



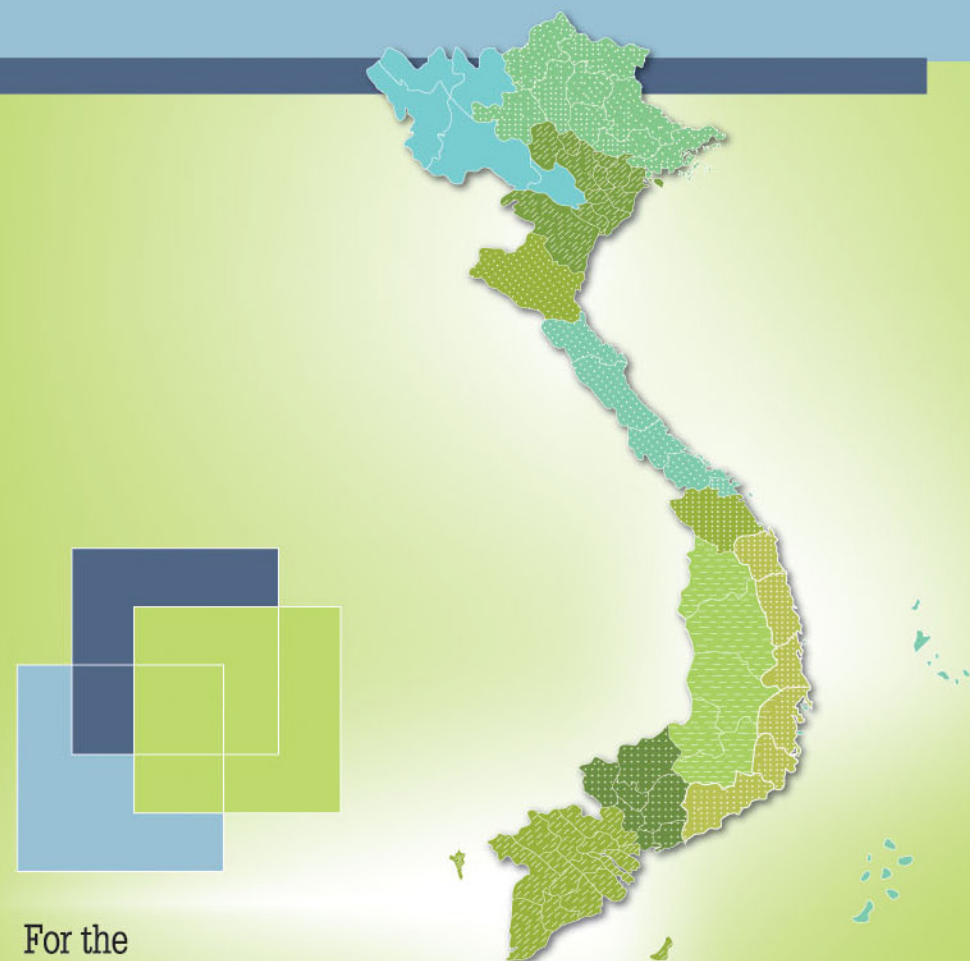
International
Labour
Organization

Mapping Report of

Vocational Training and Employment
for People with Disabilities in Vietnam

Mapping Report of

Vocational Training and Employment
for People with Disabilities in Vietnam



ILO Country Office for Vietnam
48-50 Nguyen Thai Hoc Str.,
Hanoi, Viet Nam
Tel: (84 4) 3734 0902
Fax: (84 4) 3734 0904
Email: hanoi@ilo.org

www.ilo.org/hanoi

For the
International Labour Organization
August 2008

**INCLUDE Service
Mapping Report of Vocational Training
and Employment for People with Disabilities
in Vietnam**



**For the International Labour Organization
August 2008**

Disclaimer

The International Labour Organisation, Geneva, supported the development of this report. The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Labour Organisation.

Contents

1.	Executive summary	6
2.	Introduction and background	7
2.1.	Background to this report	7
2.2.	Methodology	7
2.3.	Scope and limitations of this report	7
3.	Vietnam government and institutions background.....	8
3.1.	Disability in Vietnam.....	8
3.1.1.	Definition of disability	8
3.1.2.	A word on language.....	8
3.1.3.	Attitudes and awareness of disability in Vietnam	8
3.1.4.	Gender and disability in Vietnam.....	9
3.1.5.	Statistics about people with disabilities in Vietnam.....	9
3.2.	Government in Vietnam.....	10
3.2.1.	Overview of Ministries responsible for people with disabilities in Vietnam .	10
3.2.2.	State and social organisations in Vietnam.....	12
3.3.	Disabled Persons' Organisations in Vietnam	14
3.3.1.	Vietnam Blind Association.....	15
3.3.2.	Organisations of women with disabilities	15
3.3.3.	Vietnamese Association of Business Enterprises of People with Disabilities (VABED).....	15
4.	Legislation and policy environment.....	16
4.1.	Vocational training	16
4.2.	Employment.....	17
4.3.	Entrepreneurship.....	18
4.4.	Micro-credit	18
4.5.	International Instruments	19
4.6.	National action plan to support people with disabilities 2006-10.....	19
5.	Organisations and services related to employment for people with disabilities in Vietnam	21
5.1.	Vocational training	21
5.1.1.	Mainstream training.....	21
5.1.2.	Separate training.....	22
5.1.3.	Self help groups and organisations of people with disabilities.....	25
5.1.4.	NGO vocational training programmes	26
5.2.	Employment.....	28
5.2.1.	Quota law implementation	28
5.2.2.	Mainstream employment services	30
5.2.3.	Specialised employment services for people with disabilities	30

5.3.	Entrepreneurship.....	31
5.3.1.	SIYB for people with disabilities	31
5.3.2.	IDEA - small business training for women with disabilities	32
5.3.3.	Enterprises of people with disabilities.....	32
5.4.	Microfinance.....	33
5.4.1.	Vietnam Blind Association and the Bank for Social Policies	34
6.	Conclusions.....	34
6.1.	Vocational training	34
6.2.	Employment.....	34
6.3.	Entrepreneurship.....	34
7.	Mapping of specific services for people with disabilities by province	36
	Bibliography.....	42

List of Acronyms

AO	Agent Orange (a dioxin based herbicide)
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitation
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CPFC	Vietnam Committee for Population, Families and Children
DoET	Department of Education and Training
DoLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DPO	Disabled Persons' Organisation
DRD	Disability Resource Development Centre (a Vietnamese NGO)
EU	European Union
ESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for the Asia Pacific
ESTIH	Hanoi College of Information Technology
FFRD	Fund for Reconciliation and Development
IDEA	Inclusive Development Action (a Vietnamese NGO)
IE	Inclusive Education
INGO	International NGO
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
NCCD	Vietnam National Coordinating Council on Disability
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SIYB	' <i>Start and Improve your Business</i> ' business management training.
SME	Small and medium enterprises
SSHO	Vietnam Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans
USAID	US Agency for International Development
VABED	Vietnam Association of Business Enterprises of the Disabled
VCCI	Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry
VFST	Vietnam Foundation for Science and Technology
VNAH	Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped (a US INGO)
VNRC	Vietnam Red Cross
VSO	Volunteer Service Overseas
VVAF	Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (a US INGO)
WCDO	World Concern Development Organisation (a US INGO)
WU	Women's Union

1. Executive summary

This report provides an overview of organisations of or representing people with disabilities as well as services related to vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship for people with disabilities. Specific focus has been placed on organisations of women with disabilities, and services specifically targeting women with disabilities.

The Vietnamese government has recently placed greater emphasis on the importance of inclusion of people with disabilities, including in training, work and enterprise development. Specific initiatives for women with disabilities are currently limited, although there is some government recognition of the specific needs of women with disabilities. Vietnam is serious about its commitment to the Biwako Millennium Framework of the 2nd ESCAP Asia Pacific Decade of People with Disabilities and have also recently signed, but not yet ratified, the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. Various non-government organisations, particularly International NGOs are working on issues related to employment and training from the policy level to grassroots projects aiming to help people with disabilities to gain work.

The findings of this mapping exercise indicate that people with disabilities are very poorly mainstreamed into the vocational education, employment and enterprise development sectors in Vietnam. Government, many NGOs and people with disabilities themselves assume that people with disabilities require separate training services (or at least classes), specific job placement services and separate business development initiatives. The Vietnamese employment and training legislation is not clear on the issue of mainstreaming and there is no specific government policy promoting inclusive vocational training unlike the Inclusive Education Policy. However, all training centres previously specifically for people with disabilities have now been opened to any student (in practice they still largely service people with disabilities, orphans, war veterans and other disadvantaged people).

As expected, given the preference for separate provision, there are several separate vocational training centres/schools for people with disabilities however, these only really service urban areas. In rural areas access to vocational training is severely limited.¹ Job placement services are usually available in collaboration with the vocational training. The employment success of graduates of this training is relatively low, and most graduates who do succeed in getting a job tend to be employed with separate enterprises specifically for people with disabilities rather than with mainstream employers.

Vietnam has a very large number of enterprises specifically for people with disabilities. Over 8,000 people with disabilities are employed in these enterprises. However, the majority of these enterprises are very small and working in low profit-margin industries such as handicrafts, massage, sewing, etc. Access to appropriate training and/or business development services for these enterprises is very limited. The recent creation of an industry association of enterprises of people with disabilities; VABED, should improve this situation, however their capacity to provide business development services is currently limited by both funding and human resource capacity.

There are very few specific services or groups of women with disabilities. Over the past two years several organisations of women with disabilities have formed and these are now beginning to link with the Vietnam Women's Union and access the services and assistance of this organisation. There are no specific projects or government services for women with disabilities, although most services and NGO projects do aim to include women on an equal basis to men.

¹ This is the case for all Vietnamese, not only people with disabilities.

2. Introduction and background

2.1. Background to this report

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of organizations of or representing women with disabilities and services available to them in several different provinces of Viet Nam. The mapping project has been conducted in anticipation of the ILO project *Promoting Decent Work for People with Disabilities through a Disability Inclusion Support Service* (INCLUDE).

INCLUDE arises from experience in promoting the participation of women with disabilities in mainstream women's entrepreneurship activities under the ILO/Irish Aid project components 'Developing Entrepreneurship among Women with Disabilities' (DEWD) and Women's Entrepreneurship and Gender Equality (WEDGE). It reflects the practical application to persons with disabilities of principles underlying ILO standards as well as more general trends in policies and programmes for people with disabilities, particularly the trend towards a rights-based approach to disability reflected in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD) which came into force in May 2008.

The CPRD and relevant ILO standards give rise to the need for proactive strategies to promote the access of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, to entrepreneurship development and vocational skills development programmes, employment services, business development support services and credit on an equal basis with non-disabled persons so that their opportunities of finding decent work and emerging from poverty will be increased.

In preparation for implementation of INCLUDE in Vietnam, a mapping of the existing situation regarding access of people with disabilities to vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship programmes and services was undertaken during July 2008.

2.2. Methodology

The mapping exercise commenced with a desk review of relevant literature in order to identify the background, legislative environment and range of services available for people with disabilities. See the bibliography for a complete listing of sources consulted.

