Working Paper Series on

VIETNAM
LEARNING TO TEACH IN A KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

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The findings, interpretations and conclusions expressed in this paper are entirely those of the author and should not be attributed in any manner to the World Bank, to its affiliated organizations, to members of its Board of Executive Directors, or to the countries they represent.
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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADB</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOET</td>
<td>Bureau of Education and Training (District)</td>
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<td>BTC</td>
<td>Belgian Technical Cooperation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDSP</td>
<td>Cao Dang Su Pham (Teacher Training College)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPRGS</td>
<td>Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>UK Department for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>DHSP</td>
<td>Dai Hoc Su Pham (University Teacher Training College)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOET</td>
<td>Department of Education and Training (Province)</td>
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<td>EC</td>
<td>European Commission</td>
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<td>EDS 2010</td>
<td>Education Development Strategy for the year 2010</td>
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<td>EFA</td>
<td>Education for All</td>
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<td>ELTTP</td>
<td>English-Language Teacher Training Project</td>
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<td>EMIS</td>
<td>Education Management Information System</td>
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<td>GVN</td>
<td>Government of Vietnam</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Computer Technology</td>
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<td>LSEDP</td>
<td>Lower Secondary Education Development Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>LSTTP</td>
<td>Lower Secondary Teacher Training Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MOET</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Training</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Nongovernmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NIESCD</td>
<td>National Institute for Educational Strategies and Curriculum Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Official Development Assistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCU</td>
<td>Project Coordination Unit</td>
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<td>PEP</td>
<td>Primary Education Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPC</td>
<td>Provincial People’s Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>PTDP</td>
<td>Primary Teacher Development Project</td>
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<td>SESMP</td>
<td>Secondary Education Sector Master Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>THSP</td>
<td>Trung Hoc Su Pham (Teacher Training School)</td>
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<tr>
<td>TTC</td>
<td>Teacher Training College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTI</td>
<td>Teacher Training Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>ULSE</td>
<td>Universal Lower Secondary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPE</td>
<td>Universal Primary Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>VDG</td>
<td>Vietnam Development Goals</td>
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<td>WB</td>
<td>The World Bank</td>
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Acknowledgements

During this project I relied on the kind assistance and cooperation of many organizations and individuals in Bac Can, Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Thai Nguyen. I was lucky to have educators and administrators who gave up their valuable time to participate in my interviews, welcome me in their offices, universities, schools and classrooms, and bring others together to share with me their experience, hopes and concerns about teaching quality and educational opportunity.

To the many directors and staff at NGOs working hard in Vietnam to improve instructional practice and educational outcomes for children, who contributed their impressions and understanding of the progress, forces and challenges of the Vietnamese educational and social context, I am also deeply grateful.

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Foreword

The Government of Vietnam considers a highly skilled and flexible workforce essential for driving further industrialization and modernization and for promoting sustainable socioeconomic development in the 21st century. In line with this premise, Vietnam’s Education sector has initiated a broad review of approaches for creating a proactive knowledge-oriented society suited to meet the continuously changing demands of modern conditions. This report is a product of that review.

We are delighted to share with you this study on “Learning to Teach in a Knowledge Society” which, through its in-depth analysis of teaching and training in Vietnam, assesses current levels of teacher competencies and highlights gaps and challenges in implementing further educational reforms. In addition, this report provides a useful tool for promoting an international understanding of Vietnam’s current teacher training policy and practice, and for informing policymakers about teacher education and teacher professional development alternatives.

We would like to thank the World Bank (WB), the United Kingdom’s Department for International Development (DFID) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for supporting the development of this study and we look forward to continue our collaboration with local and international partners to improve the quality of education in Vietnam.

Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam

Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Hung
Deputy Director
International Relations Department
Executive Summary

Background and Purpose

The Government of Vietnam (GVN) has issued a mandate for the education and training system to develop the skills, attitudes and intellectual capacity needed to build an adaptable and competitive workforce. Through the 1990s, Vietnam greatly expanded access to schooling and achieved universal primary education. More recently, the GVN adopted a new national education strategy with a greater focus on quality, and endeavoring to replace the old system (rooted in teacher-centered practice and learning by rote) with one geared more toward the creation of a “knowledge society.”

