THE ROLE AND POTENTIAL OF VIETNAMESE NGOS IN THE CONTEXT OF DOI MOI

by

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ABSTRACT

Among the significant global events that have characterized the last decade has been the political and economic restructuring in socialist countries. A vital dimension of this policy has been the introduction of the market system and a rethinking of socialist principles of equality. As the formerly-provided state subsidies for social services are being cut back, the population has to struggle to adjust itself to the market system. This has contributed among other things, to social polarization.

The case of Vietnam provides a typical example of a socialist economy in transition. Economic renovation or Doi Moi has produced economic benefits for the country but also social dilemmas for the population. As a result of market forces, health and education systems have deteriorated, unemployment has increased, food distribution within the country has been disrupted and gender inequality and income disparity are on the rise.

In the midst of this transition, some non governmental organizations (NGOs) have emerged to respond to inadequate governmental planning in resolving the social consequences of economic restructuring. This thesis is an informative and analytical study of the current and potential role of Vietnamese NGOs in addressing socio-economic conditions in the context of economic renovation in Vietnam.
Interviews with thirteen NGOs, identified through "snowball" sampling methods in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City during a period of twelve weeks (Nov. 93-Feb 94) indicate the following: Vietnamese NGOs are mostly involved in providing relief and welfare services; they are not engaged in any advocacy (an indispensable method for many NGOs in the world); and have virtually no connection with the international NGO network. Although their total impact on socio-economic development is not yet substantial given the extent of social changes under Doi Moi, their existence at all is significant for Vietnam today. It is important that their efforts be recognized, nationally and by international counterparts.

Korten's typology of the four generations of NGOs provides a useful framework in identifying the current role of Vietnamese NGOs and in speculating on their potential to evolve along the developmental continuum as proposed in the typology.

In conclusion, NGOs all over the world have been the true forces of social progress and sustainable development. This thesis argues that as has been the case historically with NGOs in other developing countries, Vietnamese NGOs, given the proper support, have the potential to evolve as organs of community development and social justice.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIT</td>
<td>Asian Institute of Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APDC</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Development Bank</td>
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<td>BMI</td>
<td>Business Management Institute</td>
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<td>CEP</td>
<td>Capital Aid Fund To Employment of the Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>CERED</td>
<td>Centre for Environment Research, Education and Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGFED</td>
<td>Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIDSE</td>
<td>Cooperation Internationale pour le Developpement et la Solidarité</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRES</td>
<td>Centre for Environmental Resources Management and Environmental Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>GHA</td>
<td>Golden Heart Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>GONGO</td>
<td>Governmental Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCMC</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISSHO</td>
<td>Institute of Social Sciences in Ho Chi Minh City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCSSH</td>
<td>National Center for Social Sciences and Humanities</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEDCEN</td>
<td>The Non-State Economic Development Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>PACCOM</td>
<td>People’s Aid Coordinating Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIDA</td>
<td>Swedish International Development Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRV</td>
<td>Socialist Republic of Vietnam</td>
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<td>VWA</td>
<td>Vietnam’s Women Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>VCP</td>
<td>Vietnam Communist Party</td>
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<td>WOCA</td>
<td>Women’s Charity Association</td>
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All the Vietnamese Non-Governmental Organizations and government officials who so willingly shared information regarding themselves and their country for the purpose of this study.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Thesis Purpose

This thesis analyzes the current and potential role of the emergent domestic development-oriented NGOs (whether or not yet called such) in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in the context of economic renovation (Doi Moi).1

As a result of Doi Moi, Vietnam has made significant economic progress. The standard of living of the urban population has stabilized and improved (Trinh Duy Luan, 1993:65), inflation has dropped, agricultural output has increased to the point of self sufficiency and consumer goods are freely available on the market. But economic restructuring has also resulted in the partial withdrawal of state subsidies for social services, negatively impacting some segments of the population. Since the early nineties, a few voluntary non-governmental organizations have emerged to address the needs of those made vulnerable by the aftermath of Doi Moi.

Interviews conducted with various Vietnamese and international organizations indicated a lack of a systematic study on Vietnamese NGOs. Hence, little is known about them

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1 This thesis is based on the same data collected for the report by Mulla, Zarina and Peter Boothroyd 1994. Development-oriented NGOs of Vietnam, Vancouver: Centre for Human Settlements, and has been written parallel to it. Primarily, this report identifies and profiles Vietnamese organizations that could be considered development-oriented NGOs. Parts of the report written by me will appear in this thesis.
outside Vietnam and even in Vietnam itself. Therefore, the contribution of this thesis is three-fold:

1. **Informative**  It provides information about NGOs in Vietnam in the form of profiles of 13 development-oriented NGOs.

2. **Analytical**  Through these profiles salient features such as official status, relationship with government and other NGOs, funding sources, goals and activities are analyzed. Drawing mainly on Korten's typology of the four generations of NGOs, this thesis evaluates the status of Vietnamese NGOs, identifies the barriers to their effectiveness as agents of social development and examines their contribution as mechanisms of socio-economic development in Vietnam.

3. **Speculative**  It discusses the issue of enhancing the potential of Vietnamese NGOs in addressing the social needs and opportunities in the context of economic liberalization in Vietnam. It suggests implications for domestic NGOs in promoting just development. It also attempts to determine how other actors like the state and international NGOs can respond to enhance the potential of Vietnamese NGOs.

The thesis links field evidence with current theoretical literature on NGOs in the world, on Doi Moi and on related changes in Vietnam.
1.2 Problem Statement

As will be elaborated in Chapter two, the socialist safety net which had once provided security and social benefits to every individual in Vietnam is being compromised today to accommodate the renovated economic order. The state is making use of every opportunity to impose cost recovery measures to raise revenue. From the total amount of investment capital of US$ 50 billion needed by the year 2000, Vietnam is trying to mobilize as much as 50% from domestic sources (Pham Chi Lan, 1994:26). This might constitute a challenge, given the low domestic savings estimated at approximately US$ 2 billion, the lack of a proper tax system corresponding to the new economy and a very small export market. While waiting for the export market and an appropriate revenue-generating tax system to develop, it seems as if for the present, the state is employing the easiest technique within its reach to raise capital i.e. cutbacks on social programmes. This has led to negative social consequences. So far, no explicit governmental mechanisms or policies seem to be in place to mitigate the social impacts of economic restructuring (Pham Chi Lan, Public Forum, Vancouver, 10.11.1994).

It is against this background that some domestic NGOs are emerging to fill the void created by the new economic order. The pre Doi Moi socio-political context did not favour nor necessitate the presence of NGOs, as firstly, since all means of production and distribution were state controlled, there was no non-governmental sector and secondly, the state was equipped with mechanisms that ensured fairness (e.g. mass
organizations, cooperatives and social subsidies). But not only has Doi Moi made it possible for NGOs to emerge, the context of social changes brought about by Doi Moi makes their work imperative.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What kind of NGOs are emerging in Vietnam? What is their status?
2. Do they face any barriers?
3. How effective are they in addressing socio-economic conditions in Vietnam?

1.4 Significance of Thesis

This thesis is significant because

1. it has researched an area where there is a paucity of information as no systematic study has been undertaken so far;
2. it addresses a real world problem germane to other socialist economies going through a similar transition in their move towards a free market economy.
1.5 Definitions

*Development*

For the purpose of this thesis, this term means

Empowering the poor and the disenfranchised through appropriate education in a way that enables them to identify problems and find solutions independently;

Eradicating poverty in the long run, which in addition to identifying the sources of poverty entails examining and challenging these sources;

Promoting sustainability i.e. progress that does not compromise nature or economic growth that respects ecological balance;

Ensuring social justice i.e. progress that does not favour some over others; and

Ensuring gender equity i.e. progress that includes women in its process.

*Non-governmental Organizations*

This term is discussed in depth in Chapter four.

For the purpose of this thesis, the term NGO refers to those organizations that help the marginalized and generally exploited members of a society to develop their own organizational capabilities. The guiding principle of these organizations is a firm belief
in the empowerment of the people or a third systems\(^2\) approach. Their activities could be varied, ranging from action-oriented project work to pure research. Their main purpose is the achievement of a just social order.

This study is interested in NGOs whose main focus is development, which is the connotation implied by the use of the term "NGOs" throughout this thesis.

\textit{Gongos}

Gongos (governmental NGOs) are hybrid NGOs set up by some governments in competition with local NGOs with the purpose of attracting foreign funding designated exclusively for local NGOs. A Gongo has the outward appearance of an NGO, i.e. a certain degree of autonomy, but it is sponsored, controlled and staffed by government employees. The interviewed official of the Vietnam Ministry of Foreign Affairs referred to the Vietnamese mass organizations, e.g., Women’s Union, Youth Union, Peasants’ Union, etc. as Gongos in as far as their employees are government-salaried officials, who all the same, enjoy a certain degree of autonomy regarding activities. However, Gongos in the Vietnamese context have a unique disposition when compared to other Gongos. In the absence of recognized local NGOs, Vietnamese Gongos serve as channels for foreign funding for developmental projects. But, by no means were they set up specifically for

\(^2\) The "third system" is a term coined by the International Foundation for Development Alternatives (IFDA) in Nyon, Switzerland in 1976. According to IFDA "the state and the market are the two main sources of power over people. But people have an autonomous power, legitimately theirs. The "third system" is that part of the people which is reaching a critical consciousness of their role. (...) it constitutes a movement of those free associations, citizens, and militants, who perceive that the essence of history is the endless struggle by which people try to master their own destiny..." (IFDA, 1980, pp. 69-70 in Friedmann, 1992:3).
this purpose. Many of these were started as early as the 1930s with goals that ranged from fighting against foreign occupation, to uniting the agricultural force of the country. Therefore, one can say that the Vietnamese mass organizations can be referred to as Gongos, but bear only a partial resemblance to them.

1.6 Organization of Thesis

The remainder of this thesis is organized as follows:

Chapter two consists of a literature review which sets the political context.

Chapter three outlines the research methods and constraints involved in collecting data for this study.

Chapter four presents a typology of the thirteen development-oriented NGOs identified, and provides a profile for each, outlining its origin, motives, activities, structural organization, funding sources, relation to similar local and foreign organizations and to the local government, and problems faced. It then links theoretical literature with case studies data to analyze the salient features of the NGOs and their contribution to development.

Chapter five discusses some planning responses, mostly for the Vietnamese NGOs, but also for the Vietnamese government and international NGOs.

Chapter six offers concluding comments.

Appendices provide methodological details, a list of resource persons, information on international NGOs and Vietnamese Gongos, and photocopies of brochures of Vietnamese NGOs.
CHAPTER TWO POLITICAL CONTEXT OF VIETNAM

This chapter focuses on Doi Moi, its causes, objectives and achievements. By providing this information it aims at setting the historical context for the increasing social polarization which explains the emergence of NGOs in Vietnam today.

2.1 Doi Moi

The year 1986 marked a turning point in the history of Vietnam. At its Sixth National Congress, the Communist Party of Vietnam (VCP) launched a series of economic reforms known as renovation or Doi Moi.

The causes of this strategic policy shift were many. Some of them have been classified as follows:

2.1.1 Internal Causes - A Self Evaluation

*Economic Crisis*

The most significant of all the causes was the realization by the state that its post-reunification policies\(^3\) were being implemented at the cost of economic

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\(^3\) North and South Vietnam were reunited under the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (SRV) in 1975, twenty years after its division at the 17th Parallel by the Geneva Agreements of 1954. The SRV implemented policies that aimed at creating a just social order and a modern industrial-agricultural economy with a worker-peasant alliance at its core. Thus, a socialist ownership of the means of production was instituted. Commerce and industry were nationalized. Collectivization which was in place in the north since 1954 was introduced also to the south. This meant that land was managed by the state and welfare services and food was distributed on the basis of need (Duiker, 1989:276).
progress. The economic policies accorded top priority to heavy industry and mega projects (the hydroelectric dam at the Da River, the cement factory at Bim Son, the Thang Long bridge, etc.) (Huynh Kim Khanh, 1989:8) at the expense of agriculture and light industry. Consequently, Vietnam faced severe food shortages, an economic crisis in 1977 and 1978 and an economic stagnation during 1984 to 1986 (Vo Nhan Tri, 1990:37). This resulted in a decline in the living standards of Vietnamese workers and a rise in dissatisfaction. According to Vu Tuan Anh (1993:2), the state was sensitive to these changes and under the guidance of the reform-minded VCP Secretary-General, Nguyen van Linh, it was ready to institutionalize them through Doi Moi.

**Ideological Uncertainty**

Right from its inception in 1930, the Vietnamese Communist movement had derived its inspiration from the international communist movement. The ideological basis of Vietnamese communism was derived from Chinese Maoism and Russian Stalinism and Marxism-Leninism. The de-Stalinization in the USSR and the de-Maoization in China,

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4 In the words of VCP Secretary-General Nguyen van Linh:

"With the seething impetus brought about by the triumph over the world’s richest and strongest empire, we thought it would not take much time for us to achieve socialist reconstruction in Vietnam and we simplistically believed that now that we had defeated the enemy’s extremely fierce war of aggression, it would be easy for us to succeed in our development plan... As a result of our failure to take into account two completely different laws, we have set forth erroneous strategic policies concerning the economic structure, the mechanism of economic management, and socialist transformation... These mistakes and shortcomings have stemmed mainly from voluntarist subjectivism in defiance of the objective law in mapping out various socioeconomic advocacies and policies" (in Huynh Kim Khanh, 1989:22).
posed a problem of ideological uncertainty for the Vietnamese communist leadership (Huynh Kim Khanh, 1989:13), thus creating a favourable atmosphere for welcoming a new way of economic thinking.

