

Socialist republic of Vietnam

National report

Midterm review on Vietnam's implementation
Of Document entitled "A world fit for
children"

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Inofficial translation

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I. Vietnam's implementation of "World Fit for Children " document

A. Introduction

Occupying 329,314 square kilometres of Southeast Asia, Vietnam has an estimated population of 84.11 million, 33 percent of whom are children.¹ Despite various difficulties and challenges, recent years have seen remarkable social and economic gains due in large part to sound social-economic development planning, continued political and security stability.

Over the past five years, the economy has grown rapidly and fairly sustainably. Annual GDP increases have ranged from 7.08 percent in 2002 to 8.17 percent in 2006.² (The average annual GDP increase over the period was 7.7 percent, and 2006 per-capita income was US \$700.³) Along with economic development, Vietnam has paid close attention and prioritized the allocation of resources to social development. This twin-focus has resulted in many noteworthy improvements to the population's quality of life: the rate of poor households decreased from 28.4 percent in 2002 to 19 percent in 2006⁴ – 1.5 million new jobs were created in each of those years – life expectancy rose from 71 years in 2002 to 71.3 years in 2005, and Vietnam's ranking on the Human Development Index rose from 0.688 in 2002 to 0.704 in 2005. (Vietnam now ranks 108th out of 177 countries⁵.)

These socio-economic development achievements, including improvements in living standards, job creation and poverty reduction, form the underlying conditions that will contribute to the realisation of human rights, including the rights of children.

There have been many noteworthy changes at central level. In 2002, the Commission for Population, Family and Children (CPFC) was established through a merger of the Committee for Protection and Care of Children and the National Committee for Population and Family Planning. The CPFC is a ministerial-ranking Government body mandated to manage the State portfolio of population, families and children affairs as well as related public services.

At local levels, provincial and district CPFC units were given agency status at these levels. These units are mandated to advise People's Committees in their provinces and districts on the implementation of State policies affecting population, families and children.

In recent years, the central-level CPFC has worked closely with other ministries and State agencies to submit for approval or to approve many child related legal documents

¹ Source: General Statistic Office, 2006

² Source: General Statistic Office, 2006

³ Source: General Statistic Office, 2006

⁴ Source: General Statistic Office, 2006

⁵ Source: Human Development Report 2006

which meet a certain level of child-friendliness. The Commission has also organised the implementation and supervision of various programmes to protect children's rights.

The Government of Vietnam is committed to realising its World Fit for Children goals, as well as those embodied in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its optional protocols on (1) the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and (2) the involvement of children in armed conflicts. Vietnam has also taken into serious account the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, offered after the Committee reviewed Vietnam's second periodic national report on CRC in 2003 and Vietnam's initial report on the two optional protocols in 2006.

Vietnam has increasingly been prioritising child-friendly environments, creating conditions for more child participation, encouraging greater investment in care, protection, and education activities. As part of efforts to meet World Fit for Children commitments, Vietnam has set up special "child-friendly criteria" for wards and communes nationwide.⁶ On 26 June 2006, to assess and improve the implementation of these efforts, the Prime Minister asked the CPFC to coordinate with relevant agencies and prepare a national mid-term conference on progress towards World Fit For Children goals; the conference is to be held in March 2007.

This report will review the implementation of the targets set out in the World Fit for Children document, identify challenges and propose directions in the coming years. It is based on the outcome of regional review meetings on implementation of models of wards and communes fit for children, as well as reports and contributions from various bodies, including the Culture, Education, Youth and Children's Affairs Committee of the National Assembly, the Ministry of Investment and Planning, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Public Security, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Culture and Information, the General Statistics Office, the Youth Union, the Women's Union, and the Farmers' Association. Many other local and international organisations, particularly UNICEF, have contributed actively to the finalisation of this report.

B. Implementing the World Fit for Children Document

Vietnam has been doing its utmost to ensure the ten principles of the World Fit for Children Document – put children first; fight poverty; invest in children; leave no child out; care for every child; educate every child; stop harming and exploiting children;

⁶ Decision No. 03/2004/GD-DSGDTE dated June 1st 2004 by Minister, Chairwoman of Vietnam Commission for Population, Family and Children on standards for wards and communes fit to children

protect children from war; fight HIV/AIDS; listen to children and ensure children's participation; and protect the earth for children – are carefully implemented.

To build a world in which all Vietnamese children, girls and boys, get a good start to life, enjoy high-quality basic education, grow up free from violence and abuse, participate actively in society, and develop to their full potential, Vietnam has worked carefully to build the legal framework needed to support child-friendly environments in homes, schools and society, as well as increase investment in children, enhance awareness of child rights, and intensify oversight and assessment.

1. Building and strengthening a Child-Friendly Legal System

a) Before 2002, Vietnam was gradually building a fairly comprehensive legal framework for child protection, care and education. Since 2002, Vietnam has continued to refine and improve the legal system and related policies to guarantee the implementation of children's rights. Throughout this process, Vietnam has paid close attention to the principles set out in the World Fit for Children guiding document; as a result. In this period awareness and capacity among National Assembly deputies on the rights of children have markedly increased, and this has contributed significantly to the effectiveness of legislative work and parliamentary oversight of the implementation of child-related laws.

The Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children of 2004 (replaces the Law issued in 1991) clearly states the principle that the benefit and welfare of children should come first in all activities implemented by agencies, organisations, and individuals. The law also defines the principle of non-discrimination of children and outlines 10 groups of fundamental rights and duties of children.

The Youth Law of 2005 provides a separate chapter identifying the responsibilities of the State, families and society to protect and nurture young adults from 16 to 18 years of age. In the law there is a stipulation that the State shall apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child to all persons under 18 years of age.

One of principles clearly outlined in the 2006 Law on Gender Equality is that no discrimination between boys and girls shall be tolerated.

The period 2002-2006 also saw many achievements in the development of a legal framework for the child protection: the amended Labour Code of 2002 clearly outlines regulations for minimum working age, strictly prohibiting child labour; the Ordinance on Combating and Preventing Prostitution of 2003 provides a legal backing for the

prevention and combating of child prostitution; the Criminal Proceedings Code of 2003 outlines special proceedings for criminal cases with adolescent involvement (including adolescent witnesses, victims, arrestees, defendants, and temporary detainees); and the Civil Proceedings Code of 2005, which details procedures for the initiation, investigation, prosecution, and implementation of civil cases, provides special regulations to ensure women and children's legal rights are upheld.

The Law on Protection, Care and Education for Children of 2004 has a chapter on protection, care and education of children who are in difficult circumstances. This forms the legal basis to prevent children from falling into difficult circumstances and provide necessary assistance to those in such circumstances, helping them reintegrate into their families and communities and providing the means for a stable future. In addition, the Law on Military Service (revised in 2005) has clear regulations on the conscription of 18- years- old male citizens and measures to ensure that no child under the age of 18 is led to join the armed forces

Many sub-laws consist of regulations to protect children. Decree No. 36/2005/ND – CP of the Government stipulates the details for implementation of the 2004 Law on Child Protection, Care and Education with regulations on prohibition of activities violating child rights and solutions for protection of children in difficult circumstances. Decree No. 53/2006/ND- CP of the Government supports the legal framework for the development and enhancement of social services to better protect children in difficult circumstances. Decision No. 19/2004/QD-TTg of the Prime Minister approves a program to prevent the occurrence of and rehabilitate street children, sexually abused children and children working in hazardous conditions (2004-2010). Decision No. 65/2005/QD- TTg of the Prime Minister approves a national project on community-based care for displaced orphans, abandoned children, severely disabled children, child victims of toxic contamination, and children living with HIV/AIDS (2005 – 2010). Decision No. 17/2007/QD – TTg of the Prime Minister outlines regulations on community reintegration for trafficked women and children.

To provide better health care for children, the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children outlines clear policies on free healthcare at all public health facilities for children under six years of age. The 2006 Law on HIV/AIDS Prevention covers sensitised measures to prevent and address HIV/AIDS, including special measures for children.

The 2005 Education Law, apart from outlining regulations on curriculum content at different levels, also prohibits any act of torture towards students and provides regulations on building child-friendly learning environments.

In addition, many other related laws include detailed chapters and regulations on children and adolescents, part of efforts to prioritise child rights and ensure every child is comprehensively protected, cared for, and allowed to develop to his or her physical and intellectual potential. Some examples include the 2003 Land Law, which encourages the use of public land for education, and recreation activities that benefit children, and the 2006 Cinema Law, which sets out clear guidelines for the ratio of movies and television programs made for children.

b. Limitations

Despite increasing efforts to develop a legal framework for children's rights, there remain many overlapping regulations and vague stipulations. At present, in the judicial system, there are some regulations that are not child-friendly, and enforcement in general faces many shortcomings. At the same time, given its desire to integrate into the world community, Vietnam will continue to study, consider and harmonise its domestic laws with international laws, especially in the area of child protection.

2. Developing Programmes for Children

Along with supplementing and amending laws, the Government of Vietnam has initiated many policies, decisions, programmes and projects to reduce gaps between regions and ethnic groups, while at the same time enhancing the enforcement of children's rights in all areas.

In particular, the Government has been paying attention to integrating child-related targets into local and national socio-economic development plans. In 2006, the targets *"Increase the percentage of wards and communes fit for children"* and *"Increase the percentage of children in special circumstances receiving protection and care"* were made national socio-economic development targets for until 2010.

2.1. In accordance with Agenda 21 and the Comprehensive Strategy on Poverty Reduction and Growth, Vietnam's sustainable development efforts clearly demonstrate a political will to achieve economic development along with social progress and equality, focusing on reducing poverty, narrowing economic development gaps between regions, protecting the environment, developing social security networks, ensuring gender equality, and protecting women's and children's rights.

Vietnam has been working diligently to realise the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as to implement its own 12 development goals and 32 development

targets based on the MDGs. These include special targets related to children, among them: reduce the rate of poor households; universalise lower secondary education and improve the quality of education; reduce child mortality, child malnutrition, and the national birth-rate; improve maternal health; reduce HIV/AIDS transmission; reduce inequality between ethnic groups; and ensure infrastructure development for poor provinces.