A knowledge society may be defined as one that puts a premium on solving problems and adding value through the analysis, adaptation and evaluation of existing knowledge, and its innovative application to unfamiliar problems. In its attempt to develop and implement these new goals, the GVN has found a severe mismatch between the knowledge, skills and approach of graduates of the current teacher training system and the competencies demanded of students in a knowledge society. Although efforts to align the two are under way, they require a profound shift in beliefs and behaviors about teaching and learning, as well as a radically new set of competencies, practices and expectations for teachers and teacher trainers alike.

Current Priorities of Teacher Training

Teacher training is now centered on standardizing and upgrading teacher qualifications and training institution capacity, and on adapting training and teacher support to the new primary and lower secondary curricula, textbooks and methodologies. The high level of attention given to renovating the curricula and textbooks demands a corresponding updating and upgrading of teacher knowledge and skills.

Among the multitude of changes taking place there is a concerted campaign to upgrade the capacity and qualifications of teachers, teacher trainers, and Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) as well as in-service training to introduce the new student curricula and methodologies to teachers. In addition, some projects are piloting new training models for both the primary and lower secondary levels. Other activities are providing teacher support in the form of materials and references, training educational managers, and introducing a standards-based system.

What Works

Vietnam is making important strides toward upgrading teacher training and quality. It is laying a foundation for a system of measuring current performance and for identifying and making informed decisions about future needs. Some new practices already show signs of the benefits of effective training and suggest avenues for putting theory into practice. At the same time, there has been progress in standardizing and upgrading academic qualifications at all levels. With the spirit of reform spreading throughout the education and training system, most stakeholders, even
if uncertain about how or what they should be doing differently, are aware that something needs to be changed.

Two critical steps for both teacher and student performance at the primary level have been the drafting of a teacher professional profile and the first systematic assessment and analysis of student achievement outcomes at the end of this level. To address systemic deficiencies in the TTC pre-service curriculum at the lower secondary level, the GVN is recommending greater emphasis on practice over theory, an extended practicum, and more modern teaching methodologies. Innovative TTCs are also trying to find ways to bridge the gaps between themselves and the primary and lower secondary schools and practitioners.

Trouble Spots

Despite the many steps toward improving the quality of teachers and teaching, there is limited evidence of large-scale and profound change in the classroom and professional practice. Both practical and ideological factors are to blame, many of them interrelated. Foremost is the lack of agreement on the nature of the problem and on the intended model of teaching and learning. As a result, the changes required to improve teaching competencies and instructional practice have not been clearly defined. Progress that has been made in standardizing and upgrading qualifications of teachers pertains mainly to degrees and certificates, not to the mastery of a specific area of knowledge or pedagogical competencies. Thus initiatives are not always aligned with common goals, and few measures are available for gauging either performance or progress. Currently there are no accountability measures in place for implementing the new teaching methodologies.

In addition, in-service and pre-service training does not yet employ the new methodologies. In-service training is too short and limited to yield lasting changes, while pre-service training has also been slow to reflect changes in content or methodology. To add to these problems, Vietnam has been using the Cascade Model to disseminate in-service training, which as currently executed, dilutes the knowledge transferred to each level and fails to help teachers relearn to teach. Furthermore, instructional support, in the form of both managerial support and professional community and dialogue among teachers, is weak. Linkages between institutions, organizations and initiatives are also weak.