2.1.2 External Causes - Global Events

The end of the Cold War signified important changes for the economy of Vietnam. Following the Soviet Perestroika, the USSR which had been the largest bilateral donor to Vietnam reduced its economic, military and material aid (Klintworth, 1991:222). Economic depression and political upheaval in the USSR and Eastern European countries meant a policy shift from priority aid to Vietnam to cooperation for mutual benefit (Vo Dai Luoc, 1991:139). China, which had already been outraged by the Vietnamese treatment of its overseas Chinese community, withdrew its aid too, following the presence of Vietnamese troops in Cambodia from 1978 to 1989 (Klintworth, 1991:216). The Vietnamese economy was considerably impacted by the withdrawal of aid from these two countries which constituted a major part of its support system. In addition, economic sanctions were imposed by the U.S.A. after the end of the Vietnam war and other countries including Canada, the states of the ASEAN, Japan, Australia and Denmark as a reaction to Vietnam’s involvement in Cambodia.

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5 Probably, the economic sanctions imposed by these countries did not have a significant effect on Vietnam’s economy as most of its trade was conducted with the eastern bloc countries (Storey, 1993:43).
2.1.3 Objectives of Doi Moi

These were:

1) to shift the emphasis from investment in heavy industry to commodities of daily consumption or to those in which Vietnam had a comparative advantage, i.e. agriculture, export goods and services and consumer goods (Takeuchi, 1992:8);

2) to shift from a centrally planned to a multi-sectoral economy. This meant that the hitherto prohibited private sector would now be encouraged to operate along with the state owned sector and the cooperatives (Le Dang Doanh, 1991:80);

3) to improve international economic relations by maintaining an open door policy that would attract foreign trade and investment (Takeuchi, 1992:8); and

4) to stabilize the socioeconomic environment by reducing inflation and the budget deficit and improving the standard of living (Vu Tuan Anh, 1993:28).

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6 There are five officially recognized economic sectors in Vietnam today. In the words of Hoang Vu Cuong, they are:

**State sector**

1 State sector: centrally managed enterprises, locally managed enterprises, state farms.
2 State capitalist sector: joint state-private enterprises, joint ventures between state-owned enterprises and foreign companies.

**Non-state sector**

3 Collective sector: agricultural cooperatives, small-scale industrial handicraft cooperatives and production teams.
4 Household and individual sector: family and individual businesses.
5 Private capitalist sector: small-scale private companies and 100% foreign-owned companies under the foreign investment law of 1987 (1993:41).
2.1.4 Achievements of Doi Moi

There is no doubt that the reforms of Doi Moi have produced favourable results for the Vietnamese economy. Agricultural output has gone up. In 1988, rice production reached its highest so far of 19 million tons and went up even further in 1989 to 21 million tons (Nguyen Minh Luan; 1993:5). In 1989, Vietnam was the third largest rice exporter in the world behind Thailand and the U.S.A. (Brazier, 1992:25).

Inflation has been successfully curbed. This can be attributed to the reduction of financial subsidy to state-run enterprises, the liberalization of business, the autonomy of individual enterprises in price setting, the abolition of food ration system and contractual agriculture, all leading to a growth in output and a lowering of inflation. Thus the two digit monthly rate of inflation at the beginning of Doi Moi stabilized to a one-digit figure of 2.5% in 1989 (Takeuchi, 1992:9).

With the increase in jobs and productivity, the standard of living of the people has improved. However, there are some social costs attached to Doi Moi.

2.2 Social Costs of Doi Moi

2.2.1 Education

Investment in basic education had been a priority for the communist system. As mentioned in the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam under Article 60, the state took sole responsibility for education which was compulsory and free (in Duiker, 1989:294). This policy had favourable results. Vietnam had a high adult literacy rate of
82% and in contrast to other developing countries there were nearly as many girls attending primary school as boys (Brazier, 1992:36).

With Doi Moi have come about many changes in the education system. The most significant outcome has been an increasing dropout rate. Already 2.7 million from the 40 million children between the ages of 6 and 14 have dropped out (Hannah, 1992:56). The dropout rate can be attributed to the following two factors:

1 Education is no longer free. The education budget has been reduced allowing only approximately 50,000 Dong per student. As a cost recovery measure, the state charges fees from students of 8-15,000 Dong, which is approximately 12 to 25% of the teacher’s salary (Hiebert, 1991:21). For some, education has become an unaffordable luxury;

2 Due to government cutbacks in social services many families have to scramble to make a living. In order to augment family income, children are often pulled out of school to work.

Another significant change is in the teaching profession. The average teacher earns approximately 60,000 Dong per month, whereas in the newly-born private sector, s/he could be earning 100,000 Dong or US$10. According to Cao Minh Thi, Ho Chi Minh’s City’s education director, many have given up teaching in favour of more lucrative

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7 1 US$ = 10,000 Vietnamese Dong
professions and those still teaching are forced to look for a second job to make their living in a competitive market (in Hiebert, 1991:20).

2.2.2 Health Care

According to the Constitution, the state was also responsible for health care. Health services were free and state-run. Social Insurance benefits were guaranteed to the population (in Duiker, 1989:294). That a poor country like Vietnam had achieved health standards comparable to those of higher income countries was therefore not surprising (Allen, 1992:2). But Vietnam’s health care system, a success story among its Southeast Asian neighbours has had a set back since the 80’s and later on after renovation.

Health care was an integrative part of a collective economic and social system, where the surpluses generated from collectivized industry and agriculture were channelled towards funding medical services and equipment. Decollectivization and privatization has disrupted the system (Brazier, 1992:32).

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8 Reports, papers and discussions with some people indicated the worsening of the health situation since the new reforms. Some, however, do not support that claim. For instance, the working draft of a confidential foreign NGO states that "There is no evidence to support the assertion that recent years have witnessed a deterioration of the health service supply side, either in quantity, financing or quality" (Beaulieu, 1993:9:4).
As a result of the changes introduced by the Council of Ministers in 1989

- user fees for health services were introduced;
- private practice including "after-hours" private practice by state health workers was legalized; and
- drugs could be sold directly on the open market;


Moreover, under Decree #45 of the new system, funding to hospitals was cut by 50% (Beaulieu, 1993-9:1).

The imposition of user fees has discouraged some from seeking medical attention and in some cases the number of patients in hospitals have dropped by as much as 50% (Brazier, 1992:32).

The quality of state health services is deteriorating too as medical personnel are poorly remunerated. Meanwhile, more and more self-treating patients are buying the freely available drugs in lieu of consultations (Allen, 1993:5).

Connected to health is the issue of malnutrition. From a food deficit nation before renovation, Vietnam has become the third largest exporter of rice after US and Thailand. But although self-sufficiency in rice production has been achieved, paradoxically, malnutrition is on the rise. This is due to the upsetting of a sound food distribution system within the country as a result of market forces. It is more profitable to export
rice than to distribute it within the country. Once again, some segments of the population are slipping through the safety net (Beaulieu, 1993-9:3).

2.2.3 Employment

The new economic policies have affected negatively the rate of employment in Vietnam. Pre Doi Moi policies had guaranteed employment to its citizens and everyone was employed with the state or a cooperative. But now, reduced subsidies are forcing state enterprises to downsize or even close down. Between 1990 and 1993, state enterprises have laid off 800,000 employees. This has exacerbated the unemployment crisis. The newly emerging private sector has been unable to absorb the surplus labour. The result is a high and increasing rate of unemployment (Hiebert 1993:16).

2.2.4 Status of Women

Previously, the socialist state had provided maternity homes, creches, kindergartens, community dining halls and other social amenities that facilitated working conditions for women (Duiker, 1989:295). Now, many women have to work much harder not just at home but also outside at one, two or even three jobs to make a living in a competitive market.

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9 Every year 1.1 million new workers are added to the labour force. In addition to that, the labour market is swollen by returning Vietnamese nationals: 30,000 boat people repatriated from Hongkong; 200,000 guest workers from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union after the collapse of communism in these countries and also from Iraq following Baghdad's invasion of Kuwait; half-a-million soldiers returning home from Cambodia after Vietnam's withdrawal in 1989 (Hiebert, 1993:16).
The majority of women, as many as 97% in the countryside, engage in some form of economic activity. Women in the labour force have been impacted more than men as a result of Doi Moi. For example, in Ho Chi Minh City between 1987 and 1990, from the total number of workers laid-off by state enterprises as a result of downsizing, 69% were women. It is generally assumed by some employers that women would contribute less productively or reliably to office work as they have to attend to children and have little state assistance now in doing so (Beaulieu, 1994-22:3). Once again, social cutbacks are the reason why the broadbased provision of social services once made available to women and their children under the socialist regime has declined.

Impacts of economic renovation have been felt in yet another field: prostitution. After Reunification in 1975, the socialist government had implemented policies that explicitly aimed at ending prostitution, a profession which had received a tremendous boost in the South during the American occupation of Vietnam\textsuperscript{10}. A number of centres for the "Restoration for the Dignity of Women" were set up to provide shelter and new skills for ex-prostitutes (Pelzer, 1993:). The situation has changed for the worse under Doi Moi since

it appears to be assumed that toleration of prostitution is necessary to attract foreign visitors and tourist. Provincial Tourism Offices have included massage parlors in their new hotels built for foreign visitors. (Pelzer, 1993:313).

\textsuperscript{10} During the height of the American occupation, Southern Vietnam had twenty times more prostitutes than the total of female doctors and professionals put together (Mackerras, 1988:101).
2.3 Conclusions

After Reunification in 1975, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam instituted policies that aimed at abolishing human exploitation and creating social equality. To mention some of the benefits of socialism: education was free and compulsory, health care was state-run and freely available, housing was subsidized and state built, women and men received equal wages, women were entitled to pre and post-natal care with a 6-month paid maternity leave and employment was guaranteed. The efforts to live up to the socialist ideals of fairness for all had beneficial results:

- a high literacy rate;
- an excellent primary health care system that extended even to the remotest corners of the country;
- an improved status of women as the state recognized and counted domestic work and punished domestic violence (Beaulieu, 1994-22:3). The state also provided social amenities that facilitated working conditions for women;
- low unemployment as the state assumed responsibility for training and employing its citizens; and
- subsidized and state-built housing.

The introduction of Doi Moi has brought about major changes. Market forces have made education expensive and inaccessible for some, disrupted the health care system, upset food distribution leading to malnutrition, exacerbated unemployment and affected the status of women for the worse.

Some segments of the population have been shortchanged by the new economic order.
CHAPTER THREE RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter sets the practical context for this thesis. It discusses in detail the technique of data gathering and the format of its presentation. It also presents some of the constraints involved in carrying out this research.

3.1 Research Methods

This was carried out in the following order:

1. A literature search was conducted along three lines:
   i) on NGOs in general, ii) on Vietnam in the context of Doi Moi and iii) on planning theory. Nothing was found on the topic of domestic NGOs in Vietnam.

2. Therefore it was necessary to gather information on this topic through telephone/fax/personal interviews of resource persons in Vancouver as well as overseas in China, U.K. and Bangkok (see appendix 2).

3. Field research was undertaken in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi over a period of 12 weeks. It involved:
   i) conducting interviews with
      * local NGOs;
      * international NGOs;
      * Gongos;
* UN personnel who were actively involved in projects with local organizations; and

* Vietnamese government officials;

ii) visiting the UNDP research centre in Hanoi to do a library search for reports, brochures, government documents, and newspaper articles for information on domestic NGOs and the Vietnamese government's policy regarding them. The lack of documentation on the subject was indicative of a lack of a recognized domestic NGO presence in the country;

iii) gathering information on the same topic by asking questions at a workshop conducted by the University of British Columbia and the National Centre for Social Sciences (NCSSH) on "Socio-Economic Impacts of the Renovation in Vietnam" in Do Son, Vietnam; (December 1993) and at a UN-NGO Forum in Hanoi (January 1994).

Interviews with representatives of Vietnamese NGOs were conducted with the aid of interpreters provided by NCSSH, specifically, by NCSSH's Institute of Social Sciences in Ho Chi Minh City (ISSHO) and by the NCSSH Secretariat in Hanoi. The list of possible organizations to contact was extended from that developed in Vancouver by
adding suggestions of NCSSH and of the various interviewees, thus creating a process of "snowball sampling".

Interviews of thirteen organizations that met the definition, liberally interpreted, of development-oriented NGOs were profiled and common themes were extracted from the qualitative data. In addition to these NGOs, the profiles of four Gongos appear in appendix 3.

To learn the official perspective of the Vietnamese government on NGOs, an interview was conducted with Mr. Do Thanh Chan, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs developing regulations on Vietnamese NGOs. This interview was suggested and arranged by NCSSH.

3.2 Constraints

The study encountered the following constraints:

Language: Nearly 60% of the interviews needed no interpretative services as they were conducted either in English or French. When the interviewee did not speak either of these languages or preferred to respond in Vietnamese, the interview was conducted through skilful interpreters. However, some difficulties in communication were encountered through the interpretation process. For example, it compromised the amount
of information gathered since it put more demands on the time and energy of all involved. Also, it was not entirely clear sometimes whether some information had been misunderstood or condensed by the interpreter.

*Time:* Due to the limited time available for field research, an exhaustive study could not be undertaken. Time limitations did not permit research outside HCMC and Hanoi.

*Lack of Documentation* This meant that information that had been overlooked during an interview, or which sounded conflicting or contradictory could not be verified or compared with sources other than the pamphlets of the concerned organization.
CHAPTER FOUR

A CASE STUDY OF DOMESTIC NGOS IN VIETNAM

This chapter fulfils the first two of the three purposes mentioned in the introduction i.e descriptive and analytical. The typology (4.1), the profiles of the thirteen interviewed NGOs (4.2) and their review (4.3) provides hitherto unresearched information on the topic. On the basis of this information and of the literature on the topic of NGOs, this chapter explores the status of Vietnamese NGOs, evaluates their activities and goals according to international standards and discusses their current contribution towards socio-economic development in Vietnam (4.4).