For every five households considered poor in 1993, only three remained poor in 2004. As such, Vietnam achieved the MDG on poverty reduction 10 years before the international deadline. (According to international measures, the poverty rate in Vietnam dropped from 28.4 percent in 2002 to 19 percent in 2006.) Progress has also been made to achieve MDG targets on the universalisation of lower-secondary education, and Vietnam reached national targets for literacy and universal primary education in 2000. The number of provinces with universal access to lower-secondary education jumped from 12 in 2002 to 35 in 2006. Strong achievements were also made to improve gender equality (MDG 3), and Vietnam's GDI rose from 0.668 in 1998 to 0.689 in 2004, achieving a ranking 87 out of 144 countries.

Progress was also made on several other MDGs relating to children. Under-five mortality is now half the rate it was in 1990, and maternal mortality is less than one-third. Vietnam has also met initial targets on the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and environmental sustainability, signalling a significant move towards the achievement of all MDGs by 2015.

From 2001-2005, the Government also intensified the implementation of the various national target programmes, resulting in considerable benefits for children.

- The National Target Programme for Poverty Reduction and Employment focuses on reducing household poverty (annual reduction assistance for between 280.000 and 300.000 poor households), preventing chronic hunger, supplying basic infrastructure to poor communes, providing jobs (for 1.4-1.5 million people), reducing unemployment in urban areas down (down to 5-6 percent), and increasing productive annual working time in rural areas (up to 80 percent).
- The National Target Programme for Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation provides partial funding for difficult areas to build efficient clean water-supply systems, as well as little-or-no-interest loans for water supply development.

- The National Target Programme on Population and Family Planning aims to facilitate a sustainable reduction in the national birth-rate, with focus in areas with high birth-rate trends, including remote and isolated areas and highly poor areas. This includes the pilot implementation of models to promote healthy population growth.
- The National Target Programme on the Prevention and Control of Social Diseases, Dangerous Epidemics and HIV/AIDS aims to actively prevent and combat certain social and biological diseases, including HIV/AIDS, thus increasing overall life expectancy and population quality. The programme also includes efforts to increase social equality in healthcare, overall economic well-being, political and security stability in all areas, especially remote and mountainous areas (particularly border areas) and islands.
- The National Target Programme on Improving Cultural and Spiritual Life aims to preserve Vietnamese cultural values and modernise methods to produce, store and disseminate film-based media.
- The National Target Programme on Education and Training aims to improve education quality by renewing teaching objectives, methods, and curricula at all levels; implementing universal secondary education; increasing teacher numbers; and furthering the quality of human resource training, especially for science and technology education.
- The National Target Programme on Socio-Economic Development for Highly Disadvantaged Communes in Mountainous Ethnic Minority Areas (Program 135) focuses on infrastructure development, including power systems, schools, clinics, roads and markets, for disadvantaged ethnic minority communes.
- The National Target Programme on Crime Prevention and Control focuses on measures to prevent and address crime, particularly serious crime. One of the programme's four projects is "Prevention and Combating Child-Abuse and Juvenile Crimes".
- The National Target Programme on Drug Abuse Prevention defines prevention as the fundamental solution and encourages all of society, including young people and Government officials, to take part in efforts to combat drug abuse in general, address drug abuse in schools, minimise the risk of HIV/AIDS transmission through drug use, and provide community-and-family-based treatment and rehabilitation for drug users. The programme works with other socio-economic

programmes to eradicate drug cultivation and promote alternative crops, prevent illegal drug trafficking from abroad, punish drug-related crimes, eliminate gathering points for illegal drug trafficking and use, and monitor medicine production to prevent the production of illegal drugs.

- The National Target Programme on Prostitution Prevention aims to prevent young people from falling into the sex trade, especially children and students, as well as halt the organised trafficking of women and children for prostitution abroad and improve treatment and reintegration for victims.

In addition, the Government of Vietnam has overseen the implementation and promulgation of several other programmes relating directly to the fulfilment of children's rights to healthcare, education and protection.

- The Second National Action Plan for Vietnamese Children 2001-2010 contains 15 target groups and 8 solutions set to respond to the fundamental needs and rights of children, prevent and eliminate the risks of child abuse, and develop safe and healthy environments for Vietnamese children so that they may enjoy protection, care and education and develop to their highest potential.
- The National Nutrition Strategy 2001-2010 aims to ensure the provision of reasonable care and feeding for children and mothers, as well as food security and a clear reduction in nutrition-related diseases by 2010.
- The National Programme to Prevent and Address the Incidence of Street Children, Sexually Abused Children and Children Working in Hazardous Conditions 2004-2010 focuses on raising awareness and changing societal behaviours to reduce the number of children in these circumstances and ensure at-risk children are protected, cared for, educated and allowed to develop fully into their adult lives.
- The National Strategy on HIV/AIDS Prevention to 2010 (with a vision to 2020) identifies targets to keep the HIV/AIDS rate under 0.3 percent by 2010, with no subsequent increase thereafter, and reduce the overall impact of HIV/AIDS on socio-economic development. The Strategy also aims to provide sensitive treatment, care and consultation for children and families infected or affected by HIV/AIDS and prevent mother-to-child transmission.

- The National Action Plan on the Prevention of Trafficking in Women and Children 2004-2010 focuses on raising awareness among society in general and specific Government bodies and mass organisations to prevent, address and significantly reduce human trafficking by 2010. The Plan has four main projects: Educating communities on the illegal trafficking of children and women; Combating trafficking in children and woman; Assisting the repatriating of child and woman victims; And strengthening the legal system to eliminate trafficking in children and women.

- The National Project on Community-Based Care for Displaced Orphans, Abandoned Children, Severely Disabled Children, Child Victims of Toxic Contamination and Children Living with HIV/AIDS (2005-2010) encourages families and communities to take an active part in providing guidance and care. The Project supports the reintegration of children in difficult circumstances back into their communities, as is their legal right, and aims to narrow living-standard gaps between children in difficult circumstances and other children from the same areas through the development of community-based models.

- The National Project on Support for Disabled People 2006-2010 supports disabled children to fulfil their right to a basic education.

- National plans to develop cultural, entertainment and leisure facilities for children have been extended to 2010.

- The Vietnam Family Development Strategy 2005-2010 aims to enhance capacities and strengthen the role of families, through assistance to develop household economies and family services (including assistance to needy families) to encourage prosperous, progressive, equal, happy and small families (one or two children per couple).

- The National Action Plan on Safe Motherhood 2003-2010 focuses on reducing infant and maternal mortality and ensuring every child enjoys a healthy life from birth.

- The National Action Plan on the Prevention of Mother-to-Child HIV transmission 2006-2010 aims to significantly reduce the rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission.

- The National Policy on Injury Prevention and Control 2002-2010 aims to reduce the incidence of injuries among population in general and particularly children at schools, in families and in communities by raising awareness for promoting safe environments for children.
- The National Plan of Action on Reproductive Health Education and the Prevention of HIV/AIDS focus on addressing HIV/AIDS issues in schools.

2.2. Limitations

The monitoring and evaluation of the above-mentioned programs, plans and projects has not been carried out regularly and there remains no adequate strategic framework to direct and integrate all these programs, plans and projects to effectively and comprehensively address children's rights to protection, care and education.

3. Creating Child-Friendly Environments

To meet its commitments to build a world fit for children, Vietnam has paid close attention to encouraging child-friendly families, schools and society.

3.1. The Family plays an important role in shaping and developing every child's personality; home is where protection and care originate. Vietnam, therefore, has paid close attention to activities designed to strengthen the role of the family, often carried out through campaigns with titles such as: *"Bringing up Healthy and Well-Educated Children"*, *"Exemplary Adults, Attentive Children"*, *"New Residences New Lives"*, *"Building up Cultured Families"*, *"Rural Families Fighting Child Malnutrition"*, *"Rural Families, No Street Children"* etc.

Vietnamese clan's role has been always essential in promoting on learning within the family, discouraging children from leaving home to live on the street, offering compassion and assistance to poor children, preventing domestic violence, and building child-friendly communities. (Vietnam's annual Family Day (28 June) is always given a theme such as "The role of the father", "Lighting up love in each family" etc.) All of society is responsible for building family environments that are democratic, prosperous, civilised and happy – family environments fit for children.

Vietnam actively implements activities to enhance families' economic positions, including credit assistance and economic development linked to parenting commitments on child protection, care and education. Policies support individuals and families that adopt orphaned and homeless children, child victims of Agent Orange, children living with HIV/AIDS, etc., so as ensure normal upbringings for disadvantaged children. Family-based alternative care for children in difficult circumstances (fostering orphaned children, etc.) is on the rise.

3.2. Together, families, communities and schools hold a strong influence over children's development. There has been a surge in the number of campaigns to develop child-friendly preschool and primary school environments (especially in disadvantaged areas) to consolidate earlier gains made to promote university primary education. By 2005 and with substantial assistance from UNICEF, a child-friendly school model was applied in 16 disadvantaged provinces in 188 new primary schools and 839 satellite schools

3.3. Along with the development of child-friendly families and schools, Vietnam has also paid close attention to building child-friendly communities. In 2004, a model for child-friendly communes and wards was introduced. The model has 28 indicators gathered under the following 4 clusters:

- Creating a society fit for children: includes the fulfilment of child protection, care and education commitments by authorities at all levels, national quality standards for healthcare and education services, recreation and entertainment facilities, transport links, and hygiene promotion.
- Creating family environments conducive to comprehensive child development: includes "cultural family" initiatives, safety and child injury prevention, clean water and hygienic latrine provision, and skills training on child protection, care and education.
- Ensuring the implementation of the basic child rights: includes rights to birth registration, care, protection, play, participation, etc.
- Upholding community and family responsibilities: includes care for disadvantaged children to integrate into communities and develop as other children.