During July, the ILO and a representative from the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) conducted field visits to eight provinces, meeting with representatives of thirty organisations, service providers and organisations of people with disabilities. Interviews were conducted with these representatives in order to examine the range and scope of services provided for people with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities. (See annex one for the interview guide and list of informants).

2.3. Scope and limitations of this report

This report aims to be as comprehensive as possible, however due to limitations of time it was only possible to conduct field visits to selected provinces and meet a limited number of representatives of organisations and services. The provinces selected for field visits were chosen on the basis that they had the primary, large scale activities related to employment and training for people with disabilities, either government or non-government services.

Other provinces not included in field visits have the standard government services such as Social Protection Centres for people with disabilities and orphans, however there are few initiatives

specifically to support employment and/or training of people with disabilities. It is likely that there are small scale activities of local NGOs, charity organisations or small international NGOs that are not included in this report. However, the ILO and VCCI are reasonably confident that this report includes information about the major services related to employment and training for people with disabilities in Vietnam.

3. Vietnam government and institutions background

3.1. Disability in Vietnam

3.1.1. Definition of disability

The definition of disability in Vietnam comes from the Disability Ordinance, August 1998.

‘Disabled persons by definition of this Ordinance, irrespective of the causes of the disability, are defective of one or many parts of the body or functions which are shown in different forms of disability, and which reduce the capability of activity and causes many difficulties to work, life and studies.’

3.1.2. A word on language

In Vietnamese, there are two main words meaning ‘person with a disability’. The ‘official’ word, used in the Disability Ordinance, is *nguoì tan tat*, and means a person completely lacking in abilities and capabilities. It is an extremely negative word and is now rejected by many people with disabilities themselves. The word preferred by people with disabilities is *nguoì khuyet tat*, which has a more positive connotation. People with disabilities and INGOs have been encouraging people to use this terminology for disabled people, with some success.

However, since the official law uses the word *nguoì tan tat* many government officials argue that this is the only appropriate word and will not use anything else. Terminology is changing; the Director of the office of the NCCD now uses *nguoì khuyet tat* and encourages others to do so too.

3.1.3. Attitudes and awareness of disability in Vietnam

Attitudes towards people with disabilities, particularly low expectations of the capacity of people with disabilities to participate in society, are one of the biggest barriers to their participation in Vietnamese society. The majority attitude towards people with disabilities in Vietnam is one of ‘care and protection’, as is illustrated by the name of the official Vietnamese day of people with disabilities; ‘Day for Care and Protection of Vietnamese with Disabilities’ (*Ngay Bao ve Ho tro Nguoi tan tat Viet Nam*). As a result, people with disabilities in Vietnam tend to receive care, food and shelter, however are kept from participating in any other part of society because of the belief that they are incapable of doing so. In many cases even people with very mild disabilities are believed incapable and prevented from accessing school, house-work, farm work, marriage and employment.

In a conference presentation in 2005 Robert Metts stated ‘as is the case in most countries, most people in Vietnam, including those in public administration, tend to falsely perceive people with disabilities as inherently incapable of significant participation in the social and economic mainstream.’²

² *Final Report and Recommendations* by Robert Metts, on May 6, 2005 in his closing report on the Inclusion of Disabled Persons and Disability Issues in the HEPR Program, and Creation of a National Action Plan on Disability, page 6

These attitudes significantly hamper the effective participation of Vietnamese with disabilities in all facets of life; education, training, employment, family life, and significantly hamper their participation in decision making, even at the lowest level.

3.1.4. Gender and disability in Vietnam

There is no research information about the confluence of gender and disability in Vietnam, and the gender breakdown of statistics is inadequate. However anecdotal information indicates that women with disabilities face greater barriers to participation than their male peers. Women in Vietnam, as is common in many countries, face greater restrictions to independent living, and this is even more so for women with disabilities who tend to be over-protected by well meaning families. Women with disabilities report greater difficulties in basic social interactions such as going to school, getting married and having families than their male peers.

A number of the people interviewed for this mapping exercise indicated that access to vocational training and employment was more difficult for women with disabilities than men. Many people reported that women with disabilities face pressure to either stay home with family, or marry and care for the husband's family. Interview respondents reported that many women with disabilities who marry leave their vocational training or employment in order to stay home and care for the family.

3.1.5. Statistics about people with disabilities in Vietnam

Vietnam, like many other countries, faces difficulties accurately collecting statistics related to people with disabilities. The major population survey in Vietnam is the Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey (VHLSS), conducted by the General Statistics Office (GSO) every 2-3 years. The most recent VHLSS included a question on disability for the first time, using the International Classification of Functioning and Health (ICF). The results of this survey, released in December 2007, indicate that 15.3% of the Vietnamese population have a disability (12.75 million people).³ Prior to this survey, MoLISA estimated a disabled population of only 5.3 million (6.34% of the population).

The VHLSS estimates a higher percentage of disability in urban areas; 17.8% of the urban population is disabled, compared to 14.4% in rural areas. The survey also found a higher percentage of women with disabilities than men with disabilities, 16.58% of women are disabled compared to 13.69% of men. This is attributed to the higher life expectancy of women, thus higher numbers of older women. See Annex Two for a more detailed breakdown of these statistics.

Other than the VHLSS, the recent MoLISA *National Action Plan to Support People with Disabilities 2006-10* brings together the most detailed, accurate and up to date statistics:

Key indicator	Percentage
Percentage of people with disabilities over the age of 6 who are illiterate.	41%
Percentage of non-disabled people over the age of 6 who are illiterate.	Less than 10%
Percentage of children with disabilities attending primary school.	38%
Percentage of children with disabilities attending secondary school	8%

³ Ministry of Planning and Investment, General Statistics Office, 26 December 2007, Results of Household Living Standards Survey, 2006, viewed at <http://www.gso.gov.vn/default.aspx?tabid=507&idmid=&ItemID=6932> on 2 March 2008.

Percentage of people with disabilities who have vocational training certificates.	6.5%
Percentage of people with disabilities who do not have professional qualifications.	93.4%
Percentage of households who have benefited from government provided rehabilitation services.	4.6%

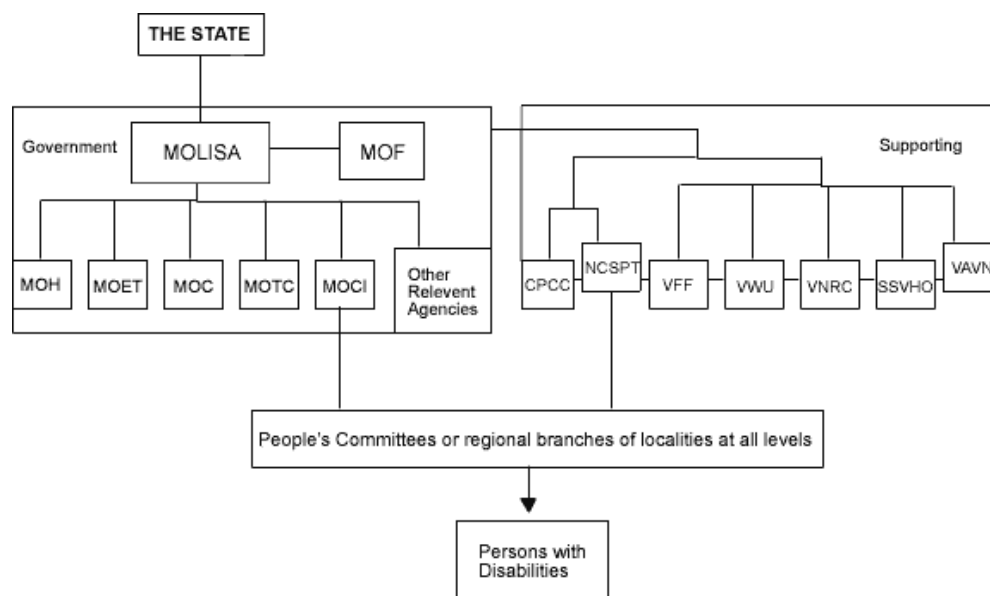
3.2. Government in Vietnam

3.2.1. Overview of Ministries responsible for people with disabilities in Vietnam

The Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) is the key ministry responsible for people with disabilities in Vietnam. This responsibility is enshrined in the Disability Ordinance of 1998, which designates MoLISA as the overall responsible Ministry, but also allocates specific responsibilities to other Ministries.

The Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education and Training are the two other ministries with most activities and responsibilities for people with disabilities. However, many ministries have specific responsibilities, as can be seen in the diagram below.

Organizational Chart of Government for Persons with Disabilities (National Level)⁴



⁴ From Asia Pacific Centre on Disability, n.d., 'Country Profile. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam', viewed at <http://www.apcdproject.org/countryprofile/vietnam/index.html> on 20 February, 2007. Note that this diagram is a little misleading as the other government agencies are not subordinate to MoLISA, but must report activities to MoLISA through the mechanism of the NCCD

Key:

MOLISA	Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs
MOF	Ministry of Finance
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOC	Ministry of Construction
MOTC	Ministry of Transportation and Communication
MOCI	Ministry of Culture and Information
CPCC	Committee for Protection and Care of Children
NCSPT	National Committee for Sports and Physical Training
VFF	Vietnam Fatherland Front
VWU	Vietnam Women's Union
VNRC	Vietnam Red Cross
SSVHO	Society for the Support of Vietnamese Handicapped and Orphans
VAVN	Veterans Association of Vietnam

National Coordinating Council on Disability

The Vietnam National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD) brings together all the ministries with responsibilities and interests in people with disabilities. It includes the Ministries of:

- Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
- Health
- Education and Training
- Construction
- Home Affairs
- Sports
- Justice
- General Statistics Office
- Culture and Information
- Transport and Communication
- Finance
- Taxation
- The Office of the Government
- National Steering Committee on Information Technology

In addition the NCCD includes representatives from:

- Vietnam Women's Union
- Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans
- Vietnam Blind Association
- Vietnam Red Cross
- Hanoi Deaf Association
- Bright Future Group of People with Disabilities
- Vietnam Television (VTV)

The NCCD is responsible for ensuring coordination of government activities related to people with disabilities, and ensuring the effective implementation of the Disability Ordinance.

Peoples' Committees

Provincial Peoples' Committees have significant local authority and independence. They are the peak body in each province and all agencies of government fall under their authority. Peoples' Committees also have independent control over their budget and how it is allocated within their province. The allocation of the national budget is complex- departments (eg DoLISA, DoH) receive budget from their Ministry at the National level, however, they may also receive additional budget from the Provincial

Peoples' Committee. For example, the national vocational training funds for people with disabilities are distributed via Peoples' Committees rather than via MoLISA. Provincial Peoples' Committees have complete discretion as to how to spend this money. This can result in inconsistencies. For example, MoLISA encourages inclusive vocational training, having abolished specific training centres for people with disabilities some years ago, however, Provincial Peoples' Committees do not have a good understanding of this policy, or the concept of inclusion, thus a substantial portion of the vocational training funding provided has been given to non-inclusive organisations such as Social Protection Centres.

Peoples' Committees also have discretionary funds, and active provincial or district organisations can receive additional funding from their Peoples' Committee for specific activities. The Vietnam Red Cross is one organisation that takes advantage of this, in some Provinces the Provincial Red Cross office receives funding for additional staff and activities directly from the Peoples' Committee to supplement the meagre funds they receive from the national Red Cross.