The GVN’s effort to change the traditional predisposition toward prescriptive teaching suffers from contradictions in its underlying precepts. Teachers, teacher trainers and teacher training institutions alike are being asked to replace old traditions with radically new ways of thinking, acting and interacting while still operating within the confines of an educational system rooted in those traditions, notably in a culture of rigorous oversight over the content and pace of reform. This approach runs counter to the decentralized implementation and encouragement of new competencies—such as innovation and independent thinking, critical analysis, creative problem solving—that Vietnam ostensibly wishes to cultivate in students and teachers. Hence transforming teacher education in Vietnam is more than a matter of revising content and methods. It requires a change in fundamental and deeply ingrained social norms.
Conclusion and Recommendations

One of Vietnam’s primary educational challenges at present is to encourage its teachers to build a repertoire of teaching and learning competencies and strategies that will support the development of higher-order thinking skills in students. To this end, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is asking provincial and district education departments to implement an array of new policies and practices, but they are being issued with partial understanding on either side. For its part, the ministry has not fully grasped or acknowledged the nature or scale of change it is calling for, while the respective departments lack the comprehension and capacity to carry out the full scope of what is intended.

The following recommendations address these issues from two perspectives: that of the national system and that of professional practice. Efforts at both levels must act in concert to ensure that solutions to systemic problems create the conditions needed to support deep and lasting changes in practice concerning how to teach in a knowledge society.

Recommendations for Learning to Teach in a Knowledge Society

1. Teacher and instructional development should emphasize shared and continuous learning through practice, reflection and leadership. Fundamental objectives would be to
   - ensure an adequate knowledge base;
   - promote pedagogy and practice;
   - create a culture of shared professional practice, and build both teacher expertise for examining practice and teacher voice in instruction and professional development; and
   - provide a vision of professional community and professional practice that takes responsibility for and develops internal expertise in learning and advancing together.

2. System-level precepts should focus on instructional goals and support the new vision of teacher practice. Two important steps would be to
   - introduce a standards-based system that articulates expectations for student and teacher knowledge and competencies; and
   - build accountability for teaching and teacher training quality by establishing methods of measuring performance and progress against articulated performance standards.

3. A critical objective in state, school and teacher professional contexts is to address social, economic and ideological inconsistencies. Here it will be important to
   - tackle inconsistencies in centralization and decentralization; and
   - address systemic policy issues to improve teachers’ professional outlook and environment, such as civil service employment, salary, career path and working conditions.

4. Equity and excellence should be unyielding twin goals. A final recommendation serves as a reminder that
   - efforts to improve quality must not be made at the expense of equity; and
all children in Vietnam should have equal opportunity to have capable teachers who can help them acquire and apply knowledge, develop insights, and learn to think logically, resourcefully and imaginatively.
I. Introduction

_Schooling in Vietnam is an almost perfect mirror of the society Vietnam used to be. It must become a reflection of the society it wants to be._

Vietnam: Secondary Education Sector Master Plan, ADB, 2002

_Teacher repertoires have been shaped by the crucible of experience and the culture of teaching. Policymakers need to understand that altering pedagogy requires a change in what teachers believe. Getting professionals to unlearn in order to learn, while certainly not impossible, is closer in magnitude of difficulty to performing a double bypass heart operation than to hammering a nail._

Larry Cuban, 1986

Taken together, these quotations define the new direction of teaching and learning in Vietnam and the obstacles that lie ahead. In the transition from a command to a market economy and from an agrarian to a knowledge and information society, Vietnam is relying on the education system to build the student skills, attitudes, and intellectual capacity needed to create an adaptable and competitive workforce more suited to such a society. This has enormous implications for teacher and professional development, which is not merely challenged with doing more or better but is faced with recasting a deeply embedded culture of instructional practice.

The culture of Vietnam’s education system consists of conveying a fixed body of knowledge in a consistent and unchanging format. Teachers have been trained in the traditional academic disciplines, and practice teacher centered pedagogy. Students are not asked to speak or think independently but to take notes and absorb whatever knowledge the teacher provides. Although this approach provided students with adequate cognitive skills under the old economy, since Doi Moi (Vietnam’s economic renewal plan initiated in the late 1980s), the government has been transforming Vietnam into an industrial society that requires a more adaptable and skilled labor force. Vietnam views human resource development as a means of creating such a force. As noted in the Secondary Education Sector Master Plan, “to deal with the uncertainties and continuous changes characteristic of market economies, students need strategic skills such as knowing-how-to-learn skills, problem-solving skills and evaluative skills.” In light of these new demands, Vietnam is trying to introduce new educational concepts such as active learning, student-centered approaches and self-learning. Before these new concepts about both student and teacher competency can take hold and new practices put in place, basic assumptions about education and society need to be redefined.