The 28 detailed indicators under these four groups further concretise Vietnam's adherence to its World Fit for Children commitments. These indicators measure progress in a number of areas, including child participation (1) play and recreation (2) child healthcare (6), and child protection (10). Several remaining indicators measure local political commitment to building families and communities fit for children.

Based on these indicators, provinces and cities (some cities are at the same administrative level as provinces) have developed their own plans to promote child-friendly communes and wards. To date, every province and city nationwide has agreed to the model and started implementation. In 2006, following two years of implementation, the VCPFC worked with ministries and local authorities to conduct a preliminary review. So far, around 21 percent of communes and wards in Vietnam have been recognised as child-friendly (meeting 25 or more indicators⁷).

Number of indicators met Percentage of qualifying communes/wards

28/28	2%
25-27	19%
22-24	24%
18-21	21%
<18	34 %

3.4 Along with the above-mentioned models, several other initiatives have been implemented in different localities with support from international organisations and NGOs.

UNICEF has helped implement the child-friendly hospitals initiative, which has received a positive response from many provinces and cities. By 2006, 64 provincial and district hospitals had been certified as child-friendly⁸. UNICEF has also been supporting the upscaling of the child-friendly home, child-friendly school and child-friendly community models, in which safe environments with minimal risk of injury are

⁷ Source: VCPFC, 2006
⁸ Source: Ministry of Health, 2006

promoted. In addition, as per the Country Programme of Cooperation between the Government of Vietnam and UNICEF 2006-2010, the child-friendly provincial model is being rolled out in 10 provinces. The model, which incorporates support for services such as healthcare, education, clean water, hygiene promotion, injury prevention and child protection, aims to enhance local planning capacity for socio-economic development.

In addition to the UNICEF-supported activities, other child-friendly models have been or are being rolled out in Vietnam, including child-centred community development implemented in certain poor provinces by Plan International and the child-friendly district model implemented by Save the Children Sweden in Ho Chi Minh City. The participation of children and other community members in the application of these models has increased step-by-step, from planning to implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

3.5. Limitations

Although more attention is being paid to building child-friendly environments through a diverse range of models, there remain several limitations to each model's sustainability, as well as limitations to the sharing of experiences between models and the replication of effective models. At the same time, broader and deeper participation of families, children and other community members needs to be encouraged.

4. Increasing Resources for Children

Vietnam has worked diligently to provide necessary resources to fulfil children's needs and rights, increasing the State budget while at the same time mobilising resources from individuals, businesses, children's funds/foundations, and ODA donors. This work has gone hand-in-hand with an increasing effectiveness of the use of these funds.

4.1. Investment from the State Budget

Investment from the State budget in social areas has gradually increased in recent years, focusing more on poverty reduction, universal education, health care, maternal health,

child health, and HIV/AIDS prevention and control. These increases have largely benefited children.

The rate of investment in social areas as a percentage of total investment rose from 26.4 percent in 2001, 26.6 percent in 2002, 26.9 percent in 2003, 27.1 percent in 2004 and to 27.4 percent in 2005. Similarly, the rate of investment in education and training rose from 3.9 percent in 2001, 4.0 percent in 2002, 4.1 percent in 2003, 4.2 percent in 2004 and to 4.3 percent in 2005, and the rate of investment in health and social affairs rose from 2.1 percent in 2001, 2.2 percent in 2002, 2.3 percent in 2003, 2.4 percent in 2004 to 2.5 percent in 2005.⁹

Budget allocations for education and training rose from 15 percent of the total State budget in 2000 to 18.6 percent in 2006, and higher budgets were unveiled for universal education initiatives (The State budget for both primary and lower-secondary education accounted for 52.6 percent of recurrent education expenditure over the period.¹⁰)

Budget allocations for national target programmes also increased annually, with the overall 2006 allocation double in comparison with that of 2002.¹¹

Name of Project/programme	2002 (billion VND)	2006 (billion VND)
1. National Target Programme on Poverty Reduction and Employment	651	925
2. National Target Programme on Rural Water Supply and Sanitation	215	353
3. National Target Programme on Population and Family Planning	422	572
4. National Target Programme on the Prevention and Mitigation of Social Diseases, Dangerous Epidemics and HIV/AIDS	380	910

⁹ Source: 2006-2010 economic and social development plan, Section on evaluation of social and economic situation in 2001-2005

¹⁰ Source: 2006-2010 Economic and social development plan.

¹¹ Source: Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy; 2006 Government's Report

5. National Target Programme on Improving Cultural and Spiritual Life		370
6. National Target Programme on Education and Training	710	2,790

(Exchange rate by December 2006: 1 USD equals 16.000 VND)

Funding for children in need of special protection also saw considerable increases¹² (see chart below).

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Budget allocation (billion VND)	54.45	55.55	74.78	89.67	149.00

The rate of investment in basic services for children (as a percentage of total social development investment) was also higher. While investment in basic services for children accounted for 32 percent of total social development investment in 1991, that figure had risen to 42 percent in 1999. Although detailed figures are not yet available for the 2002-2006 period, preliminary figures show a continued increase in investment in areas immensely benefiting children.

4.2. Mobilising Resources from Communities

In advocating the socialisation (community fund mobilisation) of child protection, care and education issues, Vietnam has attached great importance to community-generated

¹² Source: Ministry of Labour, War Invalid and Social Affairs, 2006

resources. These resources have been contributed by individuals, mobilised through Government bond issuances, donated by the business sector, and channelled through different children's funds. In addition to State spending, Vietnamese families, especially those in large urban areas, are known for spending large sums on healthcare, education and entertainment for their children.

The system of children's funds plays an important role in mobilising resources for child protection, care and education. These funds mobilise millions of dollars annually at all four administrative levels (100 percent of provinces and cities have children's funds, as do 80 percent of districts and 70 percent of communes and wards.) Each year the system mobilises nearly US\$ 2 million into child-support programmes and projects supporting activities such as facial surgery, heart surgery, vision-restoration surgery, delta myasthenia treatment, functional rehabilitation for children with disabilities, scholarships for children in need, ad-hoc assistance for children in natural disaster-stricken areas, etc.

In addition, many other funds have mobilised considerable support from communities to directly support children. (Some of these include the Golden Heart Fund, the Compassion Fund, the Study Encouragement Fund, the Young Talent Support Fund, the Fund for Students in Need, the VINAMILK Scholarship Fund for Young Talents, the Vietnam Association for Victims of Agent Orange, etc.)

4.3. Official Development Assistance

From 2001-2005, despite a considerable reduction in worldwide ODA, donors continued to strongly support Vietnam, reflecting satisfaction with Vietnam's current development progress. ODA commitments for 2001-2005 totalled US\$14.98 billion, of which approximately 70 percent was disbursed. The diverse range of ODA resources made available for child protection, care and education programmes resulted in several direct and indirect benefits for children.

Along with programmes and projects for children implemented by UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, WHO and UNAIDS, other global agencies such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, International Labour Organisation, the International Organisation for Migration, bilateral donors (governments) and non-

governmental organisations (NGOs) provided much needed support to Vietnamese children.

UNICEF, one of the largest and most regular donors, provided US\$ 70.3 million between 2001 and 2005 for children's issues. Most of these resources were channelled towards projects focussing on technical assistance for healthcare, nutrition, clean water, environmental sanitation, education, information education and communication (IEC) on child rights, child protection, child injury prevention, and other critical areas critical to children's survival, protection and development.

This influx of ODA has led to a clear improvement in overall child protection, care and education, especially the strengthening of the legal system and the promulgation of laws, policies and development models to promote children's rights. Vietnam calls upon UN member countries, international development agencies and NGOs to continue their support for the children of Vietnam, particularly in remote and extremely disadvantaged areas.

4.4. Limitations

Although social investment, especially in programmes that benefit children and adolescents, has been increasing in recent years, demand is still far from being met. The State budget covers only a proportion of universal primary education and healthcare needs, and budgets for emerging issues such as child injury prevention, child protection etc. remain very limited. Meanwhile, contributions from the private sector, civil society and communities have not yet been fully realised.

5. Evaluation of Commitments to Create a World Fit for Children

In recent years, the collection of child-related statistics on children has improved, evidenced by an increase in the number and reliability of child-related indicators. Statistics are compiled regularly to guide the implementation of Vietnam's CRC and World Fit for Children commitments, support the design and realisation of plans, programmes and policies for children, and predict emerging trends.

5.1. Formulation of Indicators

After ratifying the CRC, Vietnam formulated a set of 84 national indicators on children's rights. There are a number of other specific indicator groups, including a

group on monitoring changes in family structures and several groups on child protection. (These include 27 indicators on commercial sexual exploitation of children, 40 indicators on adolescents in conflict with the law, and 20 indicators on street children.) Indicators related to ethnic minority children and women and disabled children are also being collected in some localities.

In addition, through the network of Commissions for Population, Family and Children at all levels, 45 child-specific indicators are being collected. To complement basic indicators such as those for healthcare and education, Vietnam introduced two more indicators in its 2006 socio-economic development plan: the increase in the number of communes and wards fit for children and the rate of children in difficult circumstances receiving adequate care.

5.2. Establishment of Information Collection Networks for Children

Vietnam has established a unified system for gathering and reporting information from the local to the central level. Data for the assessment of efforts to reach the Vietnam Development Goals (VDGs) and those set out in the National Action Programme for Children are presented in the following sources:

- National surveys:

Cluster Survey (MICS), conducted every five years. MICS I, II and III were carried out by the General Statistics Office (GSO) and the Committee for Population, Family and Children (CPFC), in coordination with UNICEF Vietnam, to assess the goals set out by the National Action Programme for Children.

Vietnam Household Living Standard Survey (VHLSS), conducted by GSO. The survey was first conducted in 1993, and then again in 1998. Since 2002, it has been conducted biennially on even years to provide statistics related to living conditions and education and healthcare issues for households with children.

Other surveys, namely the Population Census, the Labour and Employment Survey, the Vietnam National Health Survey (VNHS), the Adolescent Reproductive Health Survey, the Survey on Adolescents and Youth (SAVY), etc. In addition, 2005 saw a national family survey carried out for the first time in Vietnam.