3.2.2. State and social organisations in Vietnam

The Vietnamese government as a one party system includes a range of semi-government structures in addition to Ministries. These organizations include; mass organizations, social organizations and professional organizations.

Mass Organisations

There are six mass organisations: The Fatherland Front (FF) is usually considered a mass organisation, but functions at the same time as an umbrella for twenty-nine other socio-professional organisations. The other mass organisations are the Women's Union, Farmers' Association, Vietnam General Federation of Labour (VGCL), War Veterans' Association, and Ho Chi Minh Youth Union.

The mass organisations have strong relationships with the Communist Party and government. They are all organised hierarchically with representation at each administrative level from national level to the provinces, districts, communes and villages. The number of members of the five major mass organisations is about 32 million people (not including the FF). Despite the structured appearance of this hierarchical organisation, district, commune and village organisations have a reasonable amount of autonomy and can respond to local needs, whereas the higher levels often serve as a career ladder within the organizations and into government or Party positions. Mass organisations receive a budget from the State, however it is limited particularly at the local level thus they also require support from donors for most programmes and activities.⁵

The most relevant mass organisations for people with disabilities are the Youth Union and the War Veterans' Association. The Veterans' Association, as is suggested by the name, is only concerned with the welfare and needs of war veterans.⁶ A large number of non-war injured people with disabilities are members of the Youth Union. The Youth Union also acts as an umbrella organisation for a significant number of DPOs.

Social and Professional Organisations

Social and professional organisations include umbrella organisations such as the Vietnam Union of Friendship Organisations (VUFO) and the Vietnam Red Cross as well as professional associations such

⁵ Norlund, I, Jan 2007, 'Filling the Gap: The Emerging Civil Society in Vietnam', UNDP Vietnam, http://www.undp.org.vn/undpLive/digitalAssets/6810_Filling_the_Gap_E_.pdf, p11-12

⁶ Note that the definition of war veteran in Vietnam excludes soldiers from the former South Vietnamese Army.

as the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI), sports associations and professional organisations such as the Yong Entrepreneurs Association. Many of these organisations receive budget from the Vietnamese State, and many have a hierarchical structure from national to local level, however they are less closely linked to the Party and tend to have a wide range of forms and financial support.

A large number of socio-professional organisations are concerned with people with disabilities. The most significant with networks from centre to local are:

- Vietnam Red Cross (VNRC)
- Vietnam Blind Association
- Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans (SSHO)
- Vietnam Association of Business Enterprises of People with Disabilities (VABED)
- Vietnam Sports Association for People with Disabilities

Some groups of people with disabilities who have registered as associations are able to become independent associations, however usually they are required to register under an umbrella association such as the Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans or the Youth Union.

Vietnamese Non-Government Organisations

The next category of organisations within Vietnam is the Vietnamese NGOs. These tend to be small organisations, often established by individuals for specific purposes. A recent study into the forms of VNGOs concluded that ‘the main types of VNGOs include, roughly:

1. organisations which deliver social services for the government in health or education, often charity based;
2. NGOs carrying out research (mainly in northern Vietnam);
3. organisations that carry out social work programmes (particularly in southern Vietnam);
4. organisations that try to reach marginalised groups and use new approaches; and
5. organisations that work in the manner of consulting companies for the government or donors to help, for instance, implement Participatory Rural Assessments, prepare programmes, etc’⁷

Vietnamese NGOs do not receive a budget from the State, however many are closely associated with government, donor or INGO projects and receive financial support in this way. They have an independent legal status and can therefore apply for public or private financial support.

A large number of Vietnamese NGOs are concerned with disabilities issues. They tend to work at the local level. Many of these organizations are charity or welfare focused rather than taking a ‘rights-based’ approach. They do, however, serve to fill some of the gaps in government service provision. Few of these organisations provide assistance in terms of vocational skills development, access to employment or entrepreneurship for people with disabilities.

Community Based Organisations

In addition, there are a very large number of less formal, community based organisations such as water-user groups, youth groups, elderly peoples’ groups, religious groups, groups caring for pagodas or organising festivals, etc. In 2005 it was estimated 100,000-200,000 such groups exist nationwide.⁸ These groups do not have an independent legal status, however they can register under the Civil Code, or under an umbrella organisation, usually a mass organisation or a socio-professional organisation. These groups do not receive any State budget however they may be associated with specific

⁷ Norlund, 2007, p12

⁸ Nolund, 2007, p13

government, donor or INGO project and receive support. It is difficult for them to independently gain financial assistance because of their uncertain legal status.

Prior to official registration as an association, self-help groups of people with disabilities fall into this category. It is likely that a large number of CBOs are concerned with disabilities issues however there is little information available about these groups because of their informality.

Main Categories of Organisations in Vietnam⁹

Category	Type of Organisation Included in Category	Relationship to State (legal status)	Vietnamese Designation
Mass Organisation	1. Fatherland Front 2. Womens' Union 3. HCM Youth Union 4. Veterans Association 5. VGCL 6. Farmers' Association	Members of Fatherland Front	Socio-political organisations
Social and Professional Organisations	1. Umbrella organisations like Red Cross, VUSTA, Cooperative Alliance, etc. 2. Professional Associations	1. Members of Fatherland Front 2. Registered with an umbrella organisation, Central or Provincial agency.	Socio-professional organisations (a number of these organisations now refer to themselves as NGOs)
VNGOs	Charity Research NGOs Consultancy NGOs Educational NGOs Health NGOs	VUSTA, Line Ministry, Provincial or District People's Committees	Social organisations, NGOs
CBOs	Service and development or livelihoods-oriented Self-help groups of PWD Faith-based organisations Neighbourhood groups Family clans Recreation groups	Indirect affiliation to other organisation or Civil Code. Many are not registered	Rural collaborative groups Faith-based organisations Neighbourhood groups Family clans, etc

3.3. Disabled Persons' Organisations in Vietnam

The concept of civil society is a relatively new one for Vietnam. For most of its existence the Socialist Republic of Vietnam has viewed the mass and socio-professional organisations as the only necessary and appropriate civil society organisations. The Norlund study into civil society in Vietnam found that while civil society in Vietnam is now diverse and widespread, with very high involvement by citizens, civil society organisations in Vietnam tend to be quite weak with limited impact on public policies.¹⁰ Organisations of people with disabilities have been formed even more recently than most other civil society organisations, and thus even weaker and limited in terms of impact.

Currently there are over eighty groups of people with disabilities in Vietnam. Most of these have been officially registered with the government in some form (usually as a member based association, but

⁹ Table adapted from Norlund, 2007, p12

¹⁰ Norlund, 2007, p2

many use umbrella organizations such as the Youth Union).¹¹ Vietnam does not currently have a national cross-disability organisation. The only National DPO is the Vietnam Blind Association which has been established for many years and receives funding from the central government as a socio-political organisation.

The NCCD is currently working with representatives of groups of people with disabilities throughout the country to establish a National association of disabled people. This will probably take the form of a federation of existing provincial and district associations. The aims and objectives of this planned federation are not yet clear, and negotiations on forming this national organisation have been continuing for over 18 months with little progress on formal registration.

3.3.1. Vietnam Blind Association

The Vietnam Blind Association is the only national disabled persons' organisation in Vietnam. The Blind Association is represented in all provinces, and most districts. The Blind Association provides a range of services for members including vocational training, mobility training, supply of software and other assistive devices, peer support and advocacy and awareness raising about vision impairment.

3.3.2. Organisations of women with disabilities

Specific groups for women with disabilities have only begun to form in Vietnam in the last couple of years. As of July 2008, three Associations of Women with Disabilities have been officially registered; in Hanoi, Da Lat in the Central Highlands and Thai Binh in northern Vietnam, all with around 60 members. In addition, several branches of the Vietnam Women's Union now have a group of women with disabilities under their umbrella; Hue in central Vietnam, Nam Dinh in northern Vietnam and Vinh Long in the Mekong Delta. A women's group with fifty members is also forming under the umbrella of the Disabled Youth Association of HCMC (DYA).

Disability Resource Development Centre in HCMC has provided some leadership training for women with disabilities, including members of the DYA Women's group, students and others. Eighty women participated in the program which included public speaking skills, disability awareness and information about the history of the disability movement. Twenty of these women have been selected for advanced training as leaders throughout 2008. This program has also developed and published some case studies of successful women with disabilities. Inclusive Development Action (IDEA) in Hanoi also received a small grant in 2007-8 to support the development of groups of women with disabilities and link them with the Vietnam Women's Union.

3.3.3 Vietnamese Association of Business Enterprises of People with Disabilities (VABED)

VABED was established in October 2003 by Decision 71/2003/AD-BNV of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The association is established as a socio-political organization to represent the interests of its members who are manufacturing, business and service enterprises of people with disabilities.¹² At July 2008, VABED had 280 members employing 15,000 people, of whom 8,000 are people with disabilities (approximately 40% women with disabilities).

¹¹ IDEA, Jan 2008, 'Directory of Organisations of People with Disabilities in Vietnam'.

¹² Strictly speaking, VABED isn't an organization of people with disabilities, but rather an industry association, or chamber of commerce representing businesses of people with disabilities. However, VABED itself, the government and most other stakeholders consider it an organization of and for people with disabilities.

VABED has an office in Hanoi and a small office in HCMC. They have members throughout the country, however the majority are in northern Vietnam. This reflects the history of this category of business which was originally intended to provide employment for veterans of the 1965-75 war. VABED is developing branches at provincial level.

VABED aims to represent the interests of its members and provide services to assist business growth in order that they can provide more, decent employment for people with disabilities. In addition, VABED has adopted a role as a major vocational training provider¹³, receiving budget from the National government to directly provide vocational training for people with disabilities, as well as encouraging vocational training through member enterprises.

4. Legislation and policy environment

There is a range of legislation relevant to employment, vocational training and entrepreneurship for people with disabilities in Vietnam. The main, overall legislative environment is set by the Constitution, the Disability Ordinance and the Labour Code.

Date	Act	Key content ¹⁴
1992	Constitution of Vietnam	Outlines roles and responsibilities of all citizens. Exempts primary school children from fees.
1994	Labour Code (No. 35-L-CTN)	Outlines wages and conditions, occupational health and safety, vocational training and regulations concerning enterprises of people with disabilities.
1998	Ordinance on Disabled Persons (No.06/1998/PL-UBTVQH-10)	Details all aspects of legislation related to people with disabilities.

In 2008, NCCD and MoLISA are in discussions about upgrading the Ordinance on Disabled Persons to a Disability Law, however this process could take some time.

Since the introduction of the Ordinance on Disabled Persons a number of other regulations have been introduced to guide implementation. The most significant of these is Decree No. 55/1999/ND-CP (1999) which provides more detailed guidance on implementation of a number of articles of the Ordinance.

4.1. Vocational training

Vietnam has a comprehensive system of training institutions comprising 164 vocational training schools, 137 colleges and technical secondary schools engaged in vocational training; 148 vocational centers and 150 job and vocational training service centres. The Ordinance on Disabled Persons provides for a fee exemption for people with disabilities at vocational training centres as well as various social allowances. Job-training establishments for people with disabilities are also entitled to; borrow money at preferred rates for job-training projects, lease land in appropriate areas and receive financial assistance from the government to build schools and classes and to purchase equipment.

