



PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN VIET NAM

Key Findings from the 2009 Viet Nam Population and Housing Census



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ABBREVIATIONS

CCSC	Central (Population and Housing) Census Steering Committee
CRPD	(UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CWD	Children with Disabilities
CWDM	Children with Disabilities in Multiple Domains
CWOD	Children without Disabilities /Non-disabled children
CWSD	Children with Severe Disabilities
GSO	General Statistics Office
GoV	Government of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
ICF	(WHO's) International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs
NCCD	National Coordinating Council on Disability
PHAD	Institute of Population, Health and Development
PWD	Persons with Disabilities
PWDM	Persons with Disabilities in Multiple Domains
PWOD	Persons without Disabilities /Non-disabled persons
PWSDM	Persons with Severe Disabilities in Multiple Domains
PWSD	Persons with Severe Disabilities
UN	United Nations
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VHLSS	Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey
WHO	World Health Organization
WGDS	Washington Group on Disability Statistics

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INTRODUCTION

The Government of Viet Nam (GoV) has made a strong commitment to support persons with disabilities (PWD). The 1992 Constitution and its 2001 Revision guarantees the rights of all citizens. This includes State support for PWD.¹ Additional rights of the PWD are protected under the various laws and policies that have been passed by the GoV (Eric, 2009).²

The GoV enacted the Ordinance on Disabled Persons in 1998 (GoV, 1998), the most comprehensive legal document to date, on disability in Viet Nam. Eight years later, the GoV introduced the first National Action Plan to support PWD for the period 2006-2010 (GoV, 2006).³ The GoV also adopted the Biwako Millenium Framework (UNESCAP, 2002) and established the National Coordinating Council on Disability (NCCD). In 2007, Viet Nam signed the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) - a major international convention that has rapidly gained recognition around the world (UN, 2006). Recently, the GoV took an enormous step forward in providing legal protection to PWD when, on 17 June 2010, the National Assembly passed a law supporting PWD (GoV, 2010); this law became effective on 1 January 2011.

1 Article 59 and 67.

2 Eric (2009) had reviewed and listed them as the 1989 Law on Protection of People's Health, the 1999 Penal Law, the 2000 Law on Marriage and Family, the 1991 Law on Universalization of Primary Education, the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children, the 2005 Education Law, the 2006 Law on Vocational Training, the 2006 Law on Information Technology, the 2006 Law on Sports and Physical Education, and the 2008 Law on In-land Transportation. A list of further relevant sub-law documents, i.e. directives, decrees, and decisions, was also provided in this report. A more comprehensive list of legal documents relating to PWD between 2006 and 2010 can be found in Appendix 1 of NCCD, 2010.

3 The Convention was adopted on 13 December 2006 during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly. As of 12 July 2011, 149 countries have signed the CRPD and 103 have ratified it; 90 countries have signed the Optional Protocol and 62 have ratified it. Viet Nam signed the CRPD on 22 October 2007, but has not ratified it and has not signed the Optional Protocol.

The UN General Assembly stresses the importance of sourcing comparative disability data and statistics at both national and global levels, for the purposes of policy design, planning and evaluation.⁴ In this regard, the GoV made a strong commitment to evidence-based policy dialogues by including questions on disability in two large national surveys: the 2006 Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey and the 2009 Viet Nam Population and Housing Census.

This booklet is the ninth in a series published by the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) during recent years. It aims to provide a brief socio-economic profile of disability in Viet Nam based on the 15 per cent sample of the 2009 Viet Nam Population and Housing Census data.⁵ The specific objectives of this booklet are to:

- Provide a general picture of disability prevalence in Viet Nam;
- Highlight the main demographic and socio-economic characteristics of PWD in comparison to that of persons without disabilities;
- Provide disability-related policy implications.

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In publishing this booklet, UNFPA provides informed opinion, based on Census data, on specific characteristics, trends, and vulnerabilities apparent among people with disabilities. It is hoped that readers find this information useful in establishing a baseline against which progress can be measured to address the special socio-economic development needs of people with disabilities in Viet Nam.