- Periodical Statistical Reporting.

Concerned ministries and agencies also have specific information collection systems. The CPFC, for instance, has a four-level reporting system (from the commune level to the central level) to collect information on free medical check-ups and treatment for children, street children, disabled children, and birth registration.

Criteria used to evaluate the communes and wards fit for children model. This includes four overarching criteria and 28 indicators in use since 2004.

(The CPFC is now working with relevant ministries and local agencies to revise the criteria to better conform to the realities in these communities – and therefore promote the more effective monitoring of children’s rights)

Efforts to monitor these indicators have relied heavily on the participation on children and communities themselves and hastened the implementation of the National Programme of Action for Children. The CPFC, assisted by Ombudsman Sweden, is now applying a new survey method based on children’s observations and thoughts; this will provide policy makers a closer link with children. The new approach was used in the survey: *Fulfilment of Children’s Rights in Accordance with Criteria for Communes and Wards Fit for Children*.

The set of 84 child rights indicators collected from other ministries and agencies that report to the CPFC periodically. The CPFC also issues a publication entitled *Vietnamese Child Indicators*, a compilation of child-related statistics from various sources. However some indicators among the 84 are no longer relevant and the list is in need of revision; a number of indicators should be renamed, some concepts should be changed, and more attention should be given to indicators related to child participation.

5.3. Establishment of a Database of Child Indicators

The CPFC has worked with relevant agencies to set up a database on population, family and children indicators known as CPFCInfo (based on the DEVinfo database run by the GSO with technical assistance from UNICEF.) Vietnam’s limited resources mean building a synchronised database linked to other national and international databases will be a major future challenge.

5.4. Inspection and Monitoring

In Vietnam, the supervision of the enforcement of child rights is conducted by relevant commissions of the National Assembly, People’s Councils at all levels, CPFC inspection teams at all levels, and inspection teams from other Ministries. Many forms of inspection, including inter-disciplinary, thematic and overall inspections, are carried

out to assess the realisation of child protection, care and education goals. Children themselves have participated in monitoring the enforcement of their rights through such channels as Children's Unions, Child Rights Clubs and Young Reporters Clubs. The implementation of efforts to meet World Fit for Children commitments is monitored with the same mechanisms.

The CPFC system has piloted several models on inspection of child rights, including model child-rights inspection, monitoring and evaluation systems trialled in certain communities by the CPFC in coordination with UNICEF. Over the last five years, the CPFC systems have received and processed more than 10,000 child-related complaints, 70 percent of which were related to child rights (children not registered at birth, children not having access to a basic education, children suffering abuse, etc.) As a result, local authorities have taken timely measures to stop these rights violations.

5.5. Limitations

Child-related statistics are not always compiled in accordance with pre-set criteria (child injury, child protection, etc.), and even newly-collected data suffers from a lack of systematic nationwide agreement. Along with limitations in mechanisms for gathering and sharing information on children, Vietnam has had difficulty formulating indicators to evaluate the effectiveness and degree of child and community participation.

6. Improving Partnership Mechanisms

In recent years, local authorities, ministries, agencies, mass organisations, NGOs, faith-based organisations, the private sector, families, parents and children's legal guardians have worked more actively to create child friendly environments.

Media agencies have also been making great strides in both the quality and quantity of programs for children. National broadcasters (Vietnam Television, the Voice of Vietnam Radio) and provincial, district and commune broadcasters, as well as national and local newspapers and magazines, have been devoting significant attention to child rights issues.

Lastly, donor governments, international organisations and NGOs have made tremendous contributions to Vietnam's efforts to build a world fit for children.

II. Achievements in Meeting World Fit for Children Goals

With this continued assistance, the process of realising Vietnam's World Fit for Children goals has moved forward significantly, ensuring healthier lives, better education, greater protection, enhanced recreation, and deepened participation for children.

1. Ensuring Healthy Lives for Children

1.1. Results

Since 2005, children under six have been entitled to free medical check-ups and treatment at public healthcare facilities – an impressive child healthcare result. The Government has invested millions of dollars in this program, and as of June 2006, 8.5 million children under six (96 percent of all children under six nationwide) were granted free medical check-up cards. Many children from poor families suffering from congenital heart disease, blood diseases, bone and joint malformations, etc. are now entitled to free treatment and advanced medical services¹³.

The Extended Programme of Immunisation (EPI) vaccinates children across the country against tuberculosis, whooping cough, diphtheria, measles and polio and Hepatitis B. (The Hepatitis B vaccine was introduced in 2002.) With a 90 percent vaccination rate, the programme has significantly reduced the rate of infectious diseases among children, and river blindness, xerophthalmia, Vitamin A deficiency, polio and neo-natal tetanus have all been eradicated or significantly decreased.¹⁴

Maternal care is an integrated part of the child health success story. Ante-natal care, assisted delivery and post-natal care, as well as tetanus vaccination for mothers, have led to healthier births and better breastfeeding and maternal care in the first years of life. Maternal mortality dropped from 100 (per 100,000 live births) in 2002 to 80 in 2005. During the same period, obstetrical complications dropped from 6084 to 3270 cases, and maternal mortality cases due to obstetrical complications dropped from 140 to 93¹⁵.

The rate of rural residents with access to clean water increased from 50 percent in 2003 to 62 percent in 2005. The rate of households with hygienic latrines was 61 percent in 2005 (90 percent in urban areas and 50 percent in rural areas).

¹³ Source: VCPFC, 2006

¹⁴ Statistics Yearbook 2005, MOH

¹⁵ MOH, 2006

In addition, the under-five malnutrition rate fell from 29 percent in 2002 to 24 percent in 2006, the under-one mortality rate fell from 26 per one thousand in 2002 to 17.8 per one thousand in 2005, and the under-five mortality rate fell from 32.9 per one thousand in 2002 to 27.5 per one thousand in 2005.

Injury prevention for children has become a top priority. Vietnam is taking measures to improve the legal framework underpinning child injury prevention, communication campaigns are being launched to raise awareness and change behaviours, and models promoting safe houses, communities and schools are being developed and upscaled. Hundreds of communes in Vietnam are implementing the safe-community model, and approximately 100 schools are implementing the safe-school model. In October 2006, the first five communes were recognised as meeting the international safe community standards.

Progress has also been made to prevent and address the spread of HIV/AIDS. Laws and policies on HIV/AIDS have been improved to lay a strong legal foundation for concerted efforts to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, and Vietnam has scaled up communication interventions at the community level. Counselling, testing, mother-to-child transmission prevention, and general treatment have been offered throughout the country, together with community-based prevention and care for children living with HIV/AIDS, including abandoned children. In March 2006, the CPFC, in coordination with UNICEF and several domestic and international organisations, successfully organised the first East Asia-Pacific Consultation on Children and HIV/AIDS. The Hanoi Call to Action for Children and HIV/AIDS received a full response from all member countries and was integrated into the 12th ASEAN Summit agenda. The Government of Vietnam appointed the CPFC as the lead agency to work with related ministries and agencies to form a National Action Plan on Children and HIV/AIDS.

1.2. Limitations

Despite achievements, child healthcare in Vietnam remains faced with many challenges. Infant morbidity and mortality rates have not been sufficiently reduced. The quality of emergency medical services for children during transfer from local clinics to district or provincial hospitals does not meet set standards. Despite a slight decrease, the malnutrition rate among children under-five is high in comparison with other countries. Thirty percent of households do not have access to clean water and are living in unhygienic conditions, increasing the risk of infectious diseases in children (especially diarrhoea). Emerging pandemics such as SARS and avian flu pose a severe potential risk to children's health. The incidence of child injuries is likely to rise due to increasing risks from drowning, traffic accidents and food poisoning. HIV/AIDS

prevalence among pregnant women continues to increase, accompanied by a higher risk of mother-to-child transmission.

The number of late-registered births, especially female births, continues to be high, and this causes underreporting of the infant mortality rate (one month after delivery). Vietnam needs to improve the system of birth registration and infant death reporting to provide adequate figures on child mortality and design more targeted interventions. Furthermore, it is important for Vietnam to realize children's right to birth registration for all babies after birth and report on deaths, if any.

Healthcare infrastructure to support mothers and children at the local level remains underdeveloped, and there is a big child-health gap between certain geographical areas – child mortality and malnutrition rates are much higher in rural mountainous areas than urban delta areas. A large proportion of children in rural mountainous areas do not have access to basic health services such as pregnancy checkups, delivery support, post-natal care, vaccinations and regular check-ups and treatment. A lack of investment has hampered the delivery of high-quality healthcare services to children.

2. Good Quality Education

2.1. Results

The education sector has experienced major positive change. A comprehensive national education system has already taken shape at all levels, including public, private and semi-public schools, and the quality of education is improving. Facilities are better, and major efforts have been made to create safe, child-friendly environments at preschools and primary schools. Educational facilities, including those for early-childhood education, have been built in every commune and ward across the country, and 87 percent of all classrooms are now concrete (as opposed to bamboo).¹⁶

The number of children receiving early-childhood education increased by 2.29 percent annually between 2001 and 2005 (During the period preschool enrolment also rose by 2.8 percent per year). In 2004, the rate of 6-10 year-olds attending primary school reached 97.5 percent, and the rate of 11-15 year-olds attending secondary school reached 85 percent. (By 2005, universal lower-secondary education had been made available in 31 provinces and cities.¹⁷) Repetition and drop-out rates are also

¹⁶ MOET, 2006

¹⁷ MOET, 2006

decreasing; for the 2005-2006 school year, the primary completion rate was 95.97 percent (repetition rate 0.89 and drop-out rate 3.32) and the secondary completion rate was 94.87 percent (repetition rate 0.89 and drop-out rate 4.24). The number of Vietnamese students winning prizes in international competitions is also rising.