In reality, these policies are difficult to translate into practice as the budget for fee exemption, equipment purchase, etc is seriously limited. Since 2005, the government has been earmarking

¹³ Note that the regulations of VABED do not mention vocational training as a duty of the Association.

¹⁴ Table adapted from Yoder, J., 2004, Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002, Bangkok, International Labour Office

specific funding for vocational training for people with disabilities which is made available through the Vietnam Blind Association, VABED, the Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans and provincial Peoples' Committees. In 2005 11.5 billion VND (approx \$700,000USD) was available, 2006 18 billion (\$1 million) and 20 billion (\$1.2 million) for both 2007-08.

Government Employment Service Centres are also required by the Disability Ordinance to provide job counselling, introductions and other services to people with disabilities free of charge. In practice very few people access these services due to physical and attitudinal barriers and the lack of skilled staff at Centres to provide services to people with disabilities.

On November 29, 2006, the Vietnamese government passed a new law on vocational training, which includes a chapter on training for disabled people. This law provides for subsidies, special equipment and specific trainers for disabled people. The law is undecided on the issue of inclusive vocational training. Article 70 of Chapter VII provides for establishment of separate centres as well as encouraging mainstream vocational training centres to recruit disabled trainees. However, specific preferential funding, access to land and equipment and specific training is only provided for separate vocational centres for people with disabilities.¹⁵

4.2. Employment

The Labour Code provides for preferential treatment of people with disabilities in a number of areas of employment. These are further expanded in Decree No.81/CP dated November 23rd, 1995 and Decree no.116/2004/ND – CP dated on April 23rd, 2004, and recently amended by an Inter-Ministry circular between MOLISA, Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) No.19/2005/TTLT/BLDTBXH dated 19 May 2005. These decisions establish a quota system for employment of people with disabilities. Under this quota, all forms of businesses are required to hire 3% of their workforce as disabled employees (2% for heavy and dangerous industries such as mining, oil and gas). Companies who do not comply are subject to a fine, which is placed in a provincial employment fund for people with disabilities, and used for vocational training and employment of people with disabilities. However, this quota and the associated Employment Fund are largely unimplemented.

Over the past several years eight provinces have established Employment Funds, however only three of these provinces (Quang Ninh, Hai Duong and Bac Ninh in northern Vietnam) are actually inspecting employers and fining those that do not meet the quota.

Assistance with finding employment is largely providing through a network of Employment Service Centres in every province. Private job-search and referral companies are also widespread. Traditionally, people with disabilities have had very limited access to these employment services. A US Department of Labour funded project implemented by MoLISA and Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped from 2000-2003 supported improvements in ten such centres in eight provinces to enable them to include people with disabilities in their vocational training and job placement services, however this has not been sustained or replicated in any systematic way. During the field visits for this research project, the ILO and VCCI visited five of these Centres (Hanoi, HCMC, Da Nang, Can Tho and Dong Nai). None are currently providing vocational training for people with disabilities, and HCMC is the only centre providing job placement services.

The Labour Law also stipulates wages and conditions of work for all persons. People with disabilities under this code are not permitted to work more than seven hours per day, or 42 hours per week and are prohibited from working overtime, night shift or work exposed to dangerous or harmful

¹⁵ Law on Vocational Training of the Eleventh National Assembly, 10th Session No76/2006/QH11 of November 29 2006. Chapter VII

substances. People injured or disabled in work accidents are entitled to free treatment and vocational rehabilitation, and re-allocation to work ‘appropriate to their health conditions’. Social insurance and compensation are also specified for injured workers.

4.3. Entrepreneurship

The Ordinance stipulates that ‘disabled persons who provide jobs for themselves or work at home are eligible to borrow capital at preferential interest rates, can receive assistance from local administration in technology transfer, guidance in production and technique and in marketing their products.’

The Ordinance, the Labour Code and Decree 81 also stipulate preferential policies for enterprises of people with disabilities. Such enterprises are defined as a business with more than 51% disabled employees.¹⁶ This category of business is entitled to; tax exemption (however not exemption of Value Added Tax (VAT)), access to credit from the Bank of Social Policies, access to funds from the provincial Employment Funds for People with Disabilities (established with fund from employer fines for violation of the quota) and preferential access to land. These businesses now have a representative organisation; the Vietnam Association of Business Enterprises of People with Disabilities (VABED) described above.

4.4. Micro-credit

Vietnam has a relatively widespread, but quite young microfinance system which can be classified into the following three main categories: formal, semi-formal and informal.

Formal	Semi-formal	Informal
- Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (VBARD) - Vietnam Bank for Social Policies (VBSP) - Vietnam Postal Savings Service Company (VPSC)	- 57 international NGOs (Save the children/US, World Vision International, etc.) - 4 government-recognized MFOs: 1. <i>Tao Yeu May/</i> Compassionate Fund (TYM) 2. Capital Aid Fund for Employment of the Poor (CEP) 3. Pro-Poor Center (PPC) 4. Uong Bi Promotion of Women Development Fund	- <i>Ho/Hui</i> (a popular form of rotating savings and credit associations (ROSCA)) - Relatives, friends, neighbours - Moneylenders

The largest source of credit for poor people is from the Bank for Social Policies (previously the Bank of the Poor) the Vietnamese government microfinance institution (MFI). The Bank for Social Policies makes loans through three main channels; the Women’s Union, the Farmers’ Association and the Vietnam Blind Association. Individuals cannot access the Bank directly, they must apply via one of these socio-professional organisations.

¹⁶ Government of Vietnam, Resolution 116/2003/ND-CP, 23/04/2004.

Blind people have relatively good access to the Bank for Social Policies, through the Blind Association. For other people with disabilities, there are no specific policy impediments to access, however it seems that neither the Farmers' Association nor the Women's Union have made any effort to include people with disabilities and it is unlikely that many disabled people have taken up this opportunity.

Recently VABED members have also gained access to the VBSP. A new decision No 51/2008/QD-TTg of 24 April 2008 stipulates that enterprises of people with disabilities can get loans from the Bank of Social Policies with an interest rate of 50% of the already low rate (normal rate is 0.5-0.65%, VABED member rate is 0.32%). This guidance also allows VABED member enterprises to borrow up to 30 million VND per employee, rather than the normal maximum rate of 500 million VND.

In addition, there are a large number of small micro-finance and micro-credit programmes established and supported by local and international NGOs. As at February 2007, 50 different organizations were registered with the NGO Resource Centre as providing micro-finance programmes, or providing credit as part of other development programmes.¹⁷ These NGO programmes tend to be limited in terms of services and target beneficiaries, and localised to specific geographic areas or disadvantaged groups. None of these programmes specifically cater to people with disabilities.¹⁸

4.5. International Instruments

Vietnam ratified the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Decade of People with Disabilities Declaration on 11 June 1993, and the Biwako agreement for the second Asia Pacific Decade of People with Disabilities in 2005. The Biwako seven priority areas for action to achieve an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society for persons with disabilities are being taken quite seriously by the Vietnamese government, and have been used as the basis for structuring National plans such as the MoLISA National Action Plan to Support People with Disabilities 2006-10 .

Vietnam has not yet ratified the ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159), although discussions are ongoing about ratification.

Vietnam has signed, but not yet ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (CRPD). The government is discussing ratification, and it is expected during 2008.

4.6. National action plan to support people with disabilities 2006-10

The National Action Plan (NAP) is the key document structuring government activities to support people with disabilities in Vietnam. MoLISA and NCCD, in collaboration with NGOs and local organizations of people with disabilities developed the national plan during 2006. During 2007, each province was instructed by MoLISA to develop a provincial level plan.

The plan sets ambitious targets in a range of areas:

- o At least 80% provinces and cities will have self help group(s)/organisations of people with disabilities.

¹⁷ NGO Resource Centre Website, http://www.ngocentre.org.vn/default.asp?page=forum_and_working_groups/microfinance viewed on 14 February, 2007.

¹⁸ Within the limited time of this assessment it was not possible to speak to every microfinance provider in Vietnam, however the research done indicates that no providers are specifically focusing on people with disabilities as a target group. It is likely that small numbers of people with disabilities are accessing existing programs and schemes, however none of the NGOs providing credit services keep statistics about disability status of beneficiaries.

- o 70 % women with disabilities will be supported in different ways.
- o 70% people with disabilities will have access to health care services.
- o 3000 people will receive orthopaedic surgery and rehabilitation to improve mobility.
- o 100% children with disabilities who go to school will be supported through exemption or reduction of school fees as provided by the Government's regulations and policies.
- o By 2010, 70% of children with disabilities will be receiving schooling in different forms.
- o About 80,000 people with disabilities will have access to vocational training and be provided with appropriate jobs at the vocational training centres, in businesses, and services of various economic areas.
- o 100% of new construction and public transportation projects will be designed and built according to accessibility codes and standards, and 20-30% of old infrastructure will be upgraded to be accessible.
- o By 2010, the rate of people with disabilities having access to internet and IT services will be at least equal to ¼ of the access rate of Vietnamese population as a whole (as of December 2005, 12.84% population in Vietnam have access to the Internet).
- o 100% of people with disabilities in need and meeting the requirements will become beneficiaries of the credit program of the National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction (Employment Programme), so that they can improve their income and their livelihoods.
- o 22% people with disabilities will participate in sport activities.¹⁹

Significantly, the decision by the Prime Minister approving the plan outlines a number of tactics to achieve the plan, including 'strengthen the participation of the people, especially of people with disabilities themselves'. In addition, it aims to strengthen the capacity of staff working with people with disabilities, decentralise management of the plan and the Ordinance and increase international cooperation to achieve the plan.

The objective for vocational training and employment in the NAP is 'To promote vocational training and a good environment for people with disabilities to access employment opportunities, thus people with disabilities can be included into the community'. Specific measures include:

- To develop training programs for vocational trainers of people with disabilities.
- To research manufacturing facilities appropriate for vocational training of people with disabilities.
- To promote the establishment of the Employment Fund for people with disabilities in the provinces.
- To provide people with disabilities opportunities to access the employment fund of people with disabilities and the national fund for employment and loans of the Social Policy Bank.
- To develop and pilot vocational training and job creation models through working in collaboration with 10 vocational training schools and 10 employment service centres aiming to train people with disabilities and provide them with stable jobs.²⁰

¹⁹ Decision of the Prime Minister, No. 239/2006/QĐ-TTg, 24 October 2006, Approval of National Action Plan to Support People with Disabilities, 2006-10, Hanoi, Vietnam, p1-2

5. Organisations and services related to employment for people with disabilities in Vietnam

This section includes the results of the research and field visits conducted by the ILO and VCCI during July 2008.

5.1. Vocational training

5.1.1. Mainstream training

The research conducted in various provinces of Vietnam has confirmed that people with disabilities have very limited access to mainstream vocational training opportunities. Provincial departments of vocational training seemed surprised when asked about how many people with disabilities attended mainstream vocational training centres. No statistics are available, however the DoLISA representatives were unanimous that there were very few, and they believed that only people with very mild disabilities would be able to access mainstream services. Barriers to access such as inaccessible facilities and equipment were commonly cited as well as difficulties with transport and the low educational level of people with disabilities. The primary barrier however, seems to be attitude. Both government officials and people with disabilities seem to assume that vocational training for people with disabilities must be separate.