4.1 Typology

Table 1 on the following page indicates the types of development organizations operating in Vietnam in terms of their sectoral foci. The number under each sector corresponds to the number of the organizations profiled on the following pages.
TABLE 1:
A TYPOLOGY OF VIETNAMESE DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

NGOs

GONGO

FOCUS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Ecology</th>
<th>Others</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>2, 3, 4</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1, 5, 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8, 9, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11, 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2 Profiles

The format of the profiles to follow, represents the key elements of discussion during interviews (see Interview Questionnaire in appendix 1). The information presented appears as expressed by the interviewees or in their brochures. At times, the interviewee did not wish to or was not able to answer a particular question due to time or language constraints, in which case, that particular category has been omitted in the profiles.
PROFILE 1

Name: Golden Heart Association (GHA)

Address: 22 Ly Thai To, Hanoi

Interviewee: Dr. Nguyen Dang Quang, President.

Status: Calls itself the "first official private non-governmental charity organization" (brochure).

Origin: Started during the American War as an organization of Vietnamese doctors who offered their services on a voluntary basis to victims. Continued to help the sick voluntarily, even after the war. As a result of the government's move towards renovation, many associations were allowed to come into existence. Thus, this organization applied to the People's Committee of Hanoi and established itself as the Golden Heart Charity in December 1989.

Goal: "To help the less fortunate" (brochure).

Organization: A management board with Dr. Nguyen Dang Quang as its President. More than 100 volunteer doctors and nurses offer their services to GHA.

Main Activities: - Offering free medical services to the poor;
- providing scholarships to poor children;
- conducting training classes for practical skills;
- providing free classes on healthcare and education.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov't: None
- Other: Individual contributions, assistance from foreign NGOs and other organizations and fund raising through events and through contribution boxes at airports, hotels, etc.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't:
Had to obtain permission from government to get established. Must provide a yearly report on activities as a matter of formality. Does not need government approval in choosing its activities. Tries to influence government policy by publishing articles in newspapers with recommendations to the government.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Future: Hopes to expand operations "into all areas of need within Vietnam."

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: None

Other Information: Dr. Quang is a State official who was once earning a State salary and now gets a State pension. However, as president and volunteer of the Golden Heart Association, he is independent of the State.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
**PROFILE 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>The Society for the Support of Vietnamese Handicapped and Orphans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>2 Ngo Thi Nham Street, Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi  Telephone: 84-4-263026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee:</td>
<td>Ms. Hoang Lan, Executive Secretary General.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status:</td>
<td>Calls itself a non-governmental organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin:</td>
<td>Several decades of wars in Vietnam had left behind many orphans and children, infirmed as a result of injury or birth defects. Under Decision No 136-CT of the Prime Minister, dated 25 April 1992, this organization was formed to help the child victims of war.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal:</td>
<td>Rehabilitation and reintegration into community life of &quot;handicapped, [...] orphaned homeless and mixed-bloods children&quot; (brochure).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>A management board with Prof. Pham Khue as its chairperson. The organization operates throughout Vietnam on four levels: national, provincial, district and commune.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Main Activities: | - Providing free accommodation and food for orphaned and disabled children;  
- motivating government to provide financial assistance to them;  
- providing vocational training to young adolescents;  
- networking with foreign governmental and non-governmental organizations and overseas Vietnamese in order to gain support for these activities. |
| Funding: | - Vietnamese Gov’t: None  
- Other: International corporations and organizations. |
| Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t: | Had to obtain permission from government to get established. Subject to periodic checks from the Ministry of Finances. Professional help for training children is received from the Ministry of Education. |
| Problems Faced: | Lack of adequate funds. |
| Future: | To continue with its activities of supporting handicapped and orphaned children. |
| Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: | Information sharing and networking with the Women’s and Youth Unions, and the Ministries of Health and Finances. |
| Other Information: | Its Chairperson holds a governmental position as professor and head of the department of gerontology at Bach Mai Government Hospital. However, as Chairperson of the Society for the Support of Vietnamese handicapped and Orphans, he is independent of the State. |
| Documentation: | Brochure (see appendix 5). |
### PROFILE 3

**Name:** Xa me

**Address:** 13 Ngo Van Sa Street, Hoan Kiem District, Hanoi  
**Telephone:** 84-4-267132

**Interviewee:** Ms. Vu Thi Ngoc Oanh and Mr. Vu Tien, founders.

**Status:** Claims to be an organization established by the people and not by the State and hence non-governmental in structure and organization.

**Origin:** Started in 1990 as a programme to enable street children make their living by selling newspapers. The idea came about when these children, who begged and received food regularly from Mr. Vu Tien's restaurant, wanted to work in return. As there was not enough work available in the restaurant for a growing number of street children, the homeless orphan programme called TELT was started.

**Goal:** Community economic development, empowerment of children.

**Organization:** Mr. Vu Tien is the programme director in charge of 200 street children. Newspapers are donated by newspaper houses. Each child retains 20% of the daily earnings from the sale of newspapers, while the rest goes towards food, shelter and education, provided by Xa me.

**Main Activities:**
- Teaching street children how to earn a living by providing them with newspapers to sell;
- sending them to schools for professional training;
- finding suitable homes for them eventually.

**Funding:**
- Vietnamese Gov’t: None
- Other: Income by selling newspapers and some financial and organizational aid from International organizations.

**Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t:**
Xa Me had asked permission from the State to form this organization. However, so far it has not received permission as there is no law yet for such an organization. In order to operate legally, Xa Me is sponsored by the Hanoi Union of Teachers. The State recognizes their activities and does not interfere.

**Problems Faced:** Lack of adequate funds.

**Future:** Hopes that government gives legal recognition to them and to all similar organizations; wants the State and private organizations to implement the TELT model on a widespread basis.

**Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:** None

**Documentation:** A publication about the organization.
PROFILE 4

Name: The Children's Fund

Address: 55 Mac Dinh Chi Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City  Telephone: 84-8-25137

Interviewee: Ms. Nguyen Ngoc Dung, Deputy Director and Ms. Nguyen Thi Tuyet Le, staff.

Status: A people’s organization, refers to itself as quasi non-governmental.

Origin: Founded in 1988 by a group of social activists and intellectuals.

Goal: "Welfare care and education of children" (brochure).

Organization: An executive committee with various sub committees under it which take care of different sectors, i.e. education, malnutrition, handicapped children, communications, external relations, finance and ongoing projects. Twelve experts work regularly for The Children’s Fund on a paid and voluntary basis, and there are a number of outside volunteers.

Main Activities: - Rehabilitating handicapped children;
- Working towards eradicating malnutrition through various projects;
- Reintegrating street children into daily life through education.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: Material help such as providing land for activities and financial top-up grants for staff.
- Other: Donations from Vietnamese sources and financial and organizational aid from international agencies like Radda Barnen, Tokyo Union Church, Pearl Buck Foundation etc.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t:
Registered with the government as a (quasi) non-governmental organization.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:
Meets on a regular basis with the Social Work Resource Centre of HCMC.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 5

Name: Vietnam Blind Association

Address: 22 LY Thai To Street, Hanoi                     Telephone: 84-4-267340

Interviewee: Mr. Dao Xuan Hung, Chairman of Hanoi Blind Association.

Status: Refers to itself as an association, independent of the State and hence, an NGO. It has also been referred to as a non-governmental organization or very similar to one, by others e.g. some foreign non-governmental organizations and local resource persons.

Origin: Was established in 1969, when a group of 15 blind persons applied for permission to the government to form this association.

Goal: Rehabilitation and reintegration of the blind into community life.

Organization: The Vietnam Blind Association operates through the entire nation with branches at the national, provincial, district and commune level. The Hanoi Blind Association is a branch at the provincial level.

Main Activities:
- Teaching the blind how to read and write;
- rehabilitating, which involves organizing them into specialized branches of production, or providing them with capital to return to their families and contribute towards the household economy;
- organizing activity clubs for them;
- publishing books and cassettes which are available to all members;
- providing financial support for the needy and providing subsidies and loans at low interest rates;
- organizing recreational trips.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: Material assistance in the form of equipment and space.
- Other: Donations from international and domestic institutions, self-financed through sale of handicrafts made by members.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t: Had to obtain permission from government to get established. All foreign donations received have to be reported to the State.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Future: To continue in its activities of supporting and uniting the blind.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: None

Other Information: There are no State institutions or programmes for the blind in Vietnam. Membership to the association is reserved only to the blind and is free. The Hanoi Blind Association has 4700 members.

Documentation: None.
PROFILE 6

Name: Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (C.G.F.E.D.)
Address: 32A Dien Bien Phu Avenue, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-233130 Fax: 84-4-232410
Interviewee: Prof. Le Thi Nham Tuyet, Director.
Status: Calls itself a non-governmental organization.
Origin: Established as a research organization in April 1993.
Goal: To research the relationship between women, family and environment and to develop and implement strategies that aim at improving the status of women in Vietnam.
Organization: A Board of Directors consisting of six academics. Ten experts work for the centre but there are many collaborators from other institutions.
Main Activities: - Conducting interdisciplinary research on gender and related topics; - applying research in the formulation of strategies for socio-economic and cultural development, family planning and the environment; - teaching and training researchers in this field; - sponsoring research in this field.
Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: None
- Other: International organizations.
Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t:
Applied for and was granted permission by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Education to get established as an organization for research on women. Offers consultation on policy matters to the government.
Problems faced: Lack of adequate funds.
Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:
Information sharing and networking with the Women’s and Youth Unions.
Other Information: The Centre is currently involved in a project to do research on abortion and birth rates in rural communes and to device strategies in reducing them.
Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 7

Name: Women's Charity Association (WOCA)

Address: 186 Nam Ky Khoi Nghia, 3rd District, HCMC  
Telephone: 84-8-290081

Interviewee: Lê Thị Thanh, Vice President.

Status: Calls itself a non-governmental organization.

Origin: Established in 1989 under Licence No. 623/QDUB issued by the People's Committee of HCMC.

Goal: To help the poor, the sick, orphaned and handicapped children and the elderly in HCMC.

Organization: An Executive Committee which consists of a president, 6 Vice presidents and 24 members.

Main Activities:
- Running a credit programme without collateral for poor families wanting to do small businesses;
- organizing vocational training for youth;
- providing free education for poor children;
- providing financial support for the needy.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: None
- Other: Donations from Vietnamese industrialists and expatriates and from international funding agencies.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t: None

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: Not mentioned.

Other Information: WOCA was started and is run entirely by women from all walks of life. Many of them are members of the Women's Union.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 8

Name: Institute of Ecological Economy (ECO-ECO)
Address: Van Mieu - Quoc Tu Giam, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-252592  Fax: 84-4-255212
Interviewee: Prof. Dr. Nguyen Van Truong, Director and 5 members of the staff.
Status: Calls itself a non-governmental organization.
Origin: It was established in 1990 by the Decision of the State Committee of Sciences and Technologies. Its founding members consist of 19 scientists from various fields.
Goal: To understand and research the conflict between economic growth and ecological balance and find solutions to this end.
Organization: ECO-ECO includes 4 divisions concentrating on the ecological economy of urban, rural, upland and coastal land and 4 departments dealing with information, education and training, management and technical designs and Science and technology.
Main Activities:
- Setting up eco villages in different fragile ecosystems as demonstration models;
- networking with international institutions that focus on similar themes;
- influencing government policy through recommendations and consultancy;
- training and education on biodiversity conservation, resource management and environmental impact assessment;
- publishing articles and books independently or with other institutions;
- raising environmental awareness through workshops, seminars and the mass media.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov't: None
- Other: Through contracts with international organizations.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't:
Must get approval from government for carrying out its activities. Must make an annual report to the government on its activities.
Offers advice to Vietnamese policy-makers on environmental issues and briefs decision-makers in the formulation of Vietnam's strategy for sustainable economic development.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:
CRES

Other Information: ECO-ECO is an interdisciplinary organization. Its members consist of biologists, meteorologists, economists, sylviculturists, zoologists, engineers etc. At least six people were present for this interview and it was conducted in all 3 languages i.e. English, French and Vietnamese. This, at times led to some confusion and even some contradictions in the answers.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 9

Name: Centre for Natural Resources Management and Environmental Studies (CRES)

Address: 19 Le Thanh Tong, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-253506 Fax: 84-4-262932

Interviewee: Dr. Le Dien Duc.

Status: Calls itself a non-governmental organization.


Goal: To promote environmental research and education and to foster sustainable development.

Organization: A permanent staff of twelve members who work full-time for CRES and part-time for the Hanoi University.

Main Activities:
- Networking with international institutions focusing on similar themes;
- influencing government policy through recommendations and consultancy;
- training and education on biodiversity conservation, resource management and environmental impact assessment;
- publishing articles and books independently or with other institutions;
- raising environmental awareness through workshops, seminars and the mass media.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: None
- Other: Through contracts with International organizations.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t:
Established by the Ministry of Education and Training. However it is not supported financially by the government or the Hanoi University. CRES does not have to obtain permission from the government in order to undertake projects. Finances are not disclosed to the government but CRES has to write up a project report when it has been donated money by an international organization.
CRES offers advice to Vietnamese policy-makers on environmental issues and briefs decision-makers in the formulation of Vietnam’s strategy for sustainable economic development.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:
CERED

Other Information: Dr. Le Dien Duc is an expert on wetland management in Vietnam.
CRES has been successful in persuading the government in joining the Convention against illegal trade of endangered species (CITES).

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 10

Name: Centre for Environment Research, Education and Development (CERED)

Address: A01, K40 Giang Vo, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-345213

Interviewee: Dr. Nguyen Huu Ninh, Director.

Status: Calls itself a non-governmental organization.

Origin: It was established in 1991.

Goal: Carrying out "its strategy for environment and development research in Vietnam [...] and finding a balance between environmental conservation and socio-economic development" (brochure). Forming an internal and international network in the field of environmental studies.

Organization: A permanent staff of ten based in Hanoi, with a Director at its head.