The Government is implementing various incentive programmes to promote education for ethnic minority children (18 percent of primary school students and 14 percent of secondary school students are ethnic minorities¹⁸). Textbooks are now compiled not only in Vietnamese but also in ethnic minority languages such as Khmer, Chinese, Ede, Cham, Jarai, Bana and H'Mong. Ethnic minority students are provided with more Vietnamese lessons to help them better understand the lessons. At present, there are primary schools in almost every ethnic minority commune and hamlet, including boarding primary schools for ethnic minority children in all mountainous districts.

Alternative education, provided through mobile classes, integrated classes, *Classrooms of Love* (free lessons for poor children) and other models, is being offered to children of school age unable to attend school, as well as children at risk of dropping out, disabled children, street children, child labourers, and children of fishermen.

Education for children with disabilities has been incorporated into the regular preschool, primary and secondary education programmes. A steering committee on education for disabled children has been set up at both the district and province level, and 70,000 children with disabilities enrolled in integrated education programmes during the 2002-2003 school year, rising to 230,000 for the 2004-2005 school year. Around 7000 other children with disabilities are enrolled at 98 separate institutions.

Vietnam has also made progress promoting adult literacy. The percentage of literate 15-35 year-olds rose from 94 percent in 2002 to 97 percent in 2006. Community learning centres have helped raise adult literacy, thus improving adults' knowledge on childcare issues. The number of community learning centres increased dramatically from 15 in 1999 to 7384 in 2006; they now exist in 67.5 percent of communes, wards and townships nationwide.

The quality of education has also been given priority, with primary and secondary curriculum reforms and the establishment of national learning benchmarks. By September 2006, over 9 percent of preschools, 25 percent of primary schools and 7.25 percent of lower secondary schools had met these national benchmarks.

¹⁸ SEDP 2006-2010, Assessment of the economic and social development situation in 2001-2005.

Efforts have also been made to improve the morale and competence of teachers. Information and communication technology has been better employed to assist teacher presentations; in one example, Edmark Software, which enables teachers to organise more interesting activities for children, has been put to use in kindergartens classrooms.

2.2. Limitations

Despite significant progress, the overall efficacy of the education system remains low, reflected in students' poor capacities for certain practical applications. Moreover, a large gap persists between urban and remote, areas, with ethnic minority children facing imposing language barriers. Enrolment and completion rates for children in difficult circumstances (disabled children, ethnic minority children, etc.) are still much lower than rates for the general population, and a teacher shortage is hampering efforts to achieve universal lower-secondary education by 2010.

3. Protection of Children

Child protection, both needs and rights based, is built on two pillars: creating protective environments for children and improving services (including social and rehabilitation services) for children in difficult circumstances.

3.1. Results

In recent years, the Government has made major efforts to strengthen child protection systems. Now being finalised, the National Strategy on the Protection of Children and Adolescents 2007-2015 aims to build and enhance child protection systems at all levels, focussing on children at-risk of abuse, exploitation and assault.

Child protection has also been incorporated into the upcoming socio-economic development plan, which contains the specific objective: *"90 percent of children in difficult circumstances cared for and supported by 2010."* Now being finalised, new indicators for child protection will contribute to better monitoring, management and future orientation. Current inspection and monitoring of child protection activities has also been considerably strengthened; CPFC inspection units set up in provinces and districts have played an important role in supervising the enforcement of national and international child protection laws and policies.

Special attention has also been given to Information, Education and Communication (IEC) activities to raise awareness and build capacity among those working with children, their families, communities and children themselves. In 2004, the curriculum

for a university-level social worker training program was officially approved, and 11 colleges and universities have already opened classes.¹⁹ As a result, a network of social workers, including those trained to work specifically with children, is being developed.

A child-friendly justice system based on the rights of the child is taking shape. The competence of judicial staff working with children has improved, and officials in courts and public security agencies have been educated on child-friendly techniques for use in investigations and trials. (A child-friendly court model has also been applied in pilot areas.)

Several programmes to protect children from abuse, exploitation and assault are being designed and implemented. The new system of alternative care for children in difficult circumstances is shifting the burden of care from institutions to families and communities. Vietnam has also increased bilateral and multilateral cooperation, working with other countries to stop child trafficking by tracing and arresting criminals, tightening supervision, and supporting victims to rejoin society through rehabilitation, vocational training and job creation programmes.

Progress has been made to enhance IEC and counselling services for children, particularly children in difficult circumstances. In 2004, a free hotline (*Child Helpline*, phone number 18001567) was put into operation to provide support and counselling on child protection issues. In 2004, as part of larger efforts to fight child abuse, Vietnam also actively participated in the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children.

As a result of these efforts, the number of children in especially difficult circumstances receiving social assistance keeps rising. Every year, about 2400 children in difficult circumstances are being placed in alternative, community-based care (including adoption, individual foster care, family foster care, etc.²⁰). Several community-based child-protection models have been piloted and duplicated, and concerned authorities have made numerous timely interventions to rescue children from abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and hazardous work conditions.

In addition, many children in conflict with the law have been supported to reintegrate back into their communities, around 55 percent of orphans across the country have been placed in community or Government care, around 25 percent of disabled children (including 75 percent of severely disabled children) have been placed in community-

¹⁹ MOET, 2006

²⁰ MOLISA, 2006

based care or Government social protection centres, and 100 percent of in-school orphans, disabled children and highly poor children have been exempted from school fees.²¹

Many other programmes for children have been effectively implemented, including surgery programmes for children with congenital vision or heart problems, and assistance for child victims of Agent Orange. The Government programme entitled “*Bringing Street Children Back to their Families and Communities*” has cared for and traced the homes of 66 percent of known street children. Lastly, the right to be registered at birth is being better exercised, with 87 percent of newborns registered at birth in 2002 and 95 percent in 2005.²²

3.2. Limitations

Despite positive developments, the number of children in difficult circumstances, or at risk of being in difficult circumstances remains high. This includes children in conflict with the law, trafficked and abused children, drug-addicted children, children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, homeless orphans, street children and child labourers. Awareness among parents and local leaders on child protection issues remains inadequate, and the implementation of education and care measures is not as effective as is required.

In addition, there remain many overlapping sanctions, and lack of specific measures to deal with violations, as well as critical gaps between sanctions, relating to child protection. The overall child protection system is not yet comprehensive and systematic, and there are not enough effective inter-sectoral coordination mechanisms. Other problems include insufficient participation of civil society and the private sector, a shortage of competent, professional staff working with children (existing staff are also not provided with sufficient financial incentives), irregular inspection and monitoring of the implementation of child-protection laws and policies, an incomprehensive and unsynchronised database and statistics management system for child protection indicators, little adequate research on emerging issues in children protection, and a relatively low State budget allocated to children protection.

4. Entertainment for Children

²¹ SEDP 2006-2010

²² CPFC, 2006

4.1. Results

In order to create a safe and healthy environment for children, Viet Nam has paid increasing attention to the spiritual life and recreation components of child-friendly environments. In 2005, 38 percent of communes and wards nationwide had playgrounds, and the number of children's entertainment centres at the district level increased from 261 in 2001 to 534 in 2005. Over 80 percent of districts now have proper entertainment and recreational facilities for children.²³ Also, more artistic programmes are being designed for children (film festivals, school concerts, etc.), especially poor, ethnic minority children in remote and mountainous areas.

Cultural publications for children are being issued in larger quantities and covering a more diverse range of topics. The total number of all publications increased by 1.66 times between 2001 and 2005, during which time the proportion of publications for children increased from 48.1 percent to 63.2 percent. All provincial libraries and 30 percent of district libraries now have a reading room for children. (The Government invests 15 percent of the total National Target Programme on Culture and Spiritual Life annual budget in children's books²⁴). In addition, a network of children's cultural houses has been built up, and several recreation and entertainment activities have been organised for children from different groups (talent classes, hobby clubs, sports competitions, etc.)

The mass media has devoted significant attention to the revised Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children, and many newspapers have allocated specific columns on good examples of people and work. To mark International Children's Day (June 1st) and the mid-autumn festival (August 15th, lunar calendar), in-depth articles on protection, care and education issues have appeared alongside regular coverage of children's entertainment and recreation activities in the media. Children's issues are regularly covered by several newspapers and magazines, including *Family & Society*, *Family & Children*, *Family Planning*, *Young Vanguard*s, *Children Today*, *Youth Today*, *Tien Phong*, and *Culture & Life*.

Television programmes for children are available on all five channels of the Vietnam Television (VTV) network, as well as certain local networks of cities and provinces. These programmes, which have attracted major recent investment, feature appropriate subject matter and attract large child audiences of different age groups.

²³ MCI, 2006

²⁴ MCT, 2006

Vietnamese traditional culture also places children in very high regard. The country's two largest lunar festivals, *Tet Nguyen Dan* (the beginning of the Lunar Year) and *Tet Trung Thu* (mid-Autumn festival), include many customs and games especially for children. For the past 12 years, Vietnam has also implemented a special "action month for children", during the summer break from 15 May to 30 June.

4.2. Limitations

Cultural and entertainment opportunities exist mainly for children in affluent cities and provinces. Children in poor, remote areas have yet to enjoy many activities their urban cousins do. Overall, recreation and entertainment activities for children remain insufficient and have yet to meet societal demands. In addition, entertainment management mechanisms do not yet adequately protect children's developing minds from dangerous and corrupting influences, and the rise of information technology and the internet has led to a proliferation of online games and websites that can affect healthy development.

5. Increasing Participation of Children

5.1. Results

The last five years have seen children and adolescents better express their views and participate in activities in their homes, schools and communities, as well as in international forums through sponsored organisations such as the *Bamboo Sprout Info Team*, *the Young Journalists Club*, *the Life Skills Training Club*, etc.

There are currently around 17,000 Bamboo Sprout Advocacy Teams²⁵, each enabling children to take part in art performances and communication campaigns on child rights, HIV/AIDS prevention, drug use in schools, and a host of other topics through songs, dances, plays, etc.