Several provinces have organised separate vocational courses for people with disabilities at mainstream centres, using the budget supplied by the central government. However, the numbers are limited. For example;

Dong Nai DoLISA – training for people with disabilities²¹

No of trainees	110-150 per year (total number of PWD in Dong Nai is over 18,000, of whom 1,507 are employed/self-employed)
Percentage who are women	Approximately 40%
Industry sectors	Sewing, carpentry/woodwork, bamboo and rattan weaving Basic computer skills and massage (in collaboration with the Blind Association).
Impairment of participants	Mobility disabilities (majority) Blind and vision impaired (members of the Blind Association) Hearing impaired and deaf
Certification	DoLISA approved national certificate from VT provider
Employment outcomes	No statistics provided. Many graduates reportedly started home based businesses.

Some, but by no means all, employment service centres or vocational training centres are now receiving funds from the national budget allocated for vocational training for people with disabilities. The provincial Peoples' Committees make a budget request each year, based on requests from different departments and organisations. Some provinces allocate this funding only to separate centres and organisations, while some provide funding to mainstream vocational training centres (which however, usually organise separate courses for people with disabilities).

²⁰ It seems these pilot programs have not yet commenced.

²¹ Interview with Mr An, Social Protection Department and Mr Duc, Ms Hoa, Training Department, DoLISA Dong Nai, 9 July, 2008. Statistics from Dong Nai DoLISA from a survey at the end of 2007.

Hai Duong vocational training for people with disabilities

No of trainees	Over 5 years (2002-2007) over 2,700 people with disabilities have been trained (including 1,000 supported by NGOs)
Percentage who are women	
Training provider	No information provided
Industry sectors	Mainstream VTCs and Employment Service Centres who organise separate classes (approx 100 students per year), enterprises of people with disabilities (over 400 people in 5 years) and the Social Protection Centre (520 people in 5 years). Small and medium enterprises providing on-the-job training (World Concern model)
Impairment of participants	
Certification	
Employment outcomes	Industrial sewing, embroidery, handicrafts, electricity, basic computer, woodwork, motorbike mechanic, etc
	All kinds of disabilities, including intellectual impairment and learning difficulties.
	All training provided at centres and at registered enterprises/training organisations of people with disabilities is nationally certified. The on-the-job training provided in SMEs isn't certified.
	Estimated between 70-80%, not including those people who establish home-based businesses after training.

5.1.2. Separate training

Training for people with disabilities in separate institutions and organisations is also limited, however far more common than mainstream training. The main organisations providing separate training are:

1. HCMC care and vocational training centre for people with disabilities (Trung Tam Bao Tro va Day Nghe Nguoi Tan Tat TPHCM)
2. Thu Duc Technical Training Centre (HCMC)/ Ha Tay Vocational Training Centre
3. Social Protection Centres of DoLISA (Trung tam Bao tro Nguoi Tan tat, Tre em Mo coi)
4. The Blind Association
5. VABED and enterprises/organisations of people with disabilities (VABED members)

1. HCMC care and vocational training centre for people with disabilities

This centre is registered under the HCMC Peoples' Committee and provides training for approximately 440 people with disabilities per year, of whom approximately 35% are women. The centre provides training in a wide range of industries including; sewing, hairdressing, silk printing, electronics and electronic repair, electricity, embroidery, sign-writing/advertising, motorbike mechanic, graphic design (computer based), accounting and basic office computing. Most of the training is 6 months duration, although some courses are up to 12 months. All the training is nationally certified by the General Department of Vocational Training of MoLISA.

The facilities are relatively accessible; an international donor has recently supported the installation of an elevator. All training provided is free for the trainees, who also receive board and lodging either at the centre or nearby. The centre also tries to assist trainees with wheelchairs and other assistive devices sourced from other organisations. People with mobility disabilities make up the majority of trainees, however some deaf and people with learning or intellectual disabilities also attend the centre. The centre does not cater for blind people, who are referred to the Blind Association.

The Director of the Centre was unable to provide specific statistics about employment outcomes, however he estimated that around 50% of the trainees did not want employment, but rather wished

to establish a home-based business. The Centre does provide some assistance with job placement. They have established relationships with a range of employers (mostly mainstream employers and some VABED members) in the HCMC area and refer students on graduation.

The Centre does not currently provide any entrepreneurship training, however they are investigating introducing this into the curriculum for some courses. They have collaborated with *Swisscontact* to train some staff in business/entrepreneurship skills in order to provide this training to the disabled trainees.²²

2. Thu Duc Technical Training Centre (HCMC)/ Ha Tay Vocational Training Centre

Thu Duc Technical Training Centre in Thu Duc district of HCMC and a centre in Son Tay town, Ha Tay province near Hanoi were originally established specifically to provide training for people with disabilities. Both of these centres are now integrated, including non-disabled students, primarily poor, orphans and children of war veterans. Approximately 300-400 students with disabilities attend each of these training schools per year. They provide both short term training, and long term of up to 24 months.

Both these centres provide free training and accommodation in a dormitory. The industries trained include; sewing, car and motorbike mechanic, electronics, electricity and basic office computing. Training is nationally certified by the General Department of Vocational Training.

3. Social protection centres

Most provinces have at least one Social Protection Centre; a residential facility for people with disabilities, orphans, war veterans and elderly who don't have any other family support. Some of these centres also provide vocational training, although generally it is limited to few low-skill industry areas, and places are limited. As the Centres are residential, graduates of training rarely access open employment but work in 'sheltered workshops' of the Social Protection Centres.

4. The Blind Association

The Blind Association is the largest training provider for blind and vision impaired people. The Association receives funding from the National government in order to provide free vocational training in bamboo toothpick, mat and broom making, massage, and in some provinces, basic computer skills. The Hanoi branch of the Blind Association provides training for around 300 people per year. The majority of graduates work in Blind Association facilities, open their own small, home-based businesses or form groups to small open massage enterprises or bamboo manufacturing. The Blind Association tries to provide referrals to employers for training graduates, however they report that employers are hesitant to hire blind and vision impaired people.

The computer skills training teaches basic office computer skills, as well as skills in using assistive software for the blind. The Sao Mai centre software is made available free for members (see below for more information about the Sao Mai Centre). The Hanoi Blind Association reported that the majority of graduates are unable to find work in mainstream businesses, thus most work as computer teachers for the Association.

5. VABED and enterprises/organisations of people with disabilities

VABED and its members are significant providers of vocational training for people with disabilities in Vietnam. VABED receives a significant portion of the government budget for vocational training, and directly provides courses for approximately 700 people with disabilities each year, in northern, central and southern Vietnam. They estimate that 40-50% of these people are women. The training is

²² *Swisscontact* has implemented a large project in Vietnam since 1994 'Strengthening of Vocational Training Centres'.

between 3-6 months and delivered either at the VABED offices, at the premises of a member, or other appropriate location. VABED recruits qualified trainers, or experienced members to provide this training and graduates receive a nationally recognised certificate.

VABED Vocational Training Programme

No of trainees	700 trainees per year. Aim to increase to 1,000 per year.
Percentage who are women	Approx 40 - 50% (no statistics provided)
Training provider	VABED. VABED recruits trainees and teachers and provides the training at their offices or other appropriate location.
Industry sectors	Computer skills, languages, sewing, embroidery, handicrafts
Impairment of participants	Mobility impairment, blind and vision impaired, deaf and hearing impaired. People with severe disabilities are referred to Social Protection Centres
Certification	National certificate from the GDVT
Employment outcomes	70% of graduates gain work – most with VABED members. 20% start their own business or get a job with mainstream employers.

In addition, a number of the VABED member enterprises of people with disabilities are also registered to provide vocational training. In 2007, fifty eight VABED members (including some vocational centres) were licensed to provide training and approximately 3,000 people were trained (this includes the HCMC Vocational Training Centre for PWD and two Blind Association branches). The vast majority of these enterprises are in northern Vietnam. The training provided through these VABED members is generally informal and on the job but is certified by MoLISA. Any organisation with a licence to provide vocational training can issue nationally recognised certificates to graduates.

An interesting example is in Quang Ninh province. This is one of the few provinces that have effectively implemented the quota system and fined employers for non-compliance. They are now using the funds to support vocational training and entrepreneurship for people with disabilities. Interestingly all the vocational training supported by these funds is being provided by enterprises of people with disabilities, or social organisations such as the Society of Support for Handicapped and Orphans. The province has several VABED member enterprises who are authorised to provide training. These enterprises propose training projects to their District, and then provincial DoLISA who approves the project and supplies the budget for the training.

Quang Ninh vocational training for people with disabilities

No of trainees	In 2007-8, nine courses have been held with approximately 20-25 trainees per course (approx 180-220). (total number of PWD in Quang Ninh province is around 20,000)
Percentage who are women	Approx 50% (no statistics provided)
Training provider	VABED member enterprises
Industry sectors	Industrial sewing, tailoring, embroidery, massage, needlework
Impairment of participants	Mobility impairment, blind and vision impaired, deaf and hearing impaired.
Certification	National certificate from the GDVT
Employment outcomes	Approx 50% of trainees stay to work at the enterprises who trained them. 50% have received 1,5million VND each to start up a home-based enterprise.

5.1.3. Self help groups and organisations of people with disabilities

Vietnam now has over 80 groups of people with disabilities. Some are officially registered with the government, others are yet to register and can only conduct limited activities. Most of these groups are concerned to promote employment for their members however their capacity to do so is limited. Many organisations provide opportunities for members to share experiences about employment or running a business. They may provide ad hoc job referrals if they hear about opportunities. Several of these groups have established small production workshops or informal enterprises and provide uncertified training and employment for members. These workshops are often based on a charity model, providing limited training in industry areas such as low profit-margin sewing or handicrafts and paying very low salaries for 'employees'.

Some examples of groups of people with disabilities providing training/employment services:

Vuon len association of people with disabilities (Dong Nai province)

The Vuon len association of people with disabilities in Xuan Loc district has 260 members, approximately 30% of whom are women. The leader of the association, Mr Hien, also runs an enterprise of people with disabilities; the Duc Hien company which comprises a knitting workshop and a electronic equipment sales and repair shop. Through the Association and the enterprise, Mr Hien arranges training for around 50-60 members per year (30% of whom are women). He receives funding and support from the district DoLISA to provide the training. Training in electronic repair is provided on the job at his shop, as well as at the district vocational training centre.

The Association office, co-located with the electronics shop, has a computer room where teachers from the district VTC provide training in basic computer skills. Graduates from these two courses receive nationally recognised certificates issued by the VTC. The association also supports training in wooden handicraft making, provided on the job. Graduates of this course often then work from home supplying product to Mr Hien's shop and other sales outlets.

In addition to this formal vocational training, Mr Hien also personally provides a link between local employers and members of the Association. He has developed relationships with local SMEs and refers people with disabilities for on the job training and employment. Approximately 30-40 people per year (of whom approx 30% are women) gain employment each year through this activity. Mr Hien provides an individualised counselling and advice service for both employers and the members of the Association to ensure a good job match, and supports people post-employment to ensure retention and success.