Main Activities:
- Networking with international institutions focusing on similar themes;
- influencing government policy through recommendations and consultancy;
- training and education on biodiversity conservation, resource management and environmental impact assessment;
- publishing articles and books independently or with other institutions;
- raising environmental awareness through workshops, seminars and the mass media;
- translating and publishing essential documents on the environment in Vietnamese.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov't: None
- Other: Through contracts with International organizations.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't:
Sponsored by the Vietnam Union of Peace, Solidarity and Friendship Organizations which is a "national socio-political organization" to promote friendly relations between Vietnam and other countries. According to Dr. Ninh, the Union has soft links with the Communist Party.
CERED acts as consultants to the National Assembly. It offers advice to Vietnamese policy-makers on environmental issues and briefs decision-makers in the formulation of Vietnam's strategy for sustainable economic development.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Future: "To expand its constantly growing network of collaborators."

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:
None

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 11

Name: Business Management Institute (BMI)

Address: 217 Doi Can Street, Ba-Dinh, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-346737    Fax: 84-4-346737

Interviewee: Prof. Dr. Pham Van Nghien

Status: Claims to be a "financially self-run non-profit and non-governmental organization" (brochure).

Origin: It was established in 1991 under Decision No. 797 TC-LHH by the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations. As Vietnam was making the transition from a centrally planned agrarian economy to a market economy, one of the problems faced was a lack of managerial and business skills. BMI was established with the purpose of assisting small businesses in acquiring business expertise in order to meet the challenges of a changing economy.

Goal: To form a cadre of professionals, well-equipped with business skills to meet the demands and requirements of a market economy.

Organization: BMI consists of:
1) The Head Office
2) Department of research on the market economy
3) Training Centre for managers (Hanoi)
4) Law and economics training Centre (Ho Chi Minh City)
5) Centre for information and consultation.

Main Activities:
- Organizing training courses and workshops for businesses of all sectors and assisting with business organization;
- providing information and consulting services to business persons;
- acting as liaison between private businesses and the State in order to create a favourable atmosphere for the former.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov’t: None
- Other: Self-financed through earnings from consulting contracts and training courses and assisted by domestic and international organizations.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t: BMI had asked permission from the Vietnamese Union of Science and Technology to form this organization. The State recognizes their activities and does not interfere.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: None

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
**PROFILE 12**

**Name:** The Non-State Economic Development Center (NEDCEN)

**Address:** 77 Nguyen Thai Hoc, Hanoi.

**Telephone:** 84-4-234456  
**Fax:** 84-4-236382

**Interviewee:** Dr. Nguyen Tien Quan, General Director.

**Status:** Independent legal organization, "a semi NGO".

**Origin:** It was established in 1992 with the purpose of assisting small businesses in acquiring business expertise in order to meet the challenges of a changing economy.

**Goal:** To enhance "the development of non-state enterprises, including private enterprises, cooperatives, small enterprises and informal sector".

**Organization:** NEDCEN has branches in big cities.

**Main Activities:**
- Guiding the council of provinces and cities in organizing training courses and workshops for businesses of all sectors;
- providing information and consulting services to business persons;
- acting as liaison between Vietnamese private businesses and economic institutions abroad;
- providing small businesses with easy access to capital.

**Funding:**
- Vietnamese Gov't: None
- Other: Self-financed. No foreign funding.

**Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't:**
NEDCEN works with the State on some projects. Plays an intermediary role for small businesses to have access to State capital.

**Problems Faced:**
Lack of adequate funds.

**Future:**
It is not an NGO yet but will become one in the long run.

**Networking with Vietnamese Organizations:**
None

**Other Information:** In Vietnam the private sector is very small, almost on a family scale. In order that Vietnam has a healthy economic growth, efforts must be put into developing this sector. The government is doing very little to support small businesses.

**Documentation:** Brochure (see appendix 5).
PROFILE 13

Name: The Vietnamese Catholic Committee

Address: 15 Tu Xuong - 3rd District, HCMC
Telephone: 84-8-297616 Fax: 84-8-231071

Interviewee: Mr. Nguyen Gia Tran an Mr. Pham Dinh Thai, employees.

Status: Refers to itself as primarily a religious and social organization which is a quasi NGO.

Origin: Before 1975, there had been a long history of misunderstanding between the State and religion. This organization was established after 1975, to work towards creating peace and understanding between the State and the Catholic population.

Goal: To help the Catholic population adjust to the ongoing changes in Vietnam, to promote their welfare and to help the government understand them better.

Organization: It consists of a staff of 70 employees.

Main Activities: - Providing free education to poor children through "love classes" run by priests and nuns. At present 30 such classes with 50 children each are in operation;
- providing scholarships for needy children;
- organizing social work training for the workers.

Funding:
- Vietnamese Gov't: None
- Other: The Catholic Church.
  Funding for specific projects from international agencies e.g. Bread For the World and Missio.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't: Collaborates with the Government to create a favourable atmosphere for the Catholics of HCMC.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Vietnamese Organizations: None mentioned.

Other Information: Its Vice president represents the Catholic population at the National Assembly.

Documentation: None.
4.3 Review of Vietnamese NGOs

Mentioned below is an impressionistic view of the NGOs based on the interview and the information provided in the brochures. The next section provides an in depth analysis of them.

4.3.1 Some Salient Features

Vietnamese NGOs display the following salient features:

Newness

Almost all these organizations are recent, from a few months to five years old. Before the reforms of Doi Moi were introduced, private enterprise or any form of independently funded activity was officially nonexistent.

Relief and Welfare

Most of the profiled organizations (numbers 1-5, 7, 11-13) lean heavily to the direct servicing end of the development spectrum. Seven of the nine service-oriented NGOs are charitable, i.e., focusing on the poor or disabled; two focus on business training in general. Education is an activity common to all. In addition to their educational emphasis, three of the nine work to make credit available to new businesses.

The other four profiled NGOs (6, 8-10) are primarily concerned with research and general education. Three of those focus on ecology and one on gender and environment.
None of the profiled NGOs are involved in raising issues or advocating on behalf of vulnerable people against state agencies or new big private powers (discussed at length under 4.4.2 and 5.1).

Programmatic Independence
Most of the NGOs claim to be quite programmaticallly independent of the state. They all deny any form of governmental interference as far as activities are concerned. They said they were free to pursue whatever sectors and legal activities they wished. One explanation put forward for the lack of governmental interference was that their budgets were too small to elicit government interest (Interview with Dr. Nguyen Huu Ninh from CERED).

Roots in Academia
Most founding members are academics, either retired or still in service. They seem to be well-informed about their respective fields of involvement and seem to have formed their organizations out of a deep commitment for the development of their communities and of their nation.

Staff Also Holding Government Positions
Some NGO staff also hold a governmental position. This apparent paradox is understandable in the Vietnamese context where working at two or three jobs to make ends meet seems to be more the norm than the exception, and where most jobs are found
in the governmental sector. In this aspect, they differ greatly from NGOs in the North, where working for an NGO while holding a governmental position might appear unusual, impossible or, in certain cases, even a conflict of interest.

*Lack of Governmental Funding*

They receive no funding from the Vietnamese government.

4.3.2 **The Government’s Position on Vietnamese NGOs.**

According to Mr. Do Thanh Chan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, no law has been formulated so far relating to Vietnamese non-governmental organizations. Thus, in principle, they are not recognized by the state and hence their status is not "official". Yet, according to him, they are not illegal as the government acknowledges and approves of their existence. They are recognized by the People’s Committees at the city level. The main reason for the gap in legislation, as was gathered from conversations and interviews with individuals working with government, for NGOs and in the NCSSH is the newness of the term NGO, presumably after 1990 or after the arrival of the international NGOs in Vietnam. Being a new concept it is not entirely understood by the government. For many, the term even evoked an anti-governmental connotation, in the beginning (Interview with Do Duc Dinh 1994). Now, however, according to Mr. Chan, the government policy is to "let them exist if they do no harm." He spoke of a growing governmental interest in domestic NGOs, because the government would like to see foreign funding put to efficient use.
The Department of International Organization in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in the process of formulating regulations for domestic NGOs. Once legislated, it will allow these organizations to apply for permission to operate as officially recognized NGOs. However, Mr. Chan conceded that although they were legally nonexistent, it would be fair to say that these organizations were involved in NGO-like activities. Due to the current absence of legislation, however, their status is still ambiguous.

Concerns were expressed regarding the authenticity of some of these organizations by the Vietnamese government and also by members from the international community. It was suggested that some of these organizations might be misusing the term NGO in order to get easy access to foreign funding, which could be used for salaries for the staff. Whether that was the case or not was difficult to assess.

4.4 Analysis

In order to analyze the role and potential of Vietnamese NGOs as mechanisms of socio-economic development, it is important to determine their status and identify the barriers they face. Corresponding to the research questions, this section analyzes the findings by evaluating the above mentioned profiles by drawing on typologies and definitions of NGOs as put forward by some authors in order to determine the status of the Vietnamese NGOs.
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Identifying some of the barriers to their effectiveness as agents of development, which involves critiquing them through the perspective of advocacy planning.

Examining their current and future role in addressing socio-economic conditions in Vietnam.

4.4.1 Status of Vietnamese NGOs

Interviews and conversations with most people in international and local circles in Vietnam revealed a common conviction: a lack of acknowledgment of the Vietnamese voluntary organizations as NGOs on the grounds that they did not possess the characteristics and administer the functions of NGOs and consequently did not qualify as mechanisms of socio-economic development. The analysis below, based mainly on Korten’s typology and also on Friedmann’s definition of NGOs attempts to evaluate the status of Vietnamese NGOs.

Vietnamese NGOs as Evaluated according to Friedmann’s Definition

John Friedmann argues that mainstream economic development offers little hope to the excluded majority. What he proposes instead, is an alternative mode of development which is akin to the notion of development as expounded in this thesis. The harbingers of this development are NGOs. These he defines as

officially registered professional groups whose university-educated core staff focus their work on communities of the disempowered. (...) They may engage in a variety of tasks, from project work to process-oriented work, action research, and pure research. (1992:146).
Evaluating them according to Friedmann's definition, the Vietnamese NGOs profiled above exhibit the following features in addition to those mentioned under section 4.3:

They are professional groups, officially registered with the Prime Minister's office or a relevant Ministry as associations. They are funded privately, through public donations or international organizations. They receive no governmental funding. In this respect, they are truly non-governmental, even more so than some of their western counterparts who depend on substantial top-up from their governments. Their main source of funding, comprises donations from international agencies and NGOs, domestic fundraising and self-financing. Having no regular source of funding, they are all in a financially vulnerable position.

From their goals and objectives it is evident that these organizations attempt to empower vulnerable segments of the population. In some cases they substitute, to a certain degree, some of the services once provided by the government i.e. free education and training, free health care, support services to women etc. Some others provide services that equip the population with skills to face the challenges of a new economic order e.g. business training. Whether this form of empowerment is effective or not is discussed below under 4.4.3.
They are **involved in various development-oriented activities**. In terms of approach, training and education of target groups is the most pursued activity common to all. A majority of them (numbers 1-5, 7, 11-13) provide direct relief and welfare services, while some (6,8-10) are engaged primarily in research activities.

**Vietnamese NGOs as Evaluated According to Korten’s Typology**

In 1985, while working for the U.S. Agency for International Development, David Korten began to develop some insights into the role of NGOs. Analyzing them as facilitators of social change, he noticed a definite pattern in their evolution. He formed categories to mark their progress, observing that each subsequent category moved further away from addressing symptoms of poverty towards democratizing development. He formulated this into a typology (see Table 1 on following page).

Korten's typology of the four generations of NGOs aroused a great deal of interest among NGOs because they could identify their experiences with it or evaluate their choices according to it. This typology, especially the first and second generations\(^{11}\) can be a useful tool in understanding Vietnamese NGOs on their evolutionary path.

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\(^{11}\) This thesis has concentrated only on the first two generations of Korten's typology as Vietnamese NGOs fall in these categories, especially the first in most cases.
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(Source: Korten, 1990:117)
First generation NGOs respond to an immediate need of a target community by providing materials or services that meet those needs. It is welfare support where the beneficiary is a passive receiver of the charity. Public education on development is provided mostly for the purpose of raising funds and usually through the dramatic presentations of "starving children appealing from magazines and TV screens with sad and longing eyes for a kind person to help them by sending money to the sponsoring NGO" (Korten, 1990:116). The origins of many NGOs in the North can be traced back to the first generation category, e.g. CARE, Oxfam, etc. which started off as organizations of charity towards the victims of war and famine.

Second generation strategies believe in capacity building of the target group to answer its own needs. The emphasis of the NGO is on managing projects together with the target group, with the purpose of creating local self reliance. The NGO mobilizes the inert forces of the target group through education. Sometimes the NGO provides management skills to a group to develop its economic resource value for gainful employment (Korten, 1990:119). The NGO mobilizes the beneficiary to react resourcefully to a problem. In short, second generation strategies believe in community development12.

\[12\] Community development can be seen as comprising three important elements:

- community organizing (ad hoc and institution-building);
- "consciousness raising" (about the meaning of development and the implications for personal action); and,
- restructuring society (through state policies/programs and community initiative) to enhance the role of communities in managing territory, producing and distributing wealth, and giving meaning to life (...) Good community development planning is an
Judging from their goals and activities, 6 of the 13 Vietnamese NGOs interviewed (#s 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 13) match the characteristics of the first generation. In all these cases the NGO plays a pivotal role in providing direct logistics management (free education, free accommodation, free health services) by responding to the immediate shortages experienced by a target group (women, children, etc.) to achieve its relief and welfare-oriented goals ("to help the less fortunate" (#1) or, provide "welfare care and education of children" (#3), etc.). The NGO in all these cases is the chief actor and the beneficiary is a passive receiver. Development education of the public is mostly limited to fundraising and is done, in some cases through moving pictures (brochure of Profile 4 in appendix 5) or wording (brochure of Profile 2 in appendix 5).

Just a few Vietnamese NGOs display some of community development characteristics of the second generation and only to a certain degree at that. For example, #s 11 and 12 engage in some form of community organizing by providing managerial and business skills to individuals from the informal sector, small enterprises and cooperatives to assist them in meeting the challenges of a changing economy, and #5 provides the blind community of Vietnam with organizational skills.