Several gifted lower secondary and secondary school students have been invited to participate in 40 Young Reporters Clubs in 20 provinces and cities.²⁶ Along with providing special skills and equipment, these clubs increase members' awareness of the rights of the child (including field trips and exercises on the right of expression through

²⁵ Source: Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, 2006

²⁶ Source: Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, 2006

the mass media) and have broadcast hundreds of radio programmes and over one-thousand books and bulletins (Desires of Children, Voices of children, etc.) Of special note, in 2003 the *Green Bee Young Reporters Club* was founded for dozens of disadvantaged children in Hanoi (street children, child victims of Agent Orange, orphaned children, etc). Many television programmes made by the children have been broadcast on VTV. At the same time, members of local children's clubs, after coming up with a range of initiatives themselves, have been directly involved in campaigns to help the underprivileged children. These children have been supported to enhance their writing, reporting and club management skills, and many of their pieces have been used by Vietnam Radio and printed in popular newspapers and magazines.

Children have also been invited to join healthy living clubs in ten cities and provinces. Over 100 secondary schools have implemented healthy living and lifeskill education programmes, through which youth (including out-of-school youth) can improve their knowledge and skills on health issues such as HIV/AIDS prevention.

Relevant Government agencies have worked closely with international organisations to hold a series of child forums at national and provincial levels. These include forums such as "Youth Voices on Social Affairs" (400 in and out-of-school children), "August Meeting" (100 children from various regions), "Skills for Healthy Living" (1000 out-of-school children), and other national and regional forums to inform (1) the draft report on progress towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child and (2) the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education of Children.

Vietnamese children have also participated in international forums, including "Children's voices and HIV/AIDS" (on the occasion of the East Asia Pacific Consultation on Children and HIV/AIDS in Hanoi), "Vietnam, China and the Prevention of Trafficking in Children", and the "Asean Children's Forum" (within the framework of the 12th ASEAN Summit).

Children had opportunities to raise their voices through dialogues with high-level officials on various key issues including the fundamental rights of children; life, family and parents; teachers and friends; and problems associated with HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, child trafficking and violence against children. In addition, some Vietnamese children were selected as official members to join the Government's delegations in international conferences or in dialogue with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Many recent community-based child protection, care and education models have encouraged meaningful child participation from planning through implementation and

monitoring.²⁷ Models to enhance child participation are spreading nationwide, and more children's voices are gradually heard – and responded to. Children have become more confident, with more developed senses of responsibility and cooperation.

5.2. Limitations

Many parents and Government leaders at different levels do not actively facilitate, or are not fully aware of the need for, greater child participation. Their knowledge and skills regarding child participation remain limited, resulting in a lack of proper attention given to children's opinions and desires.

III. Lessons Learned

Vietnam's recent achievements can be attributed to several factors, including stronger political commitment and the strengthened CPFC system (from the central to the local level), as well as greater public contributions, State investment, and international cooperation for child rights and child protection, education and care initiatives.

1. Of particular importance has been Vietnam's political commitment to build the necessary legal frameworks and policy management mechanisms for the benefit of all children.

The Government of Vietnam has shown its clear commitment to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Millennium Development Goals and the World fit for Children goals, as well as Vietnam's own Law on the Protection, Care and Education of children, along with other relevant laws and policies linked to child rights.

Regular guidance provided by Government leaders from the central to the local level have pushed the incorporation of child development issues into policy planning, strategy formulation and socio-economic development plans. As a result, children are enjoying safer and healthier lives underlined by more comprehensive physical, intellectual, spiritual and ethical development. Put another way, children are increasingly becoming the top priority in matters of healthcare, education, protection and entertainment.

2. Further enhancement of the CPFC system at all levels, increased coordination between relevant agencies working for children and provide capacity development training for all those working with children.

²⁷ Source: Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, 2006

Several results have been achieved in this area. A network of professional CPFC staff members has been consolidated from the central to the local level, including a much higher quality of collaborators in hamlets and villages. Awareness and capacity among staff of all sectors and agencies working with children has been enhanced, contributing to better State management of child protection, care and education initiatives. Lastly, inter-sectoral coordination has been intensified, ensuring more efficient cooperation for children.

3. Increased investment in, and socialisation of, child protection, care and education initiatives for children.

Meeting child rights goals demands the Government play a key role in the socialisation of child protection, care and education issues. Therefore, Vietnam is increasingly eliciting the participation of individuals, families, schools, communities and mass organisations to protect, care and educate children. This includes organisation such as the Fatherland Front, the Women's Union, the Youth Union, and the Farmers' Association, as well as several other mass organisations, professional organisations, religious organisations, international organisations, and mass media.

Many communities have translated the contents of well being, happy family, and child protection, care and education goals into concrete regulations in their home villages and hamlets, respecting traditional values, promoting group ethics, preventing social disintegration and encouraging learning.

Social funds have been established and effectively implemented in accordance with grassroots democracy statutes. These include funds such as The Vietnam Employment Fund, the Fund for Poverty Reduction, the Missing Affection Fund, the Golden Hearts Fund, the Vietnam Education Fund, the Fund for Impoverished Students, the Young Talents Fund, and the Funds for Vietnamese Children. In addition, many provinces and cities have implemented their own mobilisation initiatives to support children's programmes and projects.

Vietnamese families have an increasingly important role to play in building a world fit for children, demanding a fuller awareness of child rights and greater investment in healthcare, education, entertainment and protection for their children. To build this awareness, Vietnam has worked hard to facilitate the participation of children and teenagers in planning, implementing and monitoring of child protection, care and

education initiatives. Taken together, these efforts have contributed greatly to the diversification and mobilisation of funding sources to ensure the rights of children.

4. Promotion of international cooperation for child protection, care and education.

To realise its World Fit for Children commitments, Vietnam has relied not only on internal drive but also bilateral, multilateral and regional cooperation. Recent international cooperation has helped Vietnam exchange experiences in the development of key legal frameworks, improving Vietnam's global perception and domestic capacity. Moreover, international cooperation contributes directly to poverty eradication, community development, community and child participation, family well-being, and ultimately, child protection, care and education. Through its various cooperation agencies, the Government of Vietnam has successfully coordinated international assistance from several sources, with top priority given to disadvantaged groups and poor and remote areas.

IV. Looking Ahead

1. Challenges

The implementation of the *Doi Moi* (renovation) reforms and the accompanying economic growth and poverty reduction have gradually improved the social and material well-being of the Vietnamese people, especially children. Yet Vietnam remains a poor country, with low per-capita income and large gaps between regions. Without further assistance, poor households will not be able to break from poverty cycles that have existed for generations. Children of poor families have little opportunities to develop equally in a "World Fit for Children."

Vietnam's shift to a socialist-oriented market economy, and the trade liberalisation and international integration that has come with it, has brought about many favourable conditions for Vietnamese children. But it may have also contributed to an increase in the number children in difficult circumstances, including street children, drug-addicted children, sexually abused children, trafficked children, children in conflict with the law, and children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS etc. The child-rights based approaches needed to combat these problems have not yet become adequately entrenched.

Vietnam is enacting several reforms in a number of areas, led by healthcare, education and public administration. These reforms have led to new momentum for additional

gains. However, children and women's basic needs should be more closely taken into account in policy-making, planning, and programme design, not only to address existing issues but also to prepare for emerging issues that are not yet fully known. Overall, the welfare system for children, especially needy children in poor areas, needs much more support.

Vietnamese families are encountering several new challenges due in part to certain negative aspects of the market economy. The increasing incidence of divorce, separation, co-habitation and pre-marital sex, it can be argued, is impacting negatively on young people's physical and mental health, especially adolescents.

Compounding the problem, the majority of those working in the area of child protection and care, especially at grassroots level, and Government officials working with children have not yet acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with sensitive issues effectively. Additionally, indicators and database systems for child issues, especially child protection issues, remain underdeveloped. Taken together, these represent formidable obstacles to the fulfilment of objectives set out in the National Action Plan for Children 2001-2010 and the World Fit for Children Document.

2. Major Tasks for the Upcoming Period

Vietnam will continue to work to ensure sustainable economic growth is combined with social progress and justice, gaps between regions and population groups are narrowed, and development benefits all, especially children. As such, the Government will continue to take practical measures to ensure children's rights are actively fulfilled and Vietnam becomes a country fit for children. These measures include:

- VI. Increasing guidance by authorities at all levels for the protection, care and education of children, as well as increasing the relevant participation of social and political organisations, professional organisations, schools and families.
- VII. Strictly implementing current child-related laws and policies and continuing to develop the legal system to conform to international law and meet new demands. Vietnam will forge ahead with the development of a child-and-adolescent-friendly justice system and continue to incorporate child issues into socio-economic development plans at all levels, including the Strategy on the Protection of Children and Adolescents 2007-2015, the Strategy on Early-childhood Development 2007-2010 (with a vision to 2020), the National Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS and Children, and others. In addition, Vietnam will

continue to implement its 10 National Target Programmes for the 2006 -2010 period: Water Supply and Sanitation (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development), Prevention and Mitigation of Social Diseases, Dangerous Epidemics and HIV/AIDS (Ministry of Health), Food Safety and Hygiene (Ministry of Health), Employment (Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs), Population and Family Planning (CPFC), Cultural Development (Ministry of Information and Culture), Education and Training (Ministry of Education and Training), and Crime and Drug Prevention (Ministry of Public Security).

- VIII. Reviewing pilot implementation of the Communes and Wards Fit for Children initiative by conducting surveys and assessments according to the set criteria, sharing lessons-learned, expanding the initiative nationwide by integrating criteria on the percentage of communes and wards fit for children into the yearly National Socio Economic Plan. Vietnam's goal is to reach a target of 70 percent of communes and wards fit for children by 2010.
- IX. Increasing budget allocations for activities concerned with the protection, care and education of children, including allocations from the State budget and allocations from foreign and domestic organisations and individuals. To ensure children receive due financial attention, apart from larger and better-utilised State budgets, Vietnam will adopt policies to elicit more funds from the public. In addition, Vietnam will encourage greater participation of the private sector and continue to seek assistance from international donors. All efforts will be made to use available resources effectively to help build, as rapidly as possible, a World Fit for Children.
- X. Consolidating the CPFC system at all levels, including enhanced training for all staff and volunteers working with children. This also includes the formation of better support policies for those in charge of CPFC activities at the local level.
- XI. Strengthening database, information collection, information sharing, investigation, research and monitoring systems to better inform programmes and projects for children so as to meet the demand of child protection, care and education.