Vietnam is in the first stages of this transformation: it has issued new directives orienting the education system and its practitioners toward learning to teach in a knowledge society. The purpose of this study, commissioned by the World Bank and the UK Department for International Development, is to examine teacher training in Vietnam and assess what steps it is taking to equip teachers with the competencies and skills they need to help prepare students for life in a knowledge society. In other words, to determine teacher training needs, good practices, and major gaps in implementing reforms.
The two principal aims of the study are to foster international understanding of Vietnam’s choices and experience in teacher education policy and to inform ongoing policy dialogue among relevant stakeholders about teacher education and teachers’ professional development alternatives and choices in the light of the new key competencies demanded by the knowledge society. Because Vietnam’s current strategic education goals and reform efforts in teacher training concentrate on the primary and lower secondary levels, this study is confined to teacher development at those levels.

II. Methodology: What Did We Do?

This is a qualitative study carried out in Vietnam’s capital city, Hanoi, and in a small group of provinces. Information at the central level was obtained from meetings with senior officials and key staff from MOET, from ongoing projects in the area of teacher training, and from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) implementing teacher training projects. Field research consisted of visits to schools, teacher training institutions and the Departments of Education in four provinces: Hanoi, Bac Can, Thai Nguyen and Ho Chi Minh City. These provinces were chosen not as general examples but as illustrations of teacher training issues in regions of contrasting geography, affluence and ethnic makeup.

Information was gathered in semistructured interviews both with individuals and with groups of stakeholders, using open-ended questions to generate discussion and probe for awareness and understanding. Except for interviews with NGOs, meetings were conducted through a Vietnamese interpreter. Interviews were supplemented by an in-depth review of key education strategy documents, project documents and evaluations, and other supporting materials.

The analysis opens with a definition of a knowledge society, its implications for the education system, and some general aspects of teaching knowledge and competencies. The discussion then moves to the status of Vietnam’s teacher preparation and training, notably its current training programs and institutions, the entities responsible for teacher training, and the overall teacher force. The next and central topic is the government’s new strategic education goals, the programs and reforms in place to enact those goals, the promising results and stumbling blocks of current practice, and the fundamental contradiction in Vietnam’s espoused educational goals. The discussion closes with a set of recommendations Vietnam may choose to consider as it continues learning to teach in a knowledge society.

III. Knowledge Society: Theory of Action and Implications for Teaching and Learning

“Knowledge society,” “knowledge economy,” “information society,” “learning society”—these are among the many terms used to capture the essence of the current age. Gripped by a vast flow of information and technology, modern society attributes great value to mental activity and human ingenuity. Without the skills and mechanisms to analyze, apply, evaluate and share that information, society will be knowledge-poor. To thrive in this age, individuals must not just develop higher-order cognitive skills but must exercise them fluidly and flexibly, intelligently and imaginatively, to solve problems strategically across all levels, divisions and subsectors of society.
This new environment has wide implications for education, and for the role of teachers and teaching. To foster deep cognitive learning and the competencies students need to succeed in and support a knowledge society, teachers must alter not only what, how and why they teach but also how they themselves interact and learn. The teacher in a knowledge society must be the consummate problem solver, using inquiry, analysis and adaptation to maximize student understanding and insight, and to cultivate continuous self-learning and improvement.

In such a society the teaching process does not consist of demonstration by an individual but of collective practice. Teachers accustomed to being traditionally isolated must therefore learn to work collaboratively with a view to making tacit knowledge explicit and applying their shared experience and expertise to solve common