The knitting workshop and handicraft producers are primarily women, and thus a club of women with disabilities has been set up as the trade union of the Duc Hien company. This club has 32 members, comprising women working at the Duc Hien company and female members of the Vuon len Association.

Mr Hien has ambitious plans for the future. He wishes to establish a tourist centre in the district centre, which is on the main highway from HCMC to Phan Thiet beach. He has identified a location, and has agreement from the district Peoples' Committee. The Centre would provide vocational training, a workshop and outlet for handicrafts made by people with disabilities as well as providing a drinks and rest stop for tourists.

Sao Mai centre (HCMC)

The Sao Mai Centre in HCMC is a local non profit organisation specialising in developing and providing training in software for the blind. The Centre has developed screen reading software, a Web browser for the blind, a talking dictionary and are currently collaborating with Freedom Scientific to

incorporate their Vietnamese speech engine into the JAWS software package.²³ Freedom Scientific have agreed to make the new version of JAWS with Vietnamese speech engine available at a highly discounted price in Vietnam. The other Sao Mai software is provided free of charge through the Blind Association and Sao Mai centre.

In addition to this software development the Centre is providing training in computer skills, and computer teaching for the blind. Since 2001 Sao Mai has provided training in computer skills and teaching to approximately 90 blind people per year (approx 40% of whom are women). They provide training and accommodation at the Centre in HCMC and teach blind people to become computer trainers. Students receive training in computer skills, use of the Sao Mai assistive software packages as well as teaching methodology and English skills. They are awarded a certificate from the Centre, which is not accredited by the General Department of Vocational Training, but is now recognised by a number of universities in HCMC.

Sao Mai is now also providing distance learning courses through Blind Associations throughout the country. The graduates have returned to their provinces and established computer training centres at Blind Associations in five provinces. Funding was provided by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the On-NET project²⁴ to establish computer centres at a number of Blind Associations. These centres are now providing computer training to members of the Association.

5.1.4. NGO vocational training programmes

World Concern Development Organisation

The World Concern 'Adaptive Vocational Training for Adolescents with Disabilities' program has been operating since 1998 in Hai Duong, Da Nang and Quang Nam provinces, and since 2005 in Ninh Binh and Quang Nam. The program supports community based, on-the-job training for young people with disabilities with local SMEs. The programme commences with a comprehensive needs assessment survey of people with disabilities and local businesses. World Concern trains Community Based Workers, mostly staff of DoLISA and/or the Vietnam Red Cross, to liaise between young people with disabilities and employers in order to match them for training. In most cases the employers then hire the people on completion of the training period. The training provided on the job is uncertified, however is viewed by employers as highly effective and in many cases, more relevant to their needs than training provided in vocational centres.²⁵

Consecutive with the training, young people are encouraged to join a group of their peers, at which they learn life skills, reproductive health, and gain friendship and support from other young people with disabilities. If required, the young people are provided a hearing aid, sign language training, a wheelchair or surgery to ensure that they have the best possible chance of getting and retaining a job. The program also provides a significant public awareness component, to address the exclusion and discrimination that these young people face from their families, employers and their communities.

Since 2005, the program has also provided some assistance for young people with disabilities to start their own small businesses in the vocations trained, through the *Start and Improve your Business (SIYB)* program of VCCI/ILO (see 'Entrepreneurship' below for more information).

This model has been very successful, particularly in rural areas, with over 83% of the 1,300 trainees gaining stable employment as a result of participation.

²³ JAWS is the best known screen reading software for the blind. It is available in seventeen languages.

²⁴ For more information see <http://www.on-net.org/>

²⁵ World Concern Development Organisation, January 2005, 'Adaptive Vocational Training for Adolescents with Disabilities, Final Programme Evaluation, Hanoi, Vietnam, p15

Spanish Red Cross and Vietnam Red Cross

Since 2004 Spanish Red Cross and Vietnam Red Cross have been implementing a similar model to World Concern for disadvantaged women, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities in several provinces; Lam Dong in the Central Highlands and Ninh Binh, Quang Ninh and Hoa Binh in northern Vietnam. The model of Spanish Red Cross is based on a successful approach from Spain and trains Vietnam Red Cross community workers as mediators between disadvantaged people and employers in order to identify vocational training (both Centre based and on-the-job) and employment opportunities. The program is informed by a comprehensive market survey prior to starting activities to identify appropriate training and skills needs and industries with potential for expansion. This program has also supported SIYB training for people with disabilities to establish their own small businesses at the completion of training.

In addition to this project the Social Activities section of Vietnam Red Cross has a number of other projects. Poor families, particularly those with a disabled member are supported through access to credit to help them establish a business, repair their house, etc. A new project, funded by MoLISA aims to build the capacity of VNRC to support poverty reduction for people with disabilities. This project includes development of a manual/materials on social work skills and disability awareness for Red Cross staff and volunteers. VNRC are currently conducting a 'training of trainers' program to train community based trainers/mobilisers in four provinces (the same provinces as are conducting the Spanish Red Cross project) to implement the manual throughout the VNRC network. The Health department of VNRC is also implementing an early detection of children with disabilities and early intervention initiative as part of the same project.

Information Technology Training Centre project

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has recently received funding from US Agency for International Development to establish an innovative IT training centre for people with disabilities. The Centre is established at the Hanoi College of Information Technology (ESTIH) a semi-private college for IT education established in 1994. People with disabilities, recruited from all over Vietnam, are studying a Certificate in Software Engineering from NIIT, Singapore (National Indian Institute of Technology). NIIT, originally established in India is now Asia's largest IT training provider with a presence in 32 countries. The trainers are trained and certified by NIIT and the curriculum, delivered and examined in English, is provided by NIIT Singapore. Students sit internationally recognised exams and receive an internationally recognised certificate at the completion of the training (1 year). The funding from USAID is sufficient for 3 classes totalling 75 students (approx 40% of whom are women).

Accommodation is provided for students from outside of Hanoi (approx 60% of the total) at the College campus. The project has assisted the College to renovate the classrooms and accommodation to ensure they are accessible. Most of the students have mobility impairments with some students with vision impairments or language difficulties. In addition to the NIIT course, students receive English training and support in social work and job preparation from a person with disabilities. At the completion of the one year course, all students undertake a 3 month internship while still receiving the accommodation and living allowance. The first of the three classes graduated in May 2008 thus are still in their internship period, however six of the 28 students have already been employed and two are working as instructors for the computer training course for the blind (see below).

In addition to the software engineering course, the ITTC project is also supporting training in basic computer skills for 120 blind people. The three month course is conducted at the ITTC at night, and the majority of the trainees are University or school students from the Hanoi area who need to improve their computer skills in order to succeed in study. The project has recruited a teacher who is also blind, and 2 graduates from the NIIT certificate are now also assisting with this training. Graduates of this course receive a certificate from ESTIH.

Opening University education to deaf people in Vietnam

This project has been funded by the Nippon Foundation since 1999 and is located at the Dong Nai College of Education (teacher training college). The project offers the only post-primary education for deaf students in Vietnam, as well as being one of the few educational programs to offer education in sign language rather than using an oral method. Deaf schools in Vietnam only teach primary school (grade 6), however they take 2 years for each year of the curriculum, so students are 16-17 years old when they graduate. The Dong Nai project offers junior and senior secondary education to deaf people in a free residential programme.

Since 1999, 45 students have graduated from junior high school and 25 students (9 women) have graduated from senior high school, 13 of whom (6 women) passed the national high school completion exam. The project has just enrolled 13 students (7 women) in a 2 year certificate course in teaching. On graduation these students will be qualified to work as teacher's assistants in deaf schools and teach sign language to deaf students. If they then complete an 18 month in-service course they can be awarded a Bachelor of Teaching and teach in any primary school in Vietnam.

The project is also introducing a certificate course in teaching sign language to hearing people, currently 12 people (6 women) are undertaking the certificate level 1 and 5 women and 1 man doing certificate level 2. In addition, the project is developing a range of sign language teaching materials and dictionaries in English and Vietnamese (both northern and southern sign language).²⁶

The project does not keep records of employment outcomes, however they report that the majority of those students who have graduated from high school and not continued to further study have been able to get work, particularly in deaf schools and working with deaf clubs providing sign language training. Some students have gone on to work in IT or are running a home based business.

5.2. Employment

5.2.1. Quota law implementation

As mentioned above, Vietnam has a quota law requiring all forms of business to hire 3% of their workforce as disabled employees. Businesses that do not comply are subject to a fine, which is placed in a provincial level Employment Fund for People with Disabilities to support vocational training, employment and entrepreneurship for people with disabilities. Despite new guidelines and guidance from MoLISA clarifying the implementation process of this quota, the policy is largely unimplemented.

Several provinces are working on establishing an employment fund, and procedures for enforcing the quota, however most have so far not inspected any employers or collected any fines. Only three northern provinces, Quang Ninh, Hai Duong and Bac Ninh have established an employment fund and inspected employers.

²⁶ Vietnam does not yet have a national sign language. There are three main 'dialects'; north, southern and central. Deaf from different regions can usually quickly learn to understand each other, however there are significant differences in the signs.

Implementing the employment quota

Quang Ninh

Quang Ninh province in northern Vietnam is the home province of the World Heritage listed Ha Long Bay. The primary industries of the province are tourism and mining due to the limestone geography of the region. Quang Ninh has not conducted a survey of people with disabilities in the province, so they don't have detailed information about the numbers and situation of people with disabilities. They estimate approximately 20,000 people with disabilities are living in the province.

Quang Ninh province is one of only three provinces in Vietnam that have successfully implemented the quota law requirements of Decree 81. In 2007, the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs conducted a survey of employers in the province (primarily in the major cities) to determine the number of employees with disabilities. Those companies that did not meet the quota of 3% (2% for mining and heavy industries) were fined and the funds put into a provincial level Employment Fund for People with Disabilities.

The survey of employers found that approximately 25% of employers met their quota (including the VABED member enterprises of people with disabilities). Interestingly, almost 100% of employers had at least some employees with disabilities. DoLISA reported that the majority of people with disabilities currently working were war veterans, or people who had been injured or sickened on the job and retained by employers. DoLISA reported that the majority of employers would prefer to pay the fine than hire additional people with disabilities.

The funds in the Employment Fund for People with Disabilities are now being used to support separate vocational training courses for people with disabilities, and graduates are eligible for a one off payment of 1.5 million VND (approx \$100USD) to establish a home-based/micro enterprise.

Hai Duong

Hai Duong province is 50 km from Hanoi and experiencing rapid industrialisation. Industrial zones and golf courses are quickly replacing rice paddies throughout the province. Manufacturing is a major employer in the province, as is food processing and tourism. Hai Duong DoLISA conducted a survey of people with disabilities in 2007 and registered 42,000 people, of whom 14,000 are women (33%).

Hai Duong has long been active in promoting employment and training for people with disabilities. The province joined the World Concern program 'Adaptive Vocational Training for Adolescents with Disabilities' from 1998-July 2005 which provided support for on-the-job and Centre based vocational training and employment for young people with disabilities. Several other projects of NGOs and International Organisations have also been conducted in Hai Duong.