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action-research process, rational and participatory in its inputs, effective and educative in its outputs. In good community development planning, the community is the agent as well as the focus of planning. (Boothroyd, 1991:129).
According to Korten, the development of an NGO from one generation to the next, stems from the NGO’s awareness of the limitations of the previous one. It is from the critical self-evaluation of its experiences, that the NGO moves along the development continuum onto the next generation. For example, second generation strategies of community empowerment emerged from the realization that relief and welfare assistance offered just a temporary solution to the symptoms of underdevelopment (Korten, 1990:118). In the case of Vietnamese NGOs which are mostly in the first generation category, it is very likely that their logical transition, according to Korten’s experience, would be towards the second generation (and not the third or the fourth). Therefore, at this point, it would seem a bit premature to expect Vietnamese NGOs to develop third or fourth generation strategies of sustainable systems development and people’s movements respectively (see Table 2).¹³

Korten’s framework is helpful to understand the current status and potential evolution of Vietnamese NGOs. However, although models can be liberating through their ability to condense knowledge through classification, they tend to be reductionist due to their incapacity to be comprehensive. Thus, not all aspects of a given reality can be represented by a model.

¹³ Some Vietnamese NGOs claimed to be involved in what would normally be termed as third and fourth generation activities like raising public and governmental consciousness through research and education and also through influencing governmental policy concerning women’s status and ecological issues (#s 8,9 and 10). However, my impression from the interviews with the NGOs and with the government official was that their influence on government policy was precious little, if any at all.
Korten's typology was distilled from a historically and culturally diverse sample of NGOs. His selection of NGOs span the last four decades from different countries in the North and the South. However, his typology, like any other typology, refers to NGOs in the aggregate. It does not reflect the distinct individuality of each NGO or the unique political context of a country. Therefore, while using the typology as a point of departure in analyzing the role and potential of a country's NGOs, it is necessary to look beyond it by taking the particular socio-politico-economic features of that country into consideration.

The examples used in Korten's typology are, for the most part derived from democratic countries. In applying Korten's typology to analyze Vietnamese NGOs, the most important difference to bear in mind is Vietnam's political structure of centralized decision-making by a one party state of the classical Soviet style, which would normally leave no scope for the development of emerging independent organizations. But, one has also to bear in mind that the radical changes of Doi Moi were "inspired by grassroots criticism of the centrally controlled economy and stagnant bureaucracy" (Brazier, 1992:53). Thus a unique political context would impart a distinct flavour to the identity and functions of Vietnamese NGOs, which transcend the confines of a typology.

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On the basis of the above definition and typology it would be erroneous to disregard the functions and capacities of the thirteen organizations studied or to question their validity.
as development-oriented organizations. These are NGOs in the initial stages of development, they display some quintessential features and functions of NGOs, and evolving along the development spectrum, could potentially be effective in promoting social development by empowering the poor, eradicating poverty and promoting social development.

However, Vietnamese NGOs currently lack essential characteristics that prevent them from being effective agents of development. Mentioned below are some of the important barriers to their effectiveness as agents of development.

4.4.2 Some Barriers to their Effectiveness as Agents of Development

No Advocacy

It is interesting to note that none are actively involved in such tasks as advocacy or lobbying. According to Minear (1987:201), advocacy is one of the three missions...
generally associated with NGOs in the North (the other two are meeting human need in the South and educating Northern publics on global issues). Advocacy along with institution building and lobbying the government is the main means of operation of most NGOs in the North and of many effective Southern NGOs too. To give one example of the many cases of successful NGO advocacy efforts in the South: A network of NGOs in the South Indian state of Karnataka was successful in overturning a governmental decision to hand over forest land to the largest industrial conglomerate in India for the plantation of eucalyptus trees for industrial use. (Potter, 1994:13). In Vietnam, however the situation is different. As mentioned above, advocacy is virtually nonexistent. The reasons for this are mostly political as listed below:

- the lack of a need of executing the role of advocacy in the past, as traditionally, it has always been performed by mass organizations which operate country-wide at the national, provincial, district and commune level.

For example, the Vietnam’s Women’s Union plays an important role in advocating on behalf of Vietnamese women. It is active in shaping state
policies that reflect public opinion at the grassroots level and translating them back nation-wide (see appendix 3).

- the fledgling status of Vietnamese NGOs on the developmental scene. Vietnamese NGOs are not yet familiar with the different techniques employed by other NGOs in the world due to their recent status and also due to the lack of contact with other NGOs.

- the fear of or inexperience in criticizing the government stemming from a non democratic tradition. Until the reforms of Doi Moi, freedom of expression was restricted. People were hesitant to speak their minds and contact with foreigners was forbidden (Brazier, 1992:52). This has changed since Doi Moi. People are starting to speak up against corruption and other controversial issues. The party newspaper, Nhan Dan is no longer censored by the Central Committee. However, there still exists a certain degree of precaution in airing views freely (Wurfel, 1989:34). Thus, for the present, engaging in safe activities like teaching, researching and relief and welfare seems a reasonable choice.

**No Networking**

Networking is conspicuously absent. Most organizations seem to be unaware of each other's presence and when some are, they do not seem to coordinate their efforts. This
is different from other countries where some NGOs work in solidarity with the purpose of effectuating change\textsuperscript{16} or where most NGOs are in constant contact with each other regarding development issues, to work more efficiently. The lack of contact between indigenous NGOs could very likely stem from the lack of awareness of the others’ presence due to the unavailability of information on them.

Vietnamese NGOs have also very little contact with their international counterparts (with the exception of #s 8, 9 & 10 which engage in limited networking with international agencies) apart from a few financial ties. This deprives them of access to valuable experience of successful NGO elsewhere. Vietnamese NGOs are thus operating in isolation which is not conducive to their evolution.

\textit{No Legal Status}

As mentioned above, the Vietnamese NGOs seem to be operating in a legal void. This impacts their very existence as it questions the credibility of their status which in its turn affects their leverage in finding international partners and in fundraising.

\textbf{4.4.3 Mechanisms of Socio-Economic Development}

How significant is the current and potential contribution of Vietnamese NGOs towards socio-economic development in Vietnam today?

\textsuperscript{16} The Asian Coalition for Housing Rights in Thailand is an example of a group of NGOs working together on housing rights for the poor, who have gained significance and leverage by coordinating their efforts and ideas.
For the present, the most significant contribution is their very existence. This is explained below:

**Gateways for International Assistance**

If officially recognized they can serve as channels for development projects initiated by international NGOs. As was gleaned from the UN-NGO forum and from conversations with some members of the international NGO community in Hanoi, the latter would benefit by networking with indigenous NGOs whose local expertise would enable the international NGOs to access target groups efficiently in implementing development projects. At present, international NGOs are allowed to operate only through the government. This involves jumping several hurdles like bureaucracy and corruption which detracts from the efficacy of a project\(^7\) (Interview with Marie Etherton, Director of NGO Resource Centre, see appendix 2). The benefit would be mutual as the Vietnamese NGO would gain experience, expertise and status from the contact.

**Mediums of Raising Governmental Consciousness**

The fact that they exist indicates a slack in governmental policy regarding social progress. Their presence serves to remind the government of the increasing social

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\(^7\) An international NGO worker in Hanoi complained of the cumbersome administrative procedures required to import some expensive hospital equipment for a development project. This was a failure because the equipment, once in the country was lying around unused for several months as a result of bureaucracy and government neglect. It is instances like these that make international NGOs shy away from government and seek out the cooperation of local NGOs.
inequalities in Vietnam. Some NGOs (#s 8,9,&10) are beginning to influence
government policy through recommendations and consultancy.

* * *

Although the existence of Vietnamese NGOs is significant for Vietnam today, their
contribution to the social development of Vietnam is not sufficient in the face of
accelerating social dilemmas under Doi Moi and the decreasing governmental support
available to address these. Vietnamese NGOs fall mostly in the relief and welfare
category of Korten’s typology. This means that the empowerment they are aiming to
provide the target groups with risks to be short term in nature depending on funding and
other resources and it might risk creating dependency of the target group on the NGO.
It would not enable target groups to identify problems and find solutions independently
thus defeating the purpose of development as defined earlier in this thesis.

But, as Korten has pointed out, it is not uncommon to find NGOs in Southern countries
start off with a first generation approach, question its validity on gaining experience and
consequently evolve towards employing more effective development strategies (Korten,
1990:118). This might apply to some Vietnamese NGOs of the future, although it is
difficult to determine which ones.
Vietnamese NGOs have yet to create a developmental niche for themselves and establish credibility as supplements or substitutes for ineffectual governmental programmes, as has been done successfully by NGOs in many Southern countries. In Indonesia, a country loosely comparable to Vietnam in terms of an unsupportable political environment for NGOs, a non-democratic government and the absence of a strong opposition (Lim Teck Ghee, 1988:179), NGOs are beginning to walk in where the government has failed to tread. Andrew Pinney talks about the ineffectiveness and inappropriateness of some rural government programmes in Indonesia because:

- the government officials' top-down approach leaves no room for the wishes of the poor peasants;
- the programmes designed by urban-based planners reflect little understanding of rural conditions;
- projects aimed at middle level peasants with a belief in the trickle-down effect, in fact result in gaping social inequalities; and
- programmes mostly designed for large administrative units end up marginalizing the small ones.
In contrast, NGO programmes have proven to be effective because:

- their smallness of scale allows them to concentrate on a few activities efficiently;
- their policy of ensuring public participation in the decision making process produces results that are desired by the community, as opposed to projects that are simply dropped on the target communities irrespective of its wishes;
- their flexibility and voluntary spirit allows them to act quickly and innovatively to a given situation;
- their staff is committed to the cause of just development;

(Pinney, 1983:37).

Speculating from the evolutionary process of NGOs in other countries, it is very likely that NGOs in Vietnam too would experience circumstances enabling them to prove their effectiveness.

As Vietnam marches on along the path of economic liberalization, leaving reduced social services and social polarization in its wake, it is highly probable that the role played by local NGOs attains more significance as they may be increasingly depended on to deliver services once provided by the government. It is also very likely that the NGOs may develop strong advocacy and educational roles.
4.5 Conclusions

Vietnamese NGOs are still in the relief and welfare stage of Korten’s typology of NGO evolution (Table 1). At this point their effectiveness as mechanisms of social change and progress is limited, due to a number of barriers which include the factors mentioned above like

- a lack of political experience which limits their role as advocates for the underprivileged;
- very little leverage due to an ambiguous status;
- virtually no access to information from experienced international counterparts; and
- a lack of reliable funding which threatens their existence.

However, given time and proper conditions like official status and recognition (discussed in next chapter), proper financing and advocacy skills, they could develop their potential as surrogates for ineffective governance and mechanisms of community development by mobilizing community self reliance, building sustainable institutions and challenging policy constraints, which has been the case with NGOs in other third world countries. The realization of this potential would be contingent on the factors mentioned above and the farsightedness of the NGO itself in perceiving the dynamic political situation nationally and globally and developing strategies accordingly.
CHAPTER FIVE

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING TO ENHANCE THE POTENTIAL OF VIETNAMESE NGOS

How can the potential of Vietnamese NGOs be enhanced as tools of sustainable and equitable growth in Vietnam under Doi Moi? How can their effectiveness be increased as a third system discussed earlier in footnote 2 of this thesis. This chapter addresses the third component of the thesis purpose i.e. speculative. It does so by discussing a few planning responses for the different actors as preliminary points of departure for action based on the analysis of the factors that constrain Vietnamese NGOs and those that would enhance their interests. The factors that constrain them include

a) the inaccessibility to information and experience of similar organizations at home and abroad and

b) a lack of advocacy planning which could entail questioning and influencing government policies in favour of just development.

The factors that could enhance their interests include legal status and recognition and skills training.

5.1 Implications for Vietnamese NGOs

* Emulate Vietnamese NGOs can learn from the implementation strategies of many international NGOs by actively networking with them. Currently, from the 200 international NGOs involved with development in Vietnam (see appendix 4),
approximately 30 have a staffed branch of their organization mostly in Hanoi, where the majority of Vietnamese NGOs interviewed for this study are operating and some in HCMC, where other Vietnamese NGOs are established. Vietnamese NGOs can take advantage of this proximity and start networking with the international NGOs. Vietnamese NGOs can also draw inspiration from examples closer to home i.e. from poor countries. NGOs all over the developing world have many success stories to their credit in making their governments sensitive to the notion of just development. Vietnamese NGOs can learn by networking with NGOs in neighbouring Southern nations like Indonesia, the Philippines etc., which have successfully campaigned against unjust development in their countries. At present, there is little evidence of networking between Vietnamese and international NGOs. Informational aid through these sources can only improve the functional capacities of Vietnamese NGOs.

* Educate At present, this activity is limited to small target groups e.g. children, women, etc. It does not consist of involving communities and educating them in self help strategies. Consciousness raising is one of the components of community development, successfully employed by many international NGOs. Brazilian NGOs, for example, developed the approach of "conscientization" which is a combination of political education, community organization and bottom-up development, to help raise awareness among the poor and empower them (Clark, 1990:31). Vietnamese NGOs can employ similar techniques to enhance their effectiveness. To do this, they can "capitalize on communism" (Hannah, 1992:14) by working through the mass organizations which exist
at national, provincial district and village levels and which have a well developed network of extension workers through which NGOs can have immediate access to the grassroots and can work to raise awareness in the masses regarding issues concerning community development and globalization.

* **Consolidate** Vietnamese NGOs can be actively involved in the exchange of ideas, information and methodology with each other. The current situation points to the contrary. NGOs can operate more efficiently in solidarity than in solitude as seen from examples in other countries like Thailand, India, Indonesia, etc. Forming an umbrella organizations could constitute a step in the right direction.

