



Hanoi Headlines

September 2009

Students with Disabilities Start USAID-funded Job Skills Training

Fifty Vietnamese students with disabilities in August began a 12-month software engineering and information technology management training program, and 33 others with visual and hearing impairments enrolled for a three-month IT course under an initiative funded by USAID.

Started in 2007, the program trains students according to international standards, with curriculum and coursework taught in English by certified trainers from leading IT service providers. Classes are held during work hours and simulate a workplace environment with lectures in the morning and training in the afternoon. The program also provides training in project management methodology, communication skills, teamwork, discipline, and integrity. Graduates are attractive to employers because of their specialized qualifications and expertise.

"By harnessing the skills of these and other students in the future, we can help persons with disabilities take their place in society and lead successful, independent lives. We hope this program can become a model for similar initiatives," said USAID Representative Francis A. Donovan. The program is a cooperative effort between the Hanoi College of Information Technology (HCIT) and USAID's imple-



Le Van Giap, 66, a visually impaired resident of Hanoi, has discovered the Internet after receiving instruction at the USAID-sponsored information technology training center. Prompts through the computer speakers help him navigate the screen as he searches for news and information. Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID



Hoang Tuan Anh, center, tells USAID Representative Francis A. Donovan about the job skills training in information technology he receives as part of a USAID-funded activity for persons with disabilities in Hanoi. Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

menting partner, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and with funding from USAID. So far, 75 students have completed year-long training courses in Hanoi, of which 64 have found jobs or internships. A total of 103 students are currently enrolled in classes at both HCIT and at a new program in Ho Chi Minh City. A total of 99 students have completed three-month courses for the visually impaired, along with 15 students who are deaf and hearing-impaired. By the close of the project in 2010, 125 young people with disabilities will complete training in software engineering with the goal of gaining employment in Vietnam's growing computer industry. An additional 200 students with visual and hearing impairments will complete training in basic computing skills.

US Supports Vietnam's First Community AI Outbreak Simulation

Communes in Can Tho and Hung Yen provinces recently demonstrated their ability to recognize and respond to the threat of avian and pandemic influenza in humans and poultry through simulations of outbreaks in their communities.

More than 350 people in the two provinces took part in the exercise -- the first of its kind conducted at the commune level in Vietnam. Funded by USAID, the exercise focused on the community level where the threat of avian and pandemic influenza remains, and where initial detection and response efforts are essential to limiting the impact of

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USAID Field Epidemiologist Training Helps Control Outbreaks

USAID funding and technical assistance supported Vietnam's first hands-on training of officials specialized in preventing and controlling possible future outbreaks of diseases like pandemic H1N1 and avian influenza. Vietnam's Ministry of Health in August launched a two-year field epidemiology training program (FETP) in collaboration with the World Health Organization with funding from USAID and the Avian and Human Pandemic Influenza Joint Government/United Nations System Program. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provided technical assistance.

Developed in line with the Ministry of Health's master plan, the program -- and the trainee fellows -- are expected to provide service to the public health system and to improve the health of the population. FETP fellows, based in regional disease surveillance institutes, will gain valuable skills in disease surveillance, response, management, and public communication. Through on-the-job mentorship and training, the fellows will contribute immediately to disease surveillance and response activities and are expected to join the ranks of Vietnam's leading epidemiologists.



A chicken awaits safe transport to a slaughterhouse in Hung Yen Province. Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Online Official Gazettes Gain Exposure throughout Vietnam

E-Official Gazettes, an initiative driven by USAID-sponsored software to make legal documents readily available to citizens and businesses online, is gaining considerable ground throughout Vietnam. At a workshop in August in Quy Nhon Province, officials from the Office of the Government, representatives from 60 provinces and an official of the U.S. Office of the Federal Registrar in Washington discussed experiences of five provincial E-Gazettes already online. The OOG officials expressed a strong commitment to move swiftly to launch a national EOG and to extend the software to all provinces.



A young scholarship recipient from An Giang Province celebrates her success as part of a USAID-supported award program. Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Girls Scholarships Help Combat Human Trafficking in Vietnam

Reaching out to girls in southwest Vietnam at risk of being trafficked to neighboring Cambodia to work in the sex trade, USAID awarded 411 scholarships at district ceremonies in August. The support includes textbooks, school uniforms, and other supplies as an incentive for girls to stay home and go to school while rejecting dubious and dangerous job offers over the border.

Community Outbreak Simulation

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future outbreaks. Responding to unscripted scenarios, these communities identified households where a suspected outbreak might be occurring and followed procedures to report the outbreak and organize and coordinate appropriate responses. Technical observers suggested ways the communities could further protect humans and poultry.

The USAID project, implemented by Abt Associates, works with selected communities to develop effective and sustainable intervention models in the areas of community-based surveillance, biosecurity, case management and infection control, and has strengthened networks of animal health workers and behavior change communication. National level health officials said the models developed and demonstrated through the exercise could be extended to address other community public health threats. Since 2005, the US Government has provided more than \$33.5 million to support Vietnam's programs to combat avian influenza.

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