DoLISA reported that during 2007 the province implemented Decree 81, establishing an Employment Fund for People with Disabilities and surveying employers to determine if they met the quota. No specific statistics were provided, however DoLISA claims that most employers in the province meet the quota of 3% employees with disabilities. The province now has 1 billion VND (approx \$60,000USD) in the Employment Fund for People with Disabilities, of which half is fines collected from employers and half was donated by the provincial Peoples' Committee. As the funds are currently quite limited, DoLISA intends to use them to support growth and improvement for existing enterprises of people with disabilities. Support for equipment, expansion of facilities, etc, as well as loans for existing and new enterprises will be available.

5.2.2. Mainstream employment services

Employment referral and job placement for non-disabled people is available through a network of Employment Service Centres (ESC) in every province. Every province has an ESC managed by DoLISA, as well as Centres managed by other mass organisations such as the Trade Union, Women's Union or Farmers' Association. Private centres also exist. In theory, these Centres are also open for people with disabilities, however very few people with disabilities access these services. Barriers are physical accessibility of facilities, as well as attitudinal barriers among staff and lack of awareness of the services among the disabled population.

One exception is the Employment Service Centre of HCMC. This Centre provides approximately 30,000 job referrals each year, of whom 1,000 are people with disabilities (approximately 50% women). The majority of these people have mild mobility disabilities, however referrals have also been made for deaf and hearing impaired people and some vision impaired and blind people. The Centre reported that people with disabilities were very difficult to place with employers. They usually have to make many referrals, and only about 50% (i.e. 500 people per year) are successful in gaining employment. They also face many 'return customers' as the job retention rate of people with disabilities is low. The Centre reports that people with disabilities do not have a good attitude to work, or understanding of work culture and the requirements of employers and are more likely than non-disabled people to leave their jobs.

Under a previous NGO project some people with disabilities were trained, however the Centre does not currently provide vocational training at their facility for people with disabilities; they collaborate with the HCMC Vocational Training Centre for People with Disabilities for training.

5.2.3. Specialised employment services for people with disabilities

Some of the separate vocational training and employment services at provincial level provide support for job placement/ job referrals. Other than this, there are no government or NGO supported specialised employment services for people with disabilities. Currently there are two local organisations providing limited employment services for people with disabilities.

IDEA Good for Business project, Hanoi

Inclusive Development Action (IDEA) is a local NGO of and for people with disabilities in Hanoi which emerged from the Disability Forum, a group of self-help groups and International NGOs. They aim to promote inclusion of people with disabilities in Vietnam, particularly through employment. IDEA currently hires six people with disabilities and one non-disabled person. Since 2004 the American Chamber of Commerce in Hanoi (*AmCham*) have provided funding to IDEA to conduct the 'Good for Business' project to promote employment of people with disabilities, particularly among *AmCham* members.

The project provides information, advocacy and assistance to employers to hire people with disabilities. They also provide job preparation training for approximately 20 people with disabilities per year. The curriculum for the training was developed by the project, and develops participants' skills in preparing job applications and doing job interviews. HR managers from *AmCham* member companies conduct practice interviews with participants to improve their skills. The project also assists to organise internships for people with disabilities in *AmCham* member companies and NGOs.

The project does not act as a job placement agency, however they do make limited numbers of ad hoc referrals. Approximately 5-10 people per year are referred to employers for employment. There is

strong anecdotal information that a number of *AmCham* members have been influenced by this project to recruit people with disabilities.

Disability Resource Development (DRD), HCMC

The Disability Resource and Development Centre was established in 2005 as a part of the HCMC Open University. DRD currently hires five people with disabilities, including a hearing impaired coordinator to work with the deaf and hearing impaired. DRD is provided space within the Open University campus in central HCMC. DRD's mission is to promote the full participation of, and equal opportunities for, people with disabilities (PWDs) in all spheres of society, thus promoting employment is a key activity.

DRD have established strong relationships with a number of employers in HCMC and provide a job referral service for approximately 50 people per year (30-40% women). They also provide training and information on job seeking skills. So far 60 people with disabilities have joined the formal job seeking skills training, and numerous others are provided advice, information and assistance both in person, through the DRD website discussion forum and via the telephone. Services are available to people with any kind of impairment. DRD mostly provides services in HCMC and surrounding provinces, however would like to expand their activities in the future. The DRD Employment Officer also provides advice, assistance and training to employers related to the legal and business case for hiring people with disabilities.

DRD does not provide vocational training, however they do refer people who need skills training to government and private vocational training centres in HCMC, as well as for on the job training with employers. They have developed relationships with some Catholic organisations which provide accommodation for trainees who come from surrounding provinces while they complete vocational training.

Bread for Life

Bread for Life has been established as a 100% foreign owned company in Da Nang city, and is operating as a not for profit company providing training and employment for deaf people. They have 15 deaf staff aged 16-26 years, 7 of whom are women as well as 2-3 non-disabled staff. The bakery/cafe also has a residential facility so most of the staff live on site. The deaf staff are provided training in hospitality (baking, cafe facilities) as well as sign language and life and work skills. The cafe also operates as a centre for the promotion of sign language, collaborating with the Dong Nai College of Education to provide sign language training for schools of the deaf in Da Nang and surrounding areas.

5.3. Entrepreneurship

5.3.1. SIYB for people with disabilities

The *Start and Improve Your Business* (SIYB) programme is a modular training program to help entrepreneurs successfully start and run a small business. The program was developed by the ILO and has been implemented in Vietnam in partnership with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). In 2007, World Concern Development Organisation, with a grant from the US Agency for International Development, conducted a small project to modify the SIYB curricula to be more appropriate for people with disabilities. In collaboration with VABED and VCCI the SIYB curriculum has been modified by adding in more case studies of disabled entrepreneurs, etc to make it more relevant to and appropriate for people with disabilities. Fifteen members of VABED, both staff and business owners with disabilities, have been trained as Master trainers and are now qualified to provide the SIYB training.

World Concern and Spanish Red Cross have both supported the training of some disabled entrepreneurs in SIYB. Fifty young people in Ninh Binh and Quang Nam provinces have been trained and received a grant from World Concern to start a small business. Spanish Red Cross have supported fifty five people with disabilities to attend SIYB training. Spanish Red Cross report that very few of these people went on to open a small business. Difficulties are accessing capital as well as lack of confidence of the people with disabilities.

5.3.2. IDEA - small business training for women with disabilities

Very few people with disabilities have accessed any kind of small business training, despite large numbers of people with disabilities running their own small and micro enterprises. This was confirmed by a survey of women with disabilities in Hanoi and Ha Tay province conducted by IDEA in Nov 2007. Sixty three women with disabilities (members of the Hanoi Disabled Women's Association and women registered with DoLISA) were surveyed. Forty four percent of the women were currently running a business (mostly home-based micro enterprises), with an additional 11% having previously run a business. None of these women had attended any form of business development training or received any advice or information about starting a business.

Based on this demand, IDEA received funding from the British and Irish Embassy' small grants programs to conduct business development seminars for women. Two training seminars and a workshop for a total of 38 women were held over two years. Women improved their understanding of different types of businesses, gained knowledge on how to do a market assessment and self evaluate their strengths and weaknesses as well as skills in managing cash and marketing.

After the first training seminar it was decided to add in more basic disability awareness and confidence building exercises as many of the women had very poor social interaction skills, many had not left their houses in years. Over 70% of the participants had never had any contact with a disabled persons' organisation. The training was conducted by disabled women who themselves have successful small businesses, and opportunities were provided for networking with other disabled businesspeople and the Hanoi Disabled Women's Association. Following the training seminars, workshops were held with the Vietnam Women's Union to link these and other women with the members and services of the Women's Union (including their micro-credit scheme). The disabled women participants were very enthusiastic about maintaining contact with each other and the Hanoi Disabled Women's Association as well as possibly joining the Women's Union.

5.3.3. Enterprises of people with disabilities

As previously mentioned, Vietnam has a specific category of business registration for businesses that hire 51% or more of their staff as people with disabilities. Self employment, or establishing a business of people with disabilities is very popular among Vietnamese with disabilities, possibly because of the difficulties they face in accessing mainstream employment.

The majority of the VABED member enterprises are small or micro enterprises hiring less than 50 people. Most members are in northern Vietnam (See Annex three for a complete list of members, in Vietnamese). The range of industries is varied however with a large concentration in low skill, low profit handicrafts, mushroom growing and sewing. Many of these enterprises lack sophistication in terms of management skills, marketing and product development, are operating with very old equipment and have limited opportunities to access support or training services to improve their businesses.

Two examples of VABED member enterprises:

Nhip Cau Enterprise, Can Tho

The Nhip Cau enterprise in Can Tho province in the Mekong Delta was established in 2001 by Ms Bui Thi Hong Nga, a woman with mobility disabilities, in order to assist people with disabilities in the province. Nhip Cau is registered as a charity workshop under DoLISA and is a member of VABED. Ms Nga is also the chairperson of the Can Tho Disabled Persons' Association which now has 200 members. Nhip Cau used to have a shop-front and workshop in the main part of Can Tho city, however they were recently forced to move to donated land out of town. The enterprise had to raise funds to build a basic tin structure for the workshop and accommodation for staff.

Nhip Cau specialises in handicraft products made from coconut shells, a speciality product of Can Tho province. When training, employees make very basic products from coconut shell, as well as basic electronic product assembly (fans, switches etc). The fifteen staff (7 women) have mobility disabilities and all live on site at the workshop in very basic accommodation. An allowance for food is provided. Nhip Cau has a small stand at the local Co-op Mart Supermarket to sell their products, and some regular customers in Can Tho and surrounds, but unfortunately the turnover is low and thus salaries for employees are also quite low.

Ms Nga received a World Bank Innovation Day grant in 2003 in order to provide training for new employees. Most of these trainees stayed to work at Nhip Cau, however some left and became home-based producers. Ms Nga advised that most women who marry usually leave Nhip Cau to work from home, or give up work in order to care for their family. Volunteers from the Netherlands have provided English teaching for employees.

Reaching Out, Hoi An

Reaching Out is a shop and handicrafts workshop in the tourist town of Hoi An in central Vietnam. Reaching Out is located in a traditional shop house in the UNESCO World Heritage listed old town of Hoi An. The business was established by Mr Nguyen Binh, a wheelchair user and his non-disabled wife. The shop and workshop are wheelchair accessible on the ground floor. Currently the business hires 40 people with disabilities (23 women). In addition, they also source products from 56 home based producers with disabilities (70% women) in several different provinces.

Reaching Out provides training in seven different handicraft skills to employees, as well as an allowance while they are in the training period. Skilled artisans, either from Reaching Out or from other local enterprises provide the training which is uncertified. On completion of the training Reaching Out guarantees employees a decent wage as well as social and health insurance as required by Vietnamese law. The business operates on Fair Trade principles and has applied to join the International Fair Trade Association (IFAT). Employees are mostly mobility impaired, however there are also people who are deaf or hearing impaired and some people with Downs' Syndrome. Sign language training has been provided to all staff to ensure effective communication with all employees. The shop is very successful and salaries and conditions for employees and home-based producers are relatively high.

5.4. Microfinance

While microfinance is relatively well developed in Vietnam, it seems that very few if any people with disabilities are accessing either government or non-government schemes. There are no legal barriers to people with disabilities accessing these schemes, however none have specifically targeted people with disabilities.

5.4.1. Vietnam Blind Association and the Bank for Social Policies

As previously discussed, the Vietnam Blind Association has the right to facilitate access to the Bank for Social Policies for members to get micro-loans. The Association acts as guarantor and provides the requisite collateral. The Association also provides information, advice and assistance to members to help them develop a business, complete registration procedures and get the loans.

It was not possible to meet the National Blind Association during the timeframe of this research, however, we did meet the Hanoi Association. The Hanoi Blind Association facilitates access to around 2 billion VND in loans to 700-800 people per year. The success rate of these loans is very high, with the majority being paid back in 1-3 years. The Association undertakes an assessment of the loans on an annual basis, finding in 2007 that the majority of the loans lead to a 15-20% increase in business (sales), with a maximum growth rate of 30%. However, the Association also advised that this was off a low base, and as many of the enterprises are microenterprises in low-skill, low margin industries, the income for the blind and vision impaired employees tends to be very low.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Vocational training

People with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities in Vietnam have quite limited opportunities to access quality vocational training. The majority of vocational training centres are in urban areas and places are limited. Most training is provided in separate centres, separate classes or through enterprises of people with disabilities. VABED and VABED members are a significant player in the vocational training sector providing training for around 3,000 people with disabilities each year. The Vietnam Blind Association is also a significant provider of vocational training, however in very limited and low skill industry areas.

6.2. Employment

Vietnam has quite strong legislation and policy promoting the employment of people with disabilities. The quota policy is now beginning to be implemented in some provinces, but is still largely unenforced. Enforcement of this quota and collection of fines from employers presents a significant opportunity for the Vietnamese government as it would provide financial resources at the provincial level for training and employment initiatives.

There are very few specific initiatives to promote employment for people with disabilities. Job placement services are limited, and job preparation training and services virtually non-existent. The local disability NGOs and organisations of people with disabilities are beginning to recognise their role in job preparation for people with disabilities, a role which could expand in the future with additional financial and capacity building support.

6.3. Entrepreneurship

Vietnam has a long tradition of entrepreneurship for people with disabilities, however despite this there are no specific training or development services available for disabled entrepreneurs. The creation of VABED to service and represent the interests of enterprises of people with disabilities is an opportunity to change this situation and provide training and assistance for entrepreneurs and businesses, however so far their capacity is limited.

The Vietnam Blind Association is also a major provider of entrepreneurship opportunities, including access to credit from the bank for social policy. There are currently no links between VABED and the Blind Association, despite their common interests and experience.

7. Mapping of specific services for people with disabilities by province

The information below includes organisations of people with disabilities, enterprises and workshops specifically for people with disabilities and the relevant International organisation and NGO projects related to employment or training for people with disabilities. It does not include the mainstream government services such as vocational training centres and social protection centres that are present in most provinces.

No.	Province	DPO	VABED members	NGO/IO project
1	Hanoi	Hanoi Association of PWD Hanoi Disabled Women's Club Hanoi Deaf Club Hanoi Disabled Students' Association Hope Club Bright Future Club 'You and I' Club of PWD Green dreams club of Hanoi Hanoi Sports and Cultural Club of PWD Dong Doi Group	There are 77 VABED members in Hanoi, including several who provide vocational training.	VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05 Information Technology Training Centre (ITTC) Hoa Sua Training Centre IDEA
2	Bac Ninh	Luong Tai District Self Help Club of PWD	Bac Ninh Vocational training and rehabilitation centre for PWD	
3	Bac Giang		Hope Group of PWD Van Xuan private company, Bac Giang Que Nham veterans manufacturing and trade company, Tan Yen District.	
4	Ha Nam	Ha Nam Association of PWD	Phuong Dong wood production and engineering company Truong An construction company Minh Luc furniture and engineering company	Vietnam Red Cross capacity building project 2007-10
5	Ha Tay		There are 15 VABED members in Ha Tay province.	
6	Ninh Binh	Ninh Binh Association of PWD	There are 10 VABED members in Ninh	World Concern VT & E project 2005-08

			Binh	Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2005-06
7	Vinh Phuc		Me Linh District Blind Association Thuy Linh Company	Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2005-06
8	Hung Yen		Hung Son war veterans workshop	
9	Phu Tho		Education and training centre for disadvantaged children.	
10	Thai Binh	Thai Binh Disabled Youth Association Thai Thuy District Disabled Youth Association Quynh Phu District Association of PWD Vu Thu District Club of PWD	Dong Hung Club of PWD There are 11 VABED members in Thai Binh	
11	Nam Dinh	Nam Dinh Association of People with Disabilities Disabled Youth Association of Nam Dinh Sao Mai Club Xuan Truong district association of PWD Nghia Hung district association of PWD	There are 16 VABED members in Nam Dinh	
12	Hai Duong	'Solidarity' Club of PWD, Kim Thanh district Hai Duong Club of PWD	Hai Duong trade and services company Binh Han district computer company Hai Duong Vietnam-Korea Joint stock company. (VABED doesn't record them as members, however Hai Duong DoLISA claimed there were hundreds of small enterprises of people with disabilities in the province.)	World Concern VT & E Project 1998-05 VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05 Implementation of quota and employment fund for people with disabilities
13	Hai Phong	Hai Phong Deaf Club Hai Phong Club of PWD Vinh Bao District Association of PWD	There are 49 VABED members in Hai Phong, mostly enterprises established originally by veterans.	
14	Quang Ninh		There are eight VABED members in Quang Ninh.	Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2007-10 Vietnam Red Cross capacity building project 2007-10 Implementation of quota and

				employment fund for people with disabilities
15	Ha Giang	Ha Giang Association of PWD		
16	Lang Son	Lang Son City Association of PWD		
17	Thai Nguyen	Thai Nguyen Deaf Club Thai Nguyen City Association of PWD	Thai Nguyen veterans employment development company	
18	Son La		Thao Nguyen veterans cooperative Thanh Hung Joint stock company Quang Tuyet charity enterprise 30 April veterans cooperative	
19	Hoa Binh			Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2005-06 Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2007-10 Vietnam Red Cross capacity building project 2007-10
20	Nghe An	Nghe An Group of PWD	Quoc Anh charity company Nhan Tam social protection workshop	
21	Thanh Hoa	Thanh Hoa Association of PWD (also VABED member)	There are 11 VABED members in Thanh Hoa	DED (Germany) and Handicap International are running a pilot programme to support self help groups of people with disabilities as part of the 'Making PRSP Inclusive' project.
22	Ha Tinh		Vocational training and employment centre for PWD and orphans Ha Tinh veterans enterprise Cam Xuyen district charity production and vocational training workshop Dong Tam veterans cooperative Minh Khai joint stock company	
23	Quang Tri	Vinh Tu Club of PWD Thanh Binh Club of PWD, Quang Tri City Vinh Linh District Club of PWD	Quang Tri Blind Association company Quang Tri 'Light' company of PWD Duc Phuong Construction company	
24	Hue		Vocational training and employment service centre for people with disabilities	

			Education, vocational guidance and rehabilitation centre. Toothpick and broom production company Charity cooperative Tinh Tuong toothpick and broom production and trade company	
25	Da Nang	Danang Disabled Youth Association	Vocational Guidance and Production of Bamboo Products Centre for People with Disabilities Lien Chieu Blind Association Truong Cong Nghiem Enterprise Phuc Si Charity Production Enterprise Da Nang Bamboo Broom Enterprise Sao Sang Advertising Company	World Concern VT & E project 1998-2005 VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05 Bread for Life
26	Quang Nam	Hoi An Association of PWD	Reaching Out Handicrafts KT Drinking water enterprise Dai Loc district 27 July enterprise Dai Loc district association of PWD	World Concern VT & E project 1998-2008
27	Binh Dinh		Nguyen Nga enterprise of people with disabilities. Dong Tam vocational workshop	
28	Khanh Hoa		Charity company Golden Heart cooperative Vocational training and production enterprise of wood handicrafts	
29	Binh Duong		Binh Duong blind association bamboo toothpick and broom production company Binh Duong blind association massage and sauna company.	
30	HCMC	HCMC Disabled Youth Association	HCMC Care and Vocational Training	DRD

		The Deaf Club Hy Vong School 1 'Overcome difficulties' Club of HCMC	Centre for PWD HCMC Vocational Club of Youth with Disabilities HCMC 27/7 Company The Art Wood Company Hong Phuc Enterprise of the Deaf Phuong Anh Silk Printing Enterprise Hope Enterprise of HCMC Health Massage Centre Suc Song Company Khai Tri Joint Stock Company Huy Hung Production Company of PWD Dam Xuan Anh company An Phuc Company ICEVN Electronics Company Bao Chung Deaf Production Company	VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05 Sao Mai Centre
31	Dong Nai	"Overcome" Association of PWD of Xuan Loc district	Dong Nai Youth Club of PWD Duc Hien Company Bao Chung enterprise for the deaf	VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05
32	Gia Lai		Huu Hoc charity enterprise	
33	Kontum	Peer groups developed through World Concern project	27 July enterprise	World Concern VT&E project for PWD and ethnic minorities 2006-9
34	Lam Dong	Duc Trong District Association of PWD Da Lat city Association of PWD Blind Association of Lam Dong Da Lat City Vocational Guidance Club for Women with Disabilities	27 July enterprise	Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2005-06 Spanish Red Cross/VNRC project 2007-10
35	Dac Lac	Ebua Commune, Buon Ma Thuat District Club of PWD	'Morning sunlight' production, trade and service company.	
36	Dac Nong		18 April enterprise	
37	Pleiku	Pleiku Club of PWD		

38	Can Tho	Can Tho Association of PWD Can Tho Disabled University Students' Club	Nhon Ai Charity Enterprise 27/7 Production Enterprise Nhip Cau Enterprise	VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05
39	Ben Tre			VNAH Employment Service Centre support 2003-05
40	Khanh Hoa	Dien Khanh District Club of PWD		
41	Kien Giang	Dong Hanh Club of PWD		
42	Vung Tau	Vung Tau Association of PWD		

* Note: Vietnam currently has 64 provinces and cities.

Bibliography

Decision of the Prime Minister, No. 239/2006/QĐ-TTg, 24 October 2006, Approval of National Action Plan to Support People with Disabilities, 2006-10, Hanoi, Vietnam.

IDEA, Jan 2008, 'Directory of Organisations of People with Disabilities in Vietnam', Hanoi, Vietnam.

IDEA, Jan 2008, 'Directory of International NGOs', Hanoi, Vietnam.

Ministry of Planning and Investment, General Statistics Office, 26 December 2007, Results of Household Living Standards Survey, 2006, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Nguyen Thi Dieu Hong, July 2002, An Assessment of Implementation of Provisions of the Labor Code on Disabled Workers and Ordinance on People with Disabilities, Hanoi, Vietnam.

Norlund, I, Jan 2007, 'Filling the Gap: The Emerging Civil Society in Vietnam', UNDP Vietnam.

World Concern Development Organisation, January 2005, 'Adaptive Vocational Training for Adolescents with Disabilities, Final Programme Evaluation, Hanoi, Vietnam

Yoder, J., 2004, Training and Employment of People with Disabilities: Viet Nam 2002, Bangkok, International Labour Office