4 See Disabilities and Statistics at <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=13&pid=1515>.

5 For more information of the 2009 Census, see CCSC, 2009.

1. CONCEPT AND MEASUREMENT OF DISABILITY IN THE 2009 CENSUS

The 2009 Population and Housing Census was the fourth to be conducted in Viet Nam, and the first to include information and questions relating to disability. The 2009 Census adopted the World Health Organization's (WHO) framework, known as the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF),⁶ for measuring health and disability. The primary

purpose of this measurement is to equalize opportunities. The ICF does not capture individual impairments, but provides a snapshot of functional abilities among the respondents. This international comparative measurement approach is applied in population censuses in many countries. The 2009 Census applied a short set of core questions on disability, proposed by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WGDS, 2006).⁷ This short question set is developed for use on national censuses to identify persons with similar types and levels of limitations in basic activities, regardless of nationality or culture. However, these questions do not extend to all types of disability and this, in turn, imposes a constraint on obtaining a full picture of the incidence and range of disability within each community.

The core set of self-reported responses to questions on disability applied in the 2009 Census focus on difficulties in four functioning domains ('seeing', 'hearing', 'walking', and 'cognition'/ 'remembering or concentrating'). The



6 <http://www.who.int/classifications/icf/en/>

7 For development of this core set of questions on disability and further information, see WGDS, 2006.

four response categories include: 'no difficulty'; 'some difficulty'; 'a lot of difficulty'; and 'cannot do at all' (CCSC, 2010).⁸ Key definitions in this report include:

Persons with disability (PWD) including those with 'some difficulties', 'a lot of difficulties', or 'cannot do at all' in at least one of the four functioning domains.

Persons without disability (PWOD) or non-disabled persons including those who have 'no difficulty' in any of the four functioning domains.

Persons with disability in multiple domains (PWDM) including those with 'some difficulties', 'a lot of difficulties', or 'cannot do at all' in more than one functioning domain.

Persons with severe disability (PWSD) including those who 'cannot do at all' in at least one of the four functioning domains.

For international comparison, this report analyses key indicators of persons with disabilities for children aged 5 to 15, youth aged 15 to 24, and adults aged 16 and older.

2. PREVALENCE OF DISABILITY

Among the 78.5 million persons aged 5 years or older in Viet Nam in 2009, almost 6.1 million, or 7.8 per cent, live with one or more disability in seeing, hearing, walking or cognition. Of this 6.1 million population, 385,000 are persons with severe disabilities (PWSD).⁹ Although smaller, the PWSD number approximates the total number of PWSD receiving regular support from the Ministry of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs (MOLISA).¹⁰ The prevalence of disability in each of the four life domains is presented in Table 1. Problems encountered with 'seeing' are the most prevalent, followed by 'walking' and 'cognition'.¹¹ However, in the moderate to severe disability range, problems with 'walking' and 'cognition' are the most prevalent.



Multiple disabilities are profound. The 2009 Census data show that 3.8 per cent of the population aged 5 years or older or as many as nearly 3 million persons (49 per cent of the 6.1 million PWD) has a disability in more than one domain. The proportion is smaller among PWSD but still very high. 28 per cent of the PWSD experience disabilities in multiple domains (PWDM).

- 9 In this booklet, mild, moderate, and severe disability are defined as having "some difficulty", "a lot of difficulty", and "cannot do at all" respectively.
- 10 Online statistics of MOLISA on number of persons with severe disability who receive regular support in 2007 is 487,384 persons. Accessed online at <http://www.molisa.gov.vn/docs/SLTK/DetailSLTK/tabid/215/DocID/2523/TabModuleSettingsId/496/language/vi-VN/Default.aspx>; assessed 15 July 2011.
- 11 Cognition represents "remembering or concentrating" throughout this report.

⁸ See Appendix 1 for more details.

