

EDUCATION AND TRAINING WORKING GROUP'S POSITION PAPER

*Prepared by
Education & Training Working Group*

Executive Summary

Quality education, at all levels, remains vital for the future growth of the Vietnamese economy. The Education and Training Working Group continues to support relevant government agencies in improving the standard of education and progress is being made on a number of fronts. These include key changes in laws affecting Vocational Education and Training where MoLISA is finalising a draft decree to replace Decree 48 and also MoET drafting a new decree to replace Decree 73.

The paper focuses on mainly two main areas firstly, the replacement of Decree 73 and secondly, issues relating to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).

Decree 73 applies sets out the framework for the future of foreign investment in education in Vietnam. The quality of education in Vietnam has been an issue and this can be improved, in part, by attracting foreign institutions that have a record of delivering quality education. A number of issues and recommendations have been raised to help make the new decree that replaces decree 73, more effective.

Having effective TVET institutions lays the foundation for economic growth by supplying work ready graduates with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitude to make a positive contribution in the workplace. The Draft Decree to amend Decree 48 is an important step in improving TVET in Vietnam. In addition, working with various foreign agencies will help improve TVET. Collaboration of various overseas agencies, to ensure alignment in their goals, under the auspices of MoLISA would also be of benefit.

In conclusion, the Vietnamese economy needs a highly competent workforce to drive growth. The Education and Training Working Group, through the VBF, will continue with its commitment to assist Vietnam in achieving its economic potential.

I. Introduction

The Vietnamese economy has a great opportunity to grow and, in order to achieve this, education at all levels needs to be at the highest possible standard. Great achievements have been made and it is important now to maintain and even accelerate this momentum to continue the growth of the Vietnamese economy. The Vietnamese workforce has an amazing potential and this needs to be nurtured and developed.

The theme of this forum is “STRENGTHENING THE LINKAGE BETWEEN FDI AND DOMESTIC BUSINESSES IN THE NEW GLOBAL CONTEXT”. To help both domestic and foreign investment enterprises succeed Vietnam needs an educated and skilled workforce. Graduates from Vietnamese institutions need to have the necessary knowledge, skills, and professional attitude to ensure that they are ready to effectively contribute when they enter the workforce. The supply of “work ready” graduates is essential for the continued development of the Vietnamese economy.

The productivity of the labour force in Vietnam needs to significantly increase. The education and training of Vietnamese people to provide “work ready” graduates will help close “skills gaps and also provide the necessary manpower where there are currently “skills shortages”. In the short term, foreign expertise can help in this regard. Therefore “fostering partnership between domestic and foreign enterprises for a harmonious development of the Vietnamese economy” is a theme that the Education and Training Working Group fully supports.

As mentioned in previous position papers, at the highest level this needs the involvement of all major stakeholders working together under the leadership of the Vietnamese Government and in particular MoET and MoLISA. A strategic focus is required to make sure that everyone involved understands what needs to be achieved and that all stakeholders involved are in alignment. The effective use and coordination of Official Development Assistance (ODA) is important so that various initiatives are not overlapping and that the investment from these programs is both effective and efficient.

To achieve international standards education in Vietnam needs to improve the standard of education of Vietnamese institution and, in addition, needs an infusion of foreign capital, ideas and expertise. It also needs flexibility and adaptability, especially in the vocational training sector.

The effective implementation of the National Qualifications Framework will be of great benefit to all levels of education, and in particularly, TVET.

Finally on-line learning can that can help Vietnamese students develop. To be effective the Vietnamese regulatory environment needs to recognise this and allow students to gain recognition for overseas qualifications delivered in Vietnam partly online.

This report will focus on the following areas:

- Decree 73,
- Technical and Vocational Education and Training

II. The Draft Decree replacing Decree 73

The draft is set to replace Decree 73 issued in 2012, and change procedures and investment conditions to boost competitiveness and help foreign investors enter the Vietnamese education sector. There has been much consultation between MoET officials and the E&T working group members to improve the new decree to replace Decree 73. We would like to take this opportunity to thank MoET for the opportunity to collaborate with them on this. There are a number of areas that positive amendments are being considered including the points below.

- A reduction in the required number of licenses, for short-term training centres, from 3 to 2 licenses.
- The simplification of the application dossier for license issuance.
- The replacement of the requirement, when establishment of a university, that the University must construct its own campus, with a long-term leasing arrangement for campus buildings.
- The removal of conditions for the admission of Vietnamese students to the international secondary and primary schools.
- The removal of the requirement that English language teachers at Universities must have a master degree.
- The regulation of conditions on investment capital for setting up a branch campus of a University in a similar way to local Universities.

The implementation of the new decree will be a major milestone in education in Vietnam and demonstrates the Government's great desire to improve education. We look forward to continuing this good work and would like to take this opportunity to thank MoET for their cooperation.

III. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Vocational skills training and boosting employment is at the heart of the Vietnamese Government development goals. The Government also wants to tailor its vocational training more to the needs of industry. Therefore, it is promoting the expansion of vocational education and training with improvements in quality and a focus on needs-based training. The Draft Decree to amend Decree 48 is an important step in improving TVET in Vietnam.

Much work has been done and with overseas agencies including, but not limited to, GDVT from Vietnam, VGDC and GIZ from Germany, HEEAP from the USA, VSEP from Canada, and JICA from Japan. These agencies have been working on a number of areas including, but not limited to, meeting the needs of industry, developing leadership in the TVET system, improving the curriculum to make it more practical and relevant. More collaboration amongst these agencies would ensure that the impact of their work is more effective.

The Vietnamese government has recognised the need to increase the involvement of the private sector in TVET. This will help raise additional resources for TVET implementation, and improve quality and relevance TVET training programs. Progress, however, has been somewhat slow which indicates that the current strategies to promote this initiative and their implementation are not sufficiently effective to attract the participation of private enterprise,

One possible strategy to involve the industry, as identified by GIZ and GDVT, is through the initiation of active collaboration measures by the TVET institutions. The following are some activities identified:

- Inviting industry representatives to join the board of a TVET institute in a consulting role.
- Working with industry representative to develop curricula and training courses.
- Actively supporting the advanced vocational training of teachers.
- Providing internship opportunities for students with companies.
- Offer project specific collaborations that involve the active participation of students.
- Involve students in the manufacturing of products for companies in the colleges.
- Sponsoring practical education.
- Sponsoring the technical facilities/equipment of a college.
- Working with industry representative to develop and conduct examinations.

Whilst there are many great initiatives that are all helping improve TVET in Vietnam we still believe that the following are the main areas that need to be addressed:

- Meeting industry needs,
- Attracting students into TVET institutions,
- Building the capacity of TVET Institutions, and
- Effectively implementing the National Qualifications Framework.

It is important that we continue to work on these areas and find solutions to help improve the TVET system. Therefore, we look forward to continued progress and would like to take this opportunity to thank MoLISA for their cooperation.

IV. Conclusion

Vietnam needs a highly competent workforce with the knowledge, skills, and attitude to drive economy growth. Quality education at all levels is required to provide the skilled workforce to maintain this growth. This will require the strong leadership of the Vietnamese Government and especially MoET and MoLISA working closely with other relevant stakeholders to find effective solutions.

The Education and Training Working Group through the VBF will continue, in cooperation with both MoET and MoLISA, with its commitment to improve education and training in Vietnam. We look forward to seeing progress in the above areas and again would like to thank the VBF for inviting us to contribute to this important forum.