* **Advocate** This is an important function for Vietnamese NGOs to carry out in order to improve their potential as mechanisms of socio-economic equality. Advocacy as an NGO activity came about in the 1970s from the realization that poverty was political by nature (Clark, 1990:31).

Political involvement could be dangerous ground to tread on in a country like Vietnam, where criticizing the government is not done as freely as in democratic countries. But this situation is very likely to change with the increasing contact with the western world. The main thrust of advocacy by Vietnamese NGOs would be to influence the different actors i.e. government, international NGOs and academics in their policy formulations,
the implementation of which would eventually lead to the desired results of just
development.

Advocacy planning should play the role of a

facilitator of social change through the support by the planner of social groups whose
interests had previously been excluded from the planning process.

These words are extremely relevant to the potential role of Vietnamese NGOs in the
context of Doi Moi, where some segments of the population face social exclusion as a
result of economic restructuring.

Advocacy by a Vietnamese NGO could involve examining government policies that
encourage or ignore polarization between the rich and the poor. It can campaign the
government to improve or create policies regarding taxation of high income groups or
regarding clear legislation. It could also be part of the NGO policy to examine and
campaign against those international agencies or MNCs whose policies aim at economic
growth at the cost of social development. Vietnamese NGOs can also play a role in
influencing the policies of international NGOs and academic institutions regarding
linkages, funding, joint research projects, information exchange etc., all of which would
be instrumental in creating an environment of equitable development.
5.2 Implications For Vietnamese Government

The status of Vietnamese NGOs would gain significance internationally and leverage locally if the government recognized them through clear legislation. Clarity on their status may facilitate networking with international NGOs, consultations with government on national development projects and fundraising.

As has been the case in other Southern nations, government recognition of NGO existence can be followed by government realization of NGO significance leading to the incorporation of NGO efforts into governmental programmes. Thus, even in a country like Indonesia, where NGOs have to struggle to exist in the face of an NGO-unfriendly government, the latter has begun to absorb the experiences of NGOs, like YAKKUM and YIS in its Ministry of Health programmes (Pinney, 1983:40). Working together can be mutually beneficial (although this is not always the case). The government benefits from the NGOs’ skills, efficiency, flexibility and innovativeness while the NGO gains standing, income and an access to the national development scene.

Proper legislation would also reduce the risk of organizations being formed that are ostensibly non-profit and development-oriented but are in fact fronts or channels for personal greed.

The Vietnamese government can also facilitate the work of domestic (and international) NGOs by implementing policies which simplify bureaucratic procedures and which provide easy and direct access to target communities.
5.3 Implications For International NGOs

International NGOs can start by recognizing Vietnamese NGOs. They can strengthen domestic NGOs by building local alliances with them that transcend just a donor-recipient relationship by offering practical support for institution building. This could entail financial, organizational, and educational support which is self-enabling and which promotes mutual confidence, learning and respect in the long run. In their early stages, domestic NGOs can serve as conduits of developmental assistance, but over time can be delegated with more responsibilities in goal setting, project undertaking and implementation. This view is also expressed by Kingston Kajese from the Development Innovations and Networks in Zimbabwe

To our friends in the international NGO community, we in the South are saying "What you are expecting from us is good. With your help we will strive towards a measure of participatory development and self-reliance among our grassroots groups. Help us by practising what you preach."


5.4 Conclusions

Through proper policies that help them overcome their barriers and that support their interests, Vietnamese NGOs can develop their potential as mechanisms assisting in implementing socio-economic equalities in Vietnam. In the context of Vietnamese market socialism, where most activities are still controlled by government and a few others are being opened up to market forces, Vietnamese NGOs can provide the third force in development. These three forces of state, market and the people can "complement and
reinforce each other's momentum in particular respects" (Hainsworth, 1983:61). Also, some functions would be best administered by the state and yet others would be more efficient if executed by commercial enterprises. But to give preference to either one over the other would be to ignore the possibility of NGOs as a third force (Hainsworth, 1983:62).
CHAPTER SIX    CONCLUSION

6.1 Diagnosis

This thesis has raised the broad issue of social fairness in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in its transition towards a market economy. It has attempted to address this issue by focusing on the emergence of NGOs through the examples of thirteen case studies. It has identified the different kinds of NGOs, examined the conditions under which they are emerging, evaluated their status and analyzed their current role and future potential in addressing socio-economic conditions in Vietnam in the context of Doi moi.

Summing up, one can say that Vietnamese NGOs are professional organizations with a not-for-profit philosophy formed by socially conscious individuals and involved in activities that benefit people other than their own members. They are relatively autonomous from the state in the pursuit of their activities, financially independent from it and have yet to be recognized by it. They engage in safe activities that do not threaten existing power structures. They are recently established, during the last five years and, as a result perhaps, are in the early stages of evolution as instruments of community development. They are mainly oriented towards providing relief and welfare services and unlike many international NGOs are not involved in issue-specific advocacy or institution building. They are not dissimilar to international NGOs in some other ways and display some unique features. Compared to domestic NGOs in many other
countries, however, Vietnamese NGOs are still few in number and usually small in size. There are no umbrella organizations to foster or coordinate them.

A common sentiment expressed by the Vietnamese NGOs during interviews was the faith and capacity of the Vietnamese people to plan in the face of external difficulties. Vietnam had undergone a hard struggle of thirty years to free itself from French colonialism and American imperialism. The NGOs felt strongly about the inherent power of nationalism in the Vietnamese people to organize themselves efficiently under challenging circumstances. Mass movements like the Fatherland Front and the Women’s Union found their roots in this legacy. The NGOs unanimously felt that the solidarity of purpose of the Vietnamese people through suffering and scarcity had amplified their compassion for each other and for their nation, sharpened their sense of fairness and intensified their desire for a peaceful and prosperous Vietnam. This motivation underscores the raison d’etre of Vietnamese NGOs and constitutes an important asset in their struggle towards creating a just society.

Among the problems they face are: unreliable funding, non recognition from their government or the international NGO community and political inexperience. To their advantage however, in addition to the motivational factor mentioned above, is firstly, a high literacy rate of the Vietnamese population of 82% making it easier to educate and mobilize communities and secondly, the structure of the mass organizations, working through which can give them easy and immediate access to the grassroots.
6.2 Prognosis

Combining economic growth with social progress are the two main objectives of Doi Moi in Vietnam. Judging from the newly emerging entrepreneurial dynamism in the urban centres as well as from official statistics regarding economic growth rate, decline in inflation, agricultural output, industrial production and exports, Vietnam has launched itself irreversibly on the path of economic growth. But the transition from a centrally planned command economy to a socialist market economy has produced its dilemmas: cut-back of social services, increased social polarity and unemployment. The political reality points towards a trend in favour of maximizing economic potential at the cost of neglecting social progress (Le Huu Tang, 1993:18).

However, a country like Vietnam has the potential to be a trailblazer in the developing and in the socialist world in setting up a political economy that retains the best of existing socialism and acquires the most efficient from a market economy. It can "reinvent Socialism"\(^\text{18}\), creating a sort of a welfare state model for the developing world where economic progress does not compromise social equality, or in other words, where

\(^{18}\) Term used by editors Turley and Selden as the title of their book *Reinventing Vietnamese Socialism* Westview, Boulder, 1993.
development is sustainable.

Sustainable development is positive socio-economic change that does not undermine ecological and social systems upon which communities and societies are dependent (Rees, 1989).

Unfortunately, sustainable development has eluded most countries. Conventional indicators of economic prosperity do not necessarily reflect social and environmental costs. There is mounting theoretical and practical evidence of increasing global poverty mostly in the third world, which is a reflection of the capabilities of the government and/or the market to provide for the basic requirements of food, shelter and health care of marginalized segments even while achieving high rates of economic growth.

Who is to say whether the economic restructuring in Vietnam would produce dissimilar results than those mentioned above. It is possible, that the Vietnamese case might be different from other third world governments who, in their race towards economic development have neglected the social welfare of their populations. After all, Doi Moi's fundamental objective, as formulated by the then VCP Secretary-General, Nguyen Van Linh (Interview with Italian Communist paper l'UNITA, June 21, 1987, quoted in Thai Quang Trung, 1990:38) was to "tap the country's latent potential" and develop its "productive forces" through international assistance, all while remaining "within the realm of socialism" and aiming "at its better attainment in Vietnam" (Emphasis added).
But then again, current evidence of growing polarization and reduced social services manifests those precarious symptoms, similar to unsustainable third world economies. Vietnam might be facing the danger of developing into an unrestrained capitalist economy with all its negative implications of unsustainable development and unequal growth under apathetic governments. The global economy’s resource demands might soon dominate the local economy while the local government may not have the means to counterbalance these international forces. Unless appropriate planning is effectuated, it is unlikely that Vietnam will follow a different trajectory of development than other third world countries which were integrated in the global economy such as Malaysia, India, Indonesia, etc. This means that benefits might accrue to a select few while the majority bears the externalities of economic progress.

NGOs are the true forces, if perhaps the only ones of sustainable development. Popular movements have sprung up all over the world as a reaction to inadequate governments and unfair markets. Well established NGOs in countries like Bangladesh and Brazil are taking local action to fight against social injustices. In Vietnam, they are slowly emerging as a result of and a response to the changes of the new economic order. At present their impact on the Vietnamese social development scene is low. But given the right resources and conditions, they can hold a promising potential for the future in assisting the people of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in their transition towards market socialism.
APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE
APPENDIX 1

Interview Questions to Vietnamese NGOs

1. What are the goals of your organization?
2. How do you achieve them?
3. What are your main activities?
4. What is the structure of your organization?
5. How are you funded?
6. Do you receive any support from the Vietnamese government financially or in other ways?
7. Do you work with the government? How?
8. Would you describe your organization as an NGO?
9. What do you understand by the term NGO?
10. Could you describe some of the projects your organization has undertaken?
11. Does your organization network with domestic or international NGOs?
12. Does it receive any foreign funding?
13. Did your organization participate in any national or international conferences on Development?
14. What event or need prompted the creation of your organization?
15. Have you encountered problems or difficulties in implementing programmes?
16. What do you see as future trends for community development for your organization?
APPENDIX 2

RESOURCE PERSONS CONSULTED
APPENDIX 2

Resource Persons Consulted

Carole Beaulieu
Journalist, Hanoi.

Somsook Boonyabancha
Asian Coalition for Housing Rights, Bangkok.

Debra Burke
Programme Officer, East Meets West, Hanoi.

Chris Cziborr
Associate Editor, Dataconsult, Bangkok.

Do Duc Dinh
Institute of World Economy, NCSSH

Linda Demers
Country Director, UNFPA, Hanoi.

Mary Etherton
Director, NGO Resource Centre, Hanoi.

Denis Fenton
Environment Consultant, UNDP, Hanoi.

Noga Gale
Instructor, Capilano College, Vancouver.

Penny Gurstein
Professor, UBC, Vancouver.

Peter Higgs
Urban Housing Researcher, Hanoi.

Maud Johansson
Programme Officer, Rädda Barnen, Hanoi.

Govind Kelkar
Professor, AIT, Bangkok.
Susan Lesjak  
Liaison Officer, Oxfam Québec/OCSD, Hanoi.

Bertrand Mendis  
Senior Programme Coordinator, UNICEF, Hanoi.

Rene Parenteau  
Visiting Professor, AIT, Bangkok.

Tricia Parker  
Programme Officer, Oxfam Hongkong, Hanoi.

Pham Dinh Thai  
Social Worker, HCMC.

David Potter  
Professor, The Open University, UK.

Tim Schaffter  
Assistant Country Director, CARE Vietnam, Hanoi.

Mark Sidel  

Cam Sylvester  
Instructor, Capillano College, Vancouver.

Tran Thi Phuong Trinh  
Ph.D Candidate, AIT, Bangkok.

Tranh Minh Chau  
Employee, Land and Housing Department, HCMC.

Colin White  
UNV Programme Officer, UNDP, Hanoi.
APPENDIX 3

PROFILES OF VIETNAMESE GONGOs

All the mass organizations, e.g. the Women’s Union, the Peasant’s Union, the Youth Union, etc., were referred to as GONGOs by Mr. Do Thanh Chan of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. GONGOS were said to be formed by the people; they are partly programmed by their members. However, their staff are employees of the State. Hence, GONGOs are seen to be a mix between State and non-State sectors.
Name: Vietnam Women's Union (VWU)

Address: 39 Hang Chuoi Street, Hanoi
Telephone: 84-4-253436  Fax: 84-4-253143

Interviewee: Ms. Do Thi Vinh, Programme Officer and Dr. Nguyen Kim Cuc, Head of the International Relations Department.

Status: A government-sponsored mass organization.

Origin: Established in 1930.

Goal: To unite and organize the women of Vietnam and to represent their rights.

Organization: Operates throughout the country on four levels: national, provincial, district and commune. The VWU has a membership of 10 million women.

Main Activities: - Actively participating in the formulation of state policies and laws concerning women, and advocating on their behalf. Because of its four-level network, the VWU can gather information at the grassroots level which can be processed to make proposals to the government to formulate policies on women. Once a policy is drafted it is tested at the grassroots level; informing and educating women about their rights and providing opportunities to participate in development programmes such as job creation and income generation, family planning, immunization, etc.; - networking with international women's organizations.

Funding: The Vietnamese Government.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't: 90% of the recommendations put forward by the VWU have been formulated into laws by the government. According to Decision 163 promulgated by the Council of Ministers, government agencies are responsible for consulting the VWU when making decisions concerning women.

Problems Faced: Lack of trained personnel.

Future: Would like to increase gender awareness among government ministries and inform them about the impacts of Doi Moi on women at all levels.

Networking with Other Organizations: Works as a partner organization with foreign NGOs. Has worked with international organizations like SIDA, UNICEF and UNFPA on some development projects for women.

Other information: Since doi-moi, the VWU has gained considerable independence from the government in its activities, although still supported financially by the State. According to some resource persons, it has the potential of developing into an autonomous body in the future.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
Name: V.A.C. Ho Chi Minh Association

Address: 271 Nuyen Trong Tuyen, Phu Nhuan District HCMC. Telephone: 84-8-441271

Interviewee: Mr. Tran Quang Toan, Assistant Current Affair Staff.

Status: A mass organization.\(^{19}\)

Origin: Established in 1988 by a group of farmers.

Goal: To help farmers improve household economy by promoting the VAC model.\(^{20}\)

Organization: VAC-HCMC is a part of a nationwide organization, VAC-VINA, which operates in 38 provinces and cities. It has a membership of nearly 70,000.

Main Activities: - Training farmers in ecological agricultural;
                  - promoting awareness through the mass media;
                  - implementing credit schemes.

Funding: International agencies like CIDSE, CARE, SIDA and UNICEF. The Canadian government has offered to finance a VAC system for senior citizens in Xuan Dinh village outside Hanoi city.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't: None mentioned.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds and shortage of land.

Future: Would like the State to assign 15-20\% of cultivated land in flatland areas to the VAC model. This could result in a significant boost in the household economy of farmers enabling them to provide more input to field crops like rice and other cereals, which could be eventually beneficial for the country.

Networking with Other Organizations: None mentioned.

Other Information: The VAC model has developed since the introduction of Doi Moi, when agriculture was decollectivized and the farm household was accepted as a self-controlling economic unit.

Documentation: Booklet on the organization.

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\(^{19}\) It was not entirely clear if they were a government sponsored mass organization. According to the interviewee, they had no connections with the government and were an NGO.

\(^{20}\) The VAC model is an integrated approach to home garden farming involving garden, fishpond and livestock. This interrelated production system, which entails a recycling of energy and materials results in a greater quantity, quality and diversity of agricultural products. Net income from VAC farms is three to ten times greater than from rice cultivation.
Name: Capital Aid Fund to Employment of the Poor (CEP).

Address: 14 Cach Mang Thang 8 Street, District 1, HCMC.

Telephone: 84-8-223321 Fax: 84-8-393318

Interviewee: Mr. Do Thanh Son, Deputy Director.

Status: A quasi-independent, non-profit, social organization.

Origin: Established in 1991 as a social programme of HCMC Labour Confederation (itself, a mass organization). It was inspired and assisted by the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, whose principles it has applied in its credit schemes.

Goal: To solve problems of unemployment.

Organization: A management board consisting of 5-9 members. It has two rural and two urban branches. The head office has a staff of four employees.

Main Activities: - Providing credit to the poor at low rate of interest, enabling them to start income generating schemes;
- providing education;
- fund raising.

Funding: Receives funds from the Labour Union, donations from national and international organizations and individuals and loans from local organizations.

Relationship with Vietnamese Gov't: None mentioned.

Problems Faced: Lack of adequate funds.

Networking with Other Organizations: Networks with the Women's Union, VAC, The Land and Housing Department and with CIDSE, APDC and the Grameen Bank.

Other Information: CEP was established in order to supplement the poverty alleviation programmes of the government which were not able to meet the demands of increasing unemployment.

Documentation: Brochure (see appendix 5).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>People’s Aid Coordinating Committee (PACCOM)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>105 A Quan Thanh, Hanoi, and 31 Le Duan Avenue, HCMC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td>84-4-25200 Fax: 84-4-252007  Telephone: 84-8-296238 Fax: 84-8-222436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee:</td>
<td>Mr. Duong Nguyen Tuong and Mr. Le Do Ngoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status:</td>
<td>A government sponsored organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Origin:</td>
<td>Established in 1989 as a branch of the Vietnam’s Union of Peace Solidarity and Friendship, which is a member organization of the Fatherland Front.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal:</td>
<td>To liaison between international NGOs and Vietnamese beneficiaries and to facilitate foreign NGO activities in Vietnam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization:</td>
<td>It has a staff of 13 employees. It has a head office in Hanoi and branch offices in 12 provinces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Activities:</td>
<td>- Facilitating bureaucratic procedures for international NGOs wishing to set up office in Vietnam; - directing them to those provinces best suited for project implementation; - making policy recommendations regarding the functioning of foreign NGOs to the government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding:</td>
<td>Self financed through fees earned from international NGOs. The staff gets a salary from the Vietnamese government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship with Vietnamese Gov’t:</td>
<td>Acts as a bridge between government and the international development community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems Faced:</td>
<td>Lack of adequate funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future:</td>
<td>Not mentioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking with Other Organizations:</td>
<td>Works with the VWU on credit schemes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Information:</td>
<td>At present, there are 200 international NGOs registered with PACCOM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documentation:</td>
<td>Brochure (see appendix 5).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 4

LIST OF INTERNATIONAL NGOs IN VIETNAM

(Excerpted from table of contents of: Mary Etherton (ed), Non-Governmental Organizations in Vietnam. Hanoi(?): The Gioi Publishers, 1992. The full publication provides data on each of the listed organizations, though much of this is apparently out of date already. The list contains only one Canada-based NGO: Organisation Canadienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement, now OCSD/Oxfam-Québec.)
*NGOs IN VIETNAM

Action Aid ................................................................. 1
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) .................. 3
Aid to South East Asia, Inc. (ASA) ...................................... 7
American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) ....................... 9
Australian Care for Refugees (Austcare) ............................ 11
Bröt fur die Welt (BfdW) ............................................... 13
The Pearl S. Buck Foundation, Inc. (Buck) ........................... 17
The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CAMA Services, Inc.) 19
CARE International in Vietnam (CARE Vietnam) ............... 21
Christian Children’s Fund, Inc. (CCFI) ............................. 23
The Christian Church (CCDC) ......................................... 25
Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBM) .................................. 27
Church World Service (CWS) .......................................... 29
Center for International Cooperation and Appropriate Technology, 33
Technical University of Delft (CICAT) ............................... 33
Coopération Internationale pour le Développement et la Solidarité (CIDSE) 35
Committee Science and Technology for Vietnam (CSTV) ........ 39
Committee to support Children in Vietnam (CSCV) ............... 43
Community Aid Abroad .................................................. 45
Cooperative Service International (CSI) ............................ 47
Council on International Educational Exchange .................. 49
Direct Relief International (DRI) ....................................... 51
East Meets West Foundation .......................................... 53
11th Engineers Vietnam Revisited ‘89 (EIEng) .................... 55
Flemish Organization for Assistance in Development (FADO) .. 56
Fonds voor OntwikkelingsSamenwerking (FOS) ................... 57
Fraternité Chrétienne avec le Vietnam, le Cambodge et le Laos 59
The Friendship Bridge (FB)

Georgetown Business Training Program in Vietnam

Laos and Cambodia (GBTPVLC)

Groupe de Recherche et d’Echanges Technologiques (GRET)

Handicap International (HI)

Harvard Institute for International Development (HIID)

Health Science Center (HSC)

Heifer Project International (HPI)

Holt International Children’s Services (HICS)

Indochina Arts Project (IAP)

Indo China Foundation (ICF)

Indochina Project, Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (IP)

Indochina Scholarly Exchange Program,

Social Science Research Council (ISEP)

Indochina Surgical Educational Exchange (ISEE)

Intensive English Language Institute, State University of New York at Buffalo (IELI)

Interchurch Medical Assistance, Inc. (IMA)

Interchurch Organization for Development Cooperation (ICCO)

Institute of International Education (IIE)

International Assistance and Adoption Project (IAP)

International Crane Foundation (ICF)

International Development Enterprises (IDE)

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI)

International Social Sciences (ISS)

International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Interplast, Inc. (IPL)
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<th>Organization</th>
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<td>Japan International Volunteer (JIVC)</td>
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<td>William Joiner Foundation (Joiner)</td>
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<td>Komitee Twee (K Twee)</td>
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<td>International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)</td>
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<td>Lutheran Family Services, Vietnam Highlands Assistance Project (LPS)</td>
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<td>Médecins sans Frontières-Belgium (MSF-B)</td>
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<td>Médecins sans Frontières (MSF-F)</td>
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<td>Medisch Comite Netherland Vietnam (NCNV)</td>
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<td>Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aktion Gegen Hunger und Krankheit in Der Welt Bischofliches</td>
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<td>Hilfswerk Misereor E.V. (MISEREOR)</td>
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<td>National Network of Indochina Activists (NNIA)</td>
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<td>NEED, Inc. (NEED)</td>
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<td>Nordic Assistance to Repatriated Vietnamese (NARV)</td>
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<td>Nederlandse Stichting voor Leprabestrijding (NSL)</td>
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<td>The Ockenden Venture (Ockenden)</td>
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<td>Operation Smile International (OS)</td>
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<td>Operation USA (Op USA)</td>
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<td>Organisation Canadienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement (OCSD)</td>
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<td>Overseas Service Bureau (OSB)</td>
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<td>Oxfam America (Oxfam US)</td>
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<td>Oxfam-Belgique (Oxfam B)</td>
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<td>Oxfam Hong Kong (Oxfam HK)</td>
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<td>Oxfam UK and Ireland (Oxfam UK)</td>
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<td>Pathfinder International (PI)</td>
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<td>Private Agencies Collaborating Together (PACT)</td>
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<td>Prosthetics Research Foundation (PRF)</td>
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<td>Quaker Service-Vietnam (QSV)</td>
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<td>Rädda Barnen-Swedish Save the Children (RB)</td>
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<td>Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries (SAREC)</td>
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<td>Save the Children Fund, U.K., Vietnam (SCF UK)</td>
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<td>School for International Training (SIT)</td>
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<td>Secours Populaire Francais (SPF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia Rescue Foundation, Inc. (SARF)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stichting Liliane Fonds (SLF)</td>
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<td>Association Ton That Tung-Coeur-Vietnam (TCV)</td>
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<td>U.S. Committee for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam (USCSCV)</td>
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<td>U.S.-Indochina Reconciliation Project (USIRP)</td>
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<td>U.S.-Vietnam Friendship and Aid Association of Southern California (USVFAA)</td>
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<td>Veterans Association for Service Activities Abroad (VASAA)</td>
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<td>Veterans Vietnam Restoration Project (VVRP)</td>
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<td>Vietnam Assistance for the Handicapped, Inc. (VNAH)</td>
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<td>Vietnam Health, Education and Literature Projects (VNHELP)</td>
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<td>Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA)</td>
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<td>Voluntary Service Overseas in Vietnam (VSO)</td>
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<td>Volunteers in Asia (VIA)</td>
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<td>VU voor Vietnam (VUVV)</td>
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<td>War on Want (WOW)</td>
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<td>World Concern International (WCI)</td>
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<td>Wide Horizons for Children, Inc. (WHC)</td>
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APPENDIX 5

PHOTOCOPIES OF COLLECTED DOCUMENTATION
ADVISORS

1. VU MAO, Director of Secretariat of the National Assembly and State Council
2. HOANG TICH TRU, Painter
3. TRAN DINH HOAN, Minister of Labour War Invalids and Social Affairs.
4. DANG THI HONG VAN, Prof. Acad, Head of Pharmacy Faculty, Hanoi pharmacy College
5. HOANG BAO CHAU, Prof.Dr., Director, Institute of Traditional Medicine.
6. PHAN DAN, Ophthalmologist, Hanoi Medicine College
7. TO HOAI, Writer, President of Hanoi Literature-Art Association

SPONSORS (PARTIAL LISTING)

1. NGUYEN THI BINH, President, Union of Peace and Friendship with all Nations
2. LE AT HOI, Mayor of Hanoi
3. LE LUU, Writer
4. LE VIET DUOC, General director, Thanh Hoa Cigarette Enterprise
5. NGUYEN LE THUY, Director, Hai Ha Candy Factory
6. DINH VAN LUAN, Vice director, Hanoi Health Service.
7. TRAN NGOC, Stage manager, Hanoi Television
8. DANG TRUNG, Journalist

HỘI TỤ THIÊN
TÂM LÒNG VÀNG
THE GOLDEN HEART CHARITY

Vietnam's first official private non-governmental charity organization (NGO)
* Giao su Pham Khue - Chủ tịch Hội và bà Hoài Lan - Thứ trưởng Bộ GD-ĐT qua cho người tàn tật tại Trung tâm bảo trợ xã hội Hà Nội.
* Prof. Pham Khue, Chairman, and Mrs. Hoang Lan, Secretary - General, of the Society, are visiting a Social Centre for the oldaged Disabled in Hanoi and handing gifts over to its inmates.

**APPEAL**

... The only ambition cherished by this Society is to contribute to relieving the suffering of the handi-capped and lighting up the orphan's faces with smiles.

It hopes for each sympathetic response to this am-bition.

Let's give part of our heart to those who are handi-capped!

Let's share part of our happiness with those hap-less orphans!

By doing so, our heart will become more charitable and our happiness will be complete!

Chairman of the society

Prof. Pham Khue.

* Quyết định 136CT - 25/4/92 của Thủ tướng Chính phủ - về việc cho phép thành lập Hội.
* Decisión No. 136-CT, dated 25 April 1992 of the Prime Minister, by which the establishment of the Society was permitted.
* Quyết định số 688/TCCP, ngày 14.10.1992 của Ban Tổ chức cấp Bộ Chính phủ - về việc công nhận dự án Hội bảo trợ trẻ em tàn tật và trẻ mồ côi Việt Nam.
* Decision No. 688/TCCP, dated October 14, 1992 of the Personnel Department of the Government, by which the regulations of the Society was approved.
To: THE CHILDREN'S FUND (C.F)
HOCHIMINH CITY
55 - Mac Dinh Chi - District I
HoChiMinh City

PLAN OF ACTION

Any problem of the child is the preoccupation of the Children's Fund. Right now, the Fund concentrates in efforts in putting a halt to the propagation of and promoting the understanding of adequacy of facilities for the play and recreation of children of the City.

You may support in full or in part the following programmes:

1. Eradication of malnutrition.
2. Rehabilitation of handicapped children.
3. Core and re-education of delinquent children.
5. Recreational programmes for children.