The prevalence of disability found in the 2009 Census is much lower than the rate of 15.3 per cent (NCCD, 2010) presented in the 2006 Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey (VHLSS). Although the difference in the number of domains contributes to this variation, it is minor.¹² Multiple differences between the two surveys, such as found in disability-specific questions,¹³ length of the questionnaire, and skill of interviewers, may also contribute to variations in prevalence rates. However, prevalence rates found in the 2009 Census are closely aligned to results reported by the MOLISA at 6 per cent (MOLISA, 2009).¹⁴

Table 1: Prevalence of disability by domain and degree of difficulty

Core domains	Degree of difficulty					
	At least some difficulty		At least a lot of difficulty		Unable / Cannot do at all	
	%	N	%	N	%	N
Seeing	5.03	3,947,473	0.63	493,604	0.12	92,138
Hearing	3.13	2,451,536	0.62	491,084	0.13	104,098
Walking	3.70	2,901,393	0.91	712,851	0.24	190,872
Cognition	3.52	2,762,850	0.82	644,697	0.23	183,751
All four domains ¹⁵	7.75	6,074,543	1.69	1,324,424	0.49	384,561
Multiple domains ¹⁶	3.78	2,967,201	1.18	925,877	0.14	109,140

12 2006 VLSS uses two additional domains for measuring disability. The prevalence of disability found in 2006 VLSS is smaller but still very close to 15% when measure of disability is limited to 4 domains as used in the 2009 Census.

13 For instance, the 2006 VLSS asked about “difficulty even when wearing hearing aid” while the 2009 Census asked about “hearing” without any consideration to hearing aid (VLSS, 2006).

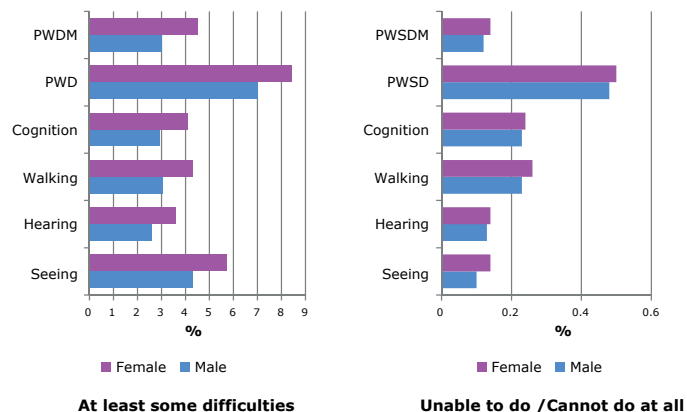
14 The report does not show the concept and measurement of disability though.

15 This is the group of all 4 life domains together. Persons who have difficulties in at least one domain fall into this group.

16 This is another measure reflecting multi-dimensionality of disability. Persons who have difficulties in more than one domain fall into this group.

The prevalence of disability is slightly higher among females than males as observed in all domains and degrees of difficulty. The prevalence is 8.4 per cent among females and 7.0 per cent among males aged 5 years or older.

Figure 1: Prevalence of disability by domain, degree of difficulty, and sex



3. CHILDREN AND ADULT WITH DISABILITIES

Of the 6,074,543 PWD, 219,375 or 3.6 per cent, are children aged 5 to under 16 years; 283,733 or 4.7 per cent of the PWD population are children and adolescents aged 5 to under 18 years;¹⁷ 3,314,700 or 54.6 per cent of the PWD population are elderly aged 60 years or older.¹⁸

Disability is largely a phenomenon among the elderly, especially the female elderly. The prevalence of disability in this age group is as high as 43.3 per cent, while only 1.4 per cent for children aged 5 to under 16 years, and 4.6 per cent in the age group 16 to 59 years. Interestingly, while the prevalence of disability in child and middle aged PWD groups records a higher incidence of disability among males than females, the inverse is true for elderly PWD.



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https://www.yunbaogao.cn/report/index/report?reportId=5_19992



- 17 Viet Nam's Law on Children Protection, Care and Education (GoV, 2004) defines a child as person under the age of 16 years. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989), which GoV signed on January 1990 and ratified on February 1990, defines a child as every human being below the age of 18 years.
- 18 The Law on the Elderly defines elderly as persons aged 60 or older (GoV, 2009).