In this next period, Vietnam will focus on the following tasks:

1. Ensuring a healthy life for all children: The improvement of child healthcare at local health stations, especially for paediatric emergencies and medical referrals, will be

prioritised. Vietnam will continue to improve basic healthcare services, including prenatal care, postnatal care, breast-feeding, micronutrient supplementation, safe water provision, hygiene and sanitation, childhood injury prevention, HIV prevention (particularly mother-to-child transmission), etc. Geographic priority will be given to poor rural areas, especially mountainous, ethnic minority areas.

2. Providing high-quality education: Along with expanding the system of preschools, primary schools, and secondary schools and continuing to work towards universal education goals, Vietnam will seek to improve the quality of education by renewing curricula and promoting student-centered learning. Vietnam will work to ensure all working teachers are qualified and of strong moral character to facilitate these changes. Lastly, Vietnam will strengthen dissemination and speed up the socialisation of education, as well as enact stronger education promotion policies for remote and ethnic minority areas.

3. Child Protection: Along with IEC activities to raise public awareness child protection and rights violation issues, Vietnam will accelerate the development of a comprehensive legal and policy framework for the protection of children, including the renewing of child protection service delivery. In addition, Vietnam will continue efforts to make social work a recognised profession and enact concrete policies to encourage the involvement of all society in protecting children.

4. Recreational activities: Vietnam will prioritise the development of recreation centres for children in mountainous, remote and disadvantaged areas. Vietnam hopes that, by 2010, all wards and communes have standardised recreation and entertainment facilities for children. In addition, Vietnam will continue to subsidise sports and cultural publications for children and maintain and improve the quality of healthy cultural performances dedicated to, and preformed by, children.

5. Increase the participation of children: Vietnam is developing plans to encourage greater social participation among children and adolescents, focussing on communication activities to raise awareness on the issue. Policy planners will work carefully to ensure the involvement of children in policy design, listening to the voices of children and responding actively.

To conclude, the Government of Vietnam would like to express its sincere wish to continue cooperating effectively with other governments, international organisations and NGOs to protect Vietnamese children and become an integral part of a world fit for children.

V. ANNEX

Annex 1. Chart on Vietnam's fulfilment of the objectives set out in the Document entitled "A World Fit for Children" in comparison with the Millennium Development Goals

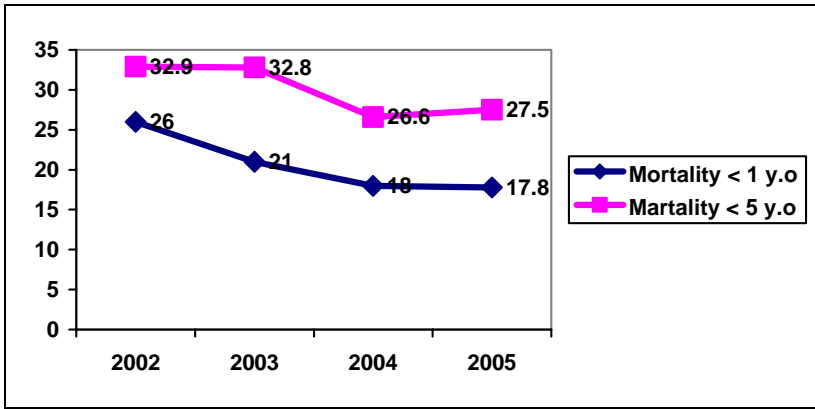
Millennium Development Goals	Vietnam's National Development Goals (based on MDGs)	Vietnam's indicators
1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Reduce the number of poor households	60% (1990) 39% (2002) 22% (2005)

Reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015	From 2001 to 2010 reduce 40% of poverty according to the international standard	
2. Achieve universal primary education Ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015	Primary education universalisation and improve education quality Increase the percentage of primary enrolment to 97% in 2005 and 99% in 2010 Increase the high-school enrolment to 80% in 2005 and 90% in 2010	86% (1990) 92% (2001) 100% (2005) 30% (1993) 67% (2001) 79.95% (2005)
3. Promote gender equality and women empowerment Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and at all levels by 2015	Ensure gender equality and foster women's rights Eliminate gender disparity in primary education Eliminate gender disparity in secondary education (the girl-boy ratio of 1998 was 93%)	94.8% (2001) 95.4% (2006) 96.9% (2006)
4. Reduce child mortality Reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five by 2015	Reduce child mortality Reduce the under-five child mortality rate to 36/1000 by 2005 and 32/1000 by 2010	58 ^o / _{oo} (1990) 38 ^o / _{oo} (2002) 27.5 ^o / _{oo} (2005)
5. Improve maternal health Reduce by three quarters the maternal	Improve maternal health Reduce maternal mortality ratio to 80/100,000 in 2005 and 70/100,000 by 2010, especially in	95 ^o / _{oooo} (2001) 85 ^o / _{oooo} (2003)

mortality ratio by 2015	needy areas	80 (2005) °/ 0000
6. Combat HIV/AIDS Halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS	Control the spread of HIV/AIDS Control and keep HIV/AIDS incidence at 0,3% by 2010 and not increase after 2010; reduce the impacts of HIV/AIDS on socio-economic development. Reduce pace of spread by 2005 and halve the increase rate by 2010	1 (1990) 70.000 (2003) 104.111 (2005)
7. Ensure environmental sustainability Reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water	Ensure environmental sustainability Ensure 60% of the population with access to safe drinking water by 2005 and 85% by 2010, and 80% of urban population by 2005	48% (1990) 56% (2002) 62% in rural areas (2005)

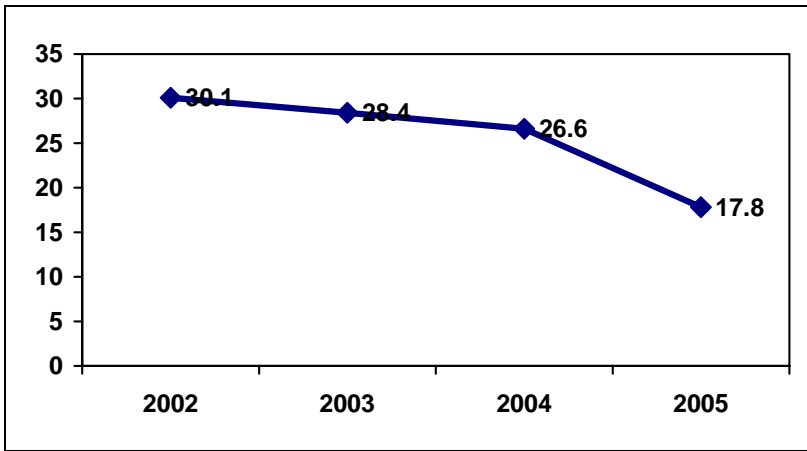
Health, Education and Entertainment Concrete Achievements

Chart 1. Under-five and under-one mortality rate in 2002-2005



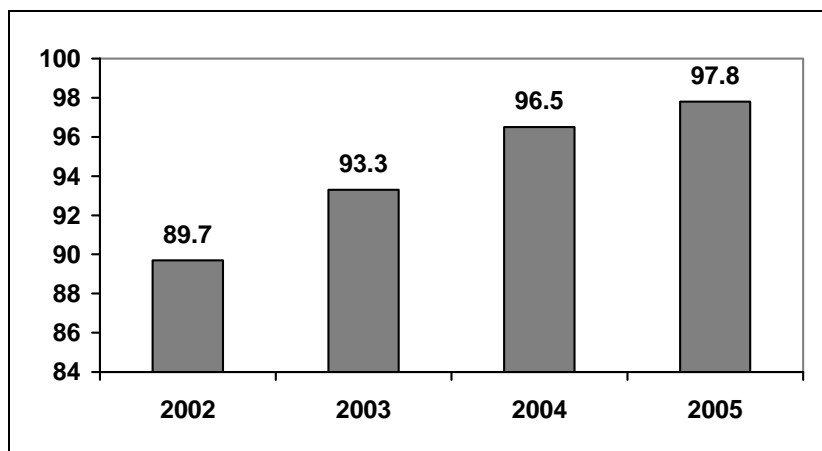
(Source: Statistics Yearbook 2005, Ministry of Health)

Chart 2. Underweight rate in comparison to age of under-five in 2002-2005



(Source: Institute of Nutrition, 2005)

Chart 3. Percentage of under-one children fully vaccinated in 2002-2005



(Source: Statistics Yearbook, 2005 – Ministry of Health)

Table 4: Implementation Results of child health and nutrition targets

Targets	Unit	2001	2003	2005
1. Reduce under-one mortality rate	‰	30.0	21.0	17.8
Reduce under-five mortality rate	‰	42.0	32.8	27.5
2. Reduce maternal mortality rate	‰	95.0	85.0	80.0
3. Reduce under-five malnutrition rate	%	31.9	28.4	25.2
4. Percentage of new-born babies under 2500g	%	7.1	6.5	5.1
5. Percentage of tetanus vaccinated pregnant women	%	89.2	91.0	90.3

Source: Ministry of Health, 2006

Table 5: Percentage of under-one children vaccinated

Types of Vaccines	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
T.B	97.6	96.7	96.7	97.5	95.6	98.2
Poliomyelitic	96.0	96.0	91.6	95.8	96.3	97.8
Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus	96.0	96.2	74.8	100	96.2	97.9
Measles	96.0	97.6	95.7	93.2	97.1	98.6

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All types of vaccines	96.0	97.0	89.7	96.7	96.5	97.8
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Source: Ministry of Health, 2006

Table 6: Implementation of Clean Water and Environmental Sanitation Targets

Targets	Unit	2002	2003	2004	2005
Rural residents using clean water	%	48.0	54.0		62.0
Urban residents using clean water	%				
Rural households using hygienic latrine	%	43.2	48.8	50.0	50.0
Urban households using hygienic latrine	%	49.3	53.4	70.0	90.0

Source: Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, 2006

Table 7: Percentage of right-aged enrolment

School Year	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Secondary School	69.19	74.40	78.32	78.89	79.95
Primary School	92.65	96.37	96.07	94.17	97.5

Source: Ministry of Education, 2006

Table 8: Publications for children (excluded text books)

Explanation	Year 2001	Year 2002	Year 2003	Year 2004	Year 2005
Number of copies	1,974	2,751	3,970	3,713	3,278
Number of printed copies (Unit: Million)	21.956	28.384	33.388	24.614	22.716
% share of the total publications	48.1%	58.9%	54.2%	51.6%	63.2%

Source: Ministry of Culture and Information, 2006

Annex 2: Criteria for communes and wards fit for children

(Issued in conjunction with Decision N° 03/2004/QĐ-DSGDTE dated 1st June 2004 by the Minister - Chairman of Vietnam Committee for Population, Family and Children)

I. Criteria 1: A society fit for children

1. Communist Party units and authorities commit to child protection, care and education.
2. Agencies, sectors and organisations partake actively in child protection, care and education
3. Health institutions meet national standards and provide effective primary healthcare
4. Education institutions meet national standards and deliver quality education
5. At least one standardized recreation site is available, with cultural, artistic, physical and sport activities being organized.
6. Road systems are convenient and safe.
7. Village roads, alleys, streets and public places are clean.

II. Criteria 2: A family environment conducive to child comprehensive development

8. Many households meet criteria for cultured families;
9. Family members have child protection, care and education knowledge and skills;
10. Families commit to children safety;
11. Many households have access to clean water
12. Many households have hygienic latrines
13. Many families do social charity works.

III. Criteria 3: Every child enjoy basic rights

14. Child's birth registration is done on time;
15. Number of newborn babies weighed under 2,500gr declines by 0.3 - 0.5% every year;
16. Number of malnourished children under five declines by 0.7 - 1.5% every year;
17. Children under 6 have access to free diagnosis and treatment at public health institutions;

18. All 5-year-old children have access to nursery schools;
19. Children aged 6-10 have access to primary schools;
20. A high percentage of children aged 11-14 have access to education institutions;
21. School children have proper study corner at home;
22. Children have access to proper forms of recreation, cultural, artistic, physical training and sport activities;
23. Children have access to information, the right to express their views and partake in suitable social activities;

IV. Criteria 4: Protection and care to children in special circumstances

24. Children with deformities and disabilities; children affected by toxic chemicals, drug-addicted children, children with HIV/AIDS are given proper assistance
25. Uncared orphan children, abandoned children, children doing hard work or working under hazardous conditions and exposed to toxics; and children working away from home are protected, cared, educated, and assisted for community and family integration.
26. Street children are assisted in their family and community re-integration
27. Children whose lives, bodies, honour and dignity are offended are protected, cared, educated and assisted to recover;
28. All children entitled to social policies enjoy corresponding treatment.

Annex 3. List of related laws and policies

1. Amended and supplemented Labour Code in 2002
2. Code of Criminal in 2003
3. Law on Child Protection, Care and Education in 2004
4. Civil Code in 2005
5. Law on Education in 2005
6. Law on military services in 2005
7. Amended and supplemented Law on military services in 2005
8. Law on National Defence in 2005
9. Law on Youth in 2005

10. Law on Child protection, care and education 2005
11. Ordinance on Self-defence Para-militia in 2004
12. Decree N^o 36/2005/N§-CP dated 17 March 2005 by the Government providing detail guidance some provisions of the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education.
13. Decree N^o 178/2005/NĐ-CP dated 15 October 2004 providing detailed guidance in implementing some provisions of the Ordinance on Prostitution Prevention and Combat
14. Decree N^o 36/2006/N§-CP dated 3 April 2006 of the Government on organization and operation of inspection of Population, family and children
15. Decree N^o 53/2006/N§-CP dated 25 May 2006 by the Government on policies for promoting non-state service providers.
16. Decree N^o 75/2006/NĐ-CP dated 2 August 2006 by the Government on detailed provisions and guidance on the implementation of some provisions of the Education Law
17. Decree N^o 76/2006/N§-CP dated 2 August 2006 of the Government regulating taking penalty for administrative violation in justice aspect
18. Decree N^o 122/2006/N§-CP dated 26 October 2006 of the Government providing detailed guidance in adopting some of provision of the amended and supplemented Law on military services in 2005 on policy for non-commissioned officers, soldiers on service.
19. Decree N^o 114/2006/N§-CP dated 3 October 2006 of the Government regulating taking penalty for administrative violation in population, family and children aspect
20. Decree N^o 139/2006/N§-CP dated 20 November 2006 of the Government providing detailed guidance in implementing some provisions of Law on Education, Labour Code on vocational training;
21. Decision N^o 161/2002/QĐ-TTg dated 15 November 2002 by the Government Prime Minister on some policies on the development of early childhood education;
22. Decision N^o 16/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 5 February by the Government Prime Minister on assistance to 2 people - plus households without self-care ability as a consequence of chemical toxics used by the U.S. in the war in Vietnam
23. Decision 19/2005/QĐ-TTg by the Government Prime Minister in 2005 approving the Programme of Prevention and Solution to problems of street children, sexually abused children and children working in hazardous environment 2004 - 2010

24. Decision N⁰ 38/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 17 March 2004 by the Government Prime Minister on financing policy towards families caring for orphaned and abandoned children.

25. Decision N⁰ 120/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 5 July 2004 by the Government Prime Minister on some schemes for the resistance fighters and their offspring who are affected by chemical toxics used by the U.S. in the war in Vietnam

26. Decision N⁰ 130/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 14 July 2004 by the Government Prime Minister approving the 2004-2010 National Plan of Action Combating Crimes of Trafficking in Children and Women

27. Decision N⁰ 187/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 29 October 2004 by the Government Prime Minister on the establishment of the Steering Committee of the 2004-2010 National Plan of Action Combating Crimes of Trafficking in Children and Women.

Plan 1: Educating the community on the combat against crimes of trafficking in children and women

Plan 2: Combating against crimes of trafficking in children and women

Plan 3: Receiving and assisting the repatriating children and women victims

Plan 4: Completing the legal system on combating crimes of trafficking in children and women

28. Decision N⁰ 62/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 24 March 2005 on supportive policies on universalisation of secondary schools

29. Decision N⁰ 65/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 25 March 2005 by the Government Prime Minister approving the 2005 - 2010 plan on care for orphaned children, abandoned children, children with serious disabilities, children-victims of chemical toxics and children living with HIV;

30. Decision N⁰ 106/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 16 May 2005 approving the Strategy on building of Vietnamese families in the 2005-2010 period

31. Decision 312/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 30 November 2005 by the Government Prime Minister approving the plans under the 2004-2010 National Plan of Action Combating Crimes of Trafficking in Children and Women;

Plan 1: Advocating in community for combating crimes of trafficking in Children and women;

Plan 2: Combating crimes of trafficking in Children and women;

Plan 3: Receiving and supporting women, children victims of trafficking

Plan 4: Developing and finalizing legal system related to combating crimes of trafficking in Children and women;

32. Decision N⁰ 313/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 2 December 2005 on some schemes for people living with HIV/AIDS and the officials and physician staff in state-funded protection centres for people living with HIV/AIDS.

33. Decision N⁰ 149/2006/QĐ-TTg dated 23 June 2006 by the Government Prime Minister approving the plan of the “development of early childhood education in 2006-2015”

34. Decision N⁰ 239/2006/QĐ-TTg dated 24 October 2006 by the Government Prime Minister approving the 2006 - 2010 plan supporting disabled people;

35. Directive N⁰ 03/2005/CT-TTg dated 25 February 2005 by the Government Prime Minister on strengthening State management on foreign-related marital relations;

36. Decision N⁰ 35/2004/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated 11 October 2004 by Minister of Education and Training on issuing Tertiary education frame curriculum for social working at tertiary and higher education

37. Regulations on National Standard for Primary Schools (Decision N⁰ 32/2005/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated 24 October 2005); Regulations on National Standard for Nursery Schools in 2002-2005 (Decision N⁰ 45/2001/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated 26 December 2001); some revised and supplemented provisions in regulations for national standards for nursery schools (Decision N⁰ 25/2005/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated 22 August 2005);

38. Regulations on Re-integration Education for People with deformities and disabilities (Decision N⁰ 23/2006/QĐ-BGD&ĐT dated 22 May 2006)

39. Circular N⁰ 06/2004/TT-BLĐTBXH dated 25 March 2004 of the Ministry of Labour, War Invalid and Social Affairs as a follow-up of the Decision N⁰ 16/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 5 February by the Government Prime Minister on assistance to 2 people - plus households without self-care ability as a consequence of toxic chemicals used by the U.S. in the Vietnam war.

40. Inter-disciplinary Circular N⁰ 10/2004/TTLT- BLĐTBXH -BTC dated 28 June 2004 by the Ministry of Labour, War Invalid and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Finance instructing the implementation of the Decision N⁰ 38/2004/QĐ-TTg dated 17 March 2004 by the Government Prime Minister on financing policies for families and individuals caring for orphans and abandoned children.

41. Circular N⁰ 02/2006/TT- BLĐTBXH dated 31 March 2006 instructing the implementation of the Decision N⁰ 313/2005/QĐ-TTg dated 2 December 2005 on some

schemes for people living with HIV/AIDS and the officials and physician staff in state-funded protection centres for people living with HIV/AIDS;

42. Inter-disciplinary Circular N⁰ 65/2006/TTLT- BLĐTBXH -BTC dated 12 July 2006 by the Ministry of Labour, War Invalid and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Finance instructing the implementation of the Decision N⁰ 267/2006/QĐ-TTg dated 31 October 2006 by the Government Prime Minister on vocational training policies for ethnic minorities.