Concrete plans will be disseminated so that further details will be given to the activities of the programmes and support given to the work for the needs of children.
I. Tasks and Functions of the Centre

1. Scientific Research: Organizing and conducting indepth, inter-disciplinary research of problems on gender, family, and environment in development, and their interactions.

2. Application of technological advances: Applying the achievements of scientific research on gender, family and environment in service of national development, and participating directly in strategies for socio-economic and cultural development, for human resources, for population and family-planning, and for protection and improvement of the environment.

3. Training of researchers: Organizing the teaching and training of specialists in gender, family and environment in development.

4. Sponsor the publishing of research results and doctoral theses on gender, family and environment in development in the form of books and scientific information materials.

II. Profile of operation

1. Assembling and linking together scientists and scientific institutions, both at home and abroad, that are active in specialized and inter-disciplinary fields to implement the research and publishing tasks of the Centre.

2. Organizing and conducting inter-disciplinary research on related basic and applied subjects to be undertaken by groups of scientists in relevant areas.

3. Holding seminars and talks for exchange of information on scientific developments, methodology and approaches, and qualitative and quantitative studies on gender, family and environment in development.

4. Establishing relations of cooperation with institutions and individuals at home and abroad to expand programmes for research application and publishing in exchange of experiences, to construct facilities, and to develop specialized personnel.

5. Setting up a scientific club, sponsoring publishing, establishing a specialized library for scientific information, holding expositions and conducting promotional activities... along with other social activities for the protection and development of the environment.

III. Participants of the Centre

1. Scientific researchers including experts in gender, family and environment in many different fields of the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities, with the disciplines of sociology, ethnology, psychology, pedagogy, demography, medicine, biology, economics, jurisprudence, etc. are sufficient to satisfy the requirements of basic and applied research.

2. Overseas scientific experts working in collaboration with the Centre in research training and publishing and in the formation and development of the Centre.

IV. The council of scientists and the council of sponsors

1. The council of scientists includes the director, the deputy director, the scientific secretary and the executive members, who are professors and doctors, researchers and lecturers, experts on gender, family and environment and related fields. The council of scientists provides consultancy on the nuclear force in the research and training activities undertaken by the Centre. The Centre also collaborates with researchers from related.

2. The Council of Sponsors embraces all institutions and individuals at home and abroad who make contributions to the formation and development of the Centre, sponsoring the Centre both intellectually and materially.

V. Board of Director

1. Director: Mrs. Le Thi Nham Tuyet, Prof of Social Anthropology.

2. Deputy Director: Mr. Nguyen The Lap, Doctor in Medicine.

3. Deputy director: Mr. Tran Huu Voch, Doctor in Medicine

4. Scientific Secretary: Mr. Le Nhu Anh Thin, Doctor in Literature

5. Programme Officer: Mr. Nguyen Minh Luan, Sociologist

6. Assistant Director: Mrs Pham Thi Mai Chinh, Doctor in Paediatrics.

Address for Communication:

Prof Le Thi Nham Tuyet
32 D. Dien Bien Phu, Aox, Hanoi - Vietnam
Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development (CGFED)
Tel: 2.3220
Fax: (94) 42.32410
Number of Foreign currency account: 710.091.349
Number of Vietnamese account: 718.091.349
Nghia hinh chinh thuing Qunh Bi Dinh
Hanoi - Vietnam

VI. Name for international communication: "Research Centre for Gender, Family and Environment in Development" (CGFED)
THE WOMEN’S CHARITY ASSOCIATION OF HO CHI MINH CITY

The Women’s Charity Association of Ho Chi Minh City (WOCA) is a voluntary and non-governmental organization. It was founded under Licence No 623/QDUB dated 19/10/1989 issued by the People’s Committee of Ho Chi Minh City.

The Executive Committee for second term (1993-1996) consists of 01 President, 06 Vice Presidents and 24 members, who are business women, teachers, doctors, nuns (Catholic as well as Buddhist), retired people and other voluntary charity workers. WOCA is under the sponsorship of a Committee having 52 members, who are businessmen, writers, social workers and people who are devoted to charity work and social welfare.

WOCA extends help to the unfortunate people in urban areas: the poor, the sick, needy children who cannot afford to go to school or vocational training classes, handicapped children, elderly people who live on their own...

WOCA is allowed to raise funds and receive charity aids from local as well as foreign organizations. It can also engage in business, production and services to generate income for its own operation and charity work.

WOCA greatly appreciates all kinds of donation and support from kind-hearted people, charity organizations and Vietnamese expatriates for its various programs.

1/ CHARITY PROGRAM:

- Regular help to the age: WOCA currently assists 200 poor and homeless elderly people with a monthly allowance of 30,000 VN dong (equivalent to 15 kg rice) plus clothing and medicine. WOCA is trying to raise enough fund to increase the number to 500.

- Irregular aids are extended to unfortunate people afflicted by accidents, serious illnesses, fire and natural disasters. Each year, on the occasion of the Lunar New Year, WOCA always launches a campaign to raise fund and gifts to help the poor and unfortunate to celebrate traditional New Year’s Day. WOCA also arranges visits to orphanages, homes for the age and invalid for various charity groups and Vietnamese expatriates who wish to donate directly to these organizations.

1/ CREDIT PROGRAM:

- WOCA extends credits without collateral to poor families for small businesses, small scale production or animal husbandry. Each family can borrow from 200,000 to 500,000 VN dong and payment is made every day until the loan is paid off after 3 months.

- If a family wishes to obtain credit to buy production goods, WOCA can grant from 1 to 3 million VN dong on a term payment from 6 to 9 months.

- WOCA also encourages these people, who receive a credit, to put aside some savings each day so that they can gradually accumulate enough capital for their business and no longer have to borrow from WOCA. In this way, credits can be extended to other needy people.
Organization Diagram of the Institute of Ecological Economy

Founded on the 1st January of 1990 by Decision of the State Committee of Sciences and Technologies

Directorate
Director Prof. D. Sc Nguyen Van Truong
Vice Director Prof Trinh Van Thinh

1. Secretariat
   Head of the office: Tran Duc Hau Senior engineer in forestry
   - Luu Van Huan Senior engineer in Biology
   - Van Thu Huyen engineer in Economy
   - Nguyen Van Coc Senior bookkeeper

2. Functional Departements
   Education and Training: Prof. Nguyen Phap, Economics
   Sciences and Technologies: Prof. Dr. Duong Hong Dat, Phytopathologist
   Socio-economy and Environment:
   - Prof. Ton That Chieu Pedologist
   - Prof Nguyen Van Pho Meteorologist
   Field implantation of projects:
   - Prof Nguyen Van Thuong Zootechnist
   - Dr. Nguyen Dac Hy Environmentalist

3. Ecosystem Divisions
   Upland Ecological Economy Nguyen Van Huong Senior Engineer, Forester
   Rural Ecological Economy Tran Quang, Engineer Expert in territorial management
   Coastal land Ecological Economy Prof. Dr. Phan Nguyen Hong
   Urban Ecological Economy Prof. Dam Trung Phuong Architecture, urban management

4. Acting members:
   - Founding members 16 Prof and Dr, 3 experts in Economy
   - Collaborator members 18 Prof, Dr and Engineers in different scientific Institutions and Colleges
   - Associate Director of Laboratories for Soil, Air and water studies
Education & Training

Postgraduate Course
Each year, the Center offers a six-month course in environmental studies focusing on ecological approaches to conservation, resource utilization, land management, and environmental impact assessment. Lecturers are drawn from Center faculty, other centers and departments within Hanoi University, state ministries, and visiting foreign experts. The 25-30 participants admitted to the course divide their studies between classroom activities and fieldwork.

Publications
The Center publishes books and papers either alone or jointly with other institutions. Recent publications include:


Newsletter
CRES publishes a quarterly newsletter which informs the public about the Center's scientific and community development activities. The newsletter also serves as a forum for the exchange of environmental knowledge and points of view.

CRES is affiliated with a variety of international institutions including the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) • International Crane Foundation (ICF) • International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) • International Development Research Center (IDRC) • World Conservation Union (IUCN) • World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) • International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau • Man and the Biosphere (MAB) • OROVERDE • Population and Development Association (PDA) • Program on Environment, East-West Center • Southeast Asian Universities Agroecosystem Network (SUAN) • United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) • University of Canberra •
Lessons from the East Asian Experience has brought about a rare opportunity for nearly one hundred of Vietnamese policy-makers and researchers to discuss environmental matters with those of neighbouring countries (Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines) on how to meet the dual challenges of strong economic growth and sound environmental management; nearly forty foreign experts and representatives from OECD, UNDP, UNIDO, SIDA, CIDA, AIDAB and the nearby countries present at the workshop also shared with the Vietnamese participants their experiences and ideas on new approaches to environmental management e.g., the use of economic instruments. The workshop has been highly appreciated and considered very timely to crucial period in the formulation of Vietnam's strategy for sustainable economic development.

THE FUTURE

CERED plans to expand its constantly growing network of collaborators. Research proposals currently in preparation emphasize impact assessments of sea level rise as this is a major threat to Vietnam with its population clustered in low lying coastal and deltaic plains. Biodiversity, environmental management, rural area development are envisioned. Funds are being sought for these from international donors.

A series of policy-makers' briefings on environment and development are planned for 1994-1995.

CERED welcomes further collaboration.
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HANOI - VIET NAM
THE NON-STATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER (NEDCEN) is an organisation aiming at enhancing the development of non-state enterprises including private enterprises, cooperatives, small enterprises and informal sector, covering all activities in the fields of industry, construction, transportation, trade, services and other business.

NEDCEN is an independent legal status, with its branch representative offices in big cities.

• Being assisting the Central Council of Non-State Enterprises and the Council of provinces to implement the training on business information and cooperation programmes.

• Taking part in researching and implementing the national projects on assisting the non-state economic sector.

• Organising and conducting directly all supporting activities to enterprises, especially the small and medium enterprises.

CONCRETE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMMES

1. Implementing the assistance on investment, technology transfer to enterprises.
Representatives of the conference of all union members at the central level, as well as at the provincial district and equivalent unit level, the congress is organized once every five years. At the commune, city quarter and equivalent unit the congress is organized twice every five years. At each level, the congress reviews the situation of women in the locality, decides the tasks of the Union for the coming years, elects the new executive committee of the Union in the locality, selects representatives to attend congresses at higher levels. Any amendment or change in the regulation of the Union must be decided by the National Congress.

ORGAN OF INFORMATION, TRAINING SCHOOLS, MUSEUM AND SERVICE CENTRES OF THE UNION

- "Phu nu Viet Nam" (Women of Vietnam) weekly review (in Vietnamese)
- "Women of Vietnam" quarterly review (in English)
- The Women's Publishing House
- Programs for women through the "Voice of Vietnam" radio
- Programs for women through the "Vietnam Central Television"
- Two training schools for women activities: one in Ha Noi and one in Ho Chi Minh City
- The Museum of Vietnamese Women (in Ha Noi)
- One tourist company "Peace Tour"
- Two skills training and service centres (in the North and the South)

In Vietnam now women out number men.

According to the population census taken in 1989:
- Total population of Vietnam: 64,410,000
- Percentage of women: 51.34%
- Participation of women in different branches of the national economy:
  - Percentage of women in the total workforce
    - Agriculture: 53.20%
    - Forestry: 41.70%
    - Industry: 43.20%
    - Construction: 26.00%
    - Commerce: 70.80%
    - Post and Telephony: 46.40%
    - Communication and Transport: 14.40%
    - Education and Training: 67.10%
    - Sciences: 37.70%
    - Cultures and Arts: 34.30%
    - Finance and Credit: 54.50%
    - Medical Service, Social Insurance, Gymnastics and Sport: 63.70%
    - State management at different levels: 28.70%

- National Assembly (8th Legislature 1987): 88 women are deputies: 17.70% of the total number.

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Hochiminh City is one of the big cities of Vietnam. Its population is about 5 millions. Hochiminh City is divided into 18 districts administratively - 12 urban districts and 6 rural districts. The social survey revealed that in Hochiminh City, there are approximately 150,000 households who live below the official poverty line income, and one-third of them are very poor. The unemployment is also an urgent problem of Hochiminh City besides the poverty. Approximately, 300,000 citizens of Hochiminh City who are in working age are jobless.

Started in September of 1991 as a social programme of Hochiminh City Labour Confederation the credit programme to the poor was implemented in 3 districts - 2 rural districts and 1 urban district. Sixty five households were served with total loan of 45.3 millions Vietnam dong. Now the number of CEP Fund's member is more than 2000. In 1993, up to July, 1205 borrowers used 1.16 billions dong of CEP Fund to invest in many kinds of business such as cyclo pedaling, sewing, animal raising, shoes repairing, planting, peddlers . . . .

CEP Fund is a non-profit organization of Hochiminh City Labor Confederation, which had the permission of Hochiminh City People Committee to set credit for income-generating activities of the poor in Hochiminh City. With the assistance of Grameen Bank, CEP Fund applied the essential principles of Grameen Bank with some modifications in credit programme to the poor, as follows:

1. No need of collateral.
2. Self-managed group is a criterion to get loan.
3. Rate of interest is close to one of common Bank.
4. Repayment by instalment.
5. Credit for communities developing.

CEP Fund aims to solving the unemployment and enable the poor to have good life in their communities. Started when there was no government poverty alleviation programme, now it complements the government poverty alleviation programmes in Hochiminh City.

DIFFERENCES FROM GRAMEEN BANK.

1. Self-managed group.

CEP Fund self-managed group has 5 members, and does not distinguish into male and female, i.e men and women can make a group. This is suitable in Hochiminh City, because Vietnamese women are more and more self-reliant now.

Among the group, loan disbursements are accomplished in the manner of 3 - 2 instead of 2 - 2 - 1 as Grameen Bank did.
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BAN DIEU PHOI VIEN TRO NHAN DAN

PEOPLE'S AID COORDINATING COMMITTEE

PACCOM
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