTg dated February 26, 2010 of the Prime Minister approving the project "Supporting women in vocational training and job creation in the period 2010-2015"

Decision No. 103/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated July 21, 2008 approving the Scheme to support youth in vocational training and job creation for the period 2008-2015

Circular No: 32/2018/TT-BGDĐT dated December 26, 2018 of the Ministry of Education and Training on “Issuing general education program”. Hanoi - Vietnam

Circular No. 31/2017/TT-BGDĐT of the Ministry of Education and Training on "Guidelines for the implementation of psychological counseling for students in high schools"

General Statistics Office and ILO (2017), Vietnam Informal Labor, Statistical Publishing House.

VCCI, UNICEF, MDRI (2020) Assessment of occupational skills and good practices of enterprises to improve skills for disadvantaged and vulnerable youth”, Research results report. Hanoi – Vietnam International Labour Organization (ILO) (2021), Informal employment in Viet Nam: Trends and Determinants.

International Labour Organization (ILO) (2019), Decent Work and SDG Indicators in Vietnam, Country Profile, Hanoi

International Labour Organization (ILO) (2021), Gender and the labor market in Vietnam: An Analysis Based on the Employment Survey, Brief Study (Geneva)

Links:

<https://resources.base.vn/hr/danh-sach-cac-trang-web-tuyen-dung-hang-dau-viet-nam-194>

(Accessed 10/06/2021)

<https://vnetwork.vn/news/thong-ke-internet-viet-nam-2020> (Accessed 21 May 2021)

VietNam Social Insurance (VSS): <https://ebh.vn/ngghiep-vu-tong-hop/tong-quan-ve-bao-hiem-xa-hoi-va-cac-che-do-bhxh-tai-viet-nam> (Accessed 21 May 2021)

<https://huongnghiepsongan.com/stnnholland/>

<https://indicators.report/targets/8-6/>

<http://molisa.gov.vn/Upload/ThiTruong/LMU-So26-Q22020-D5-final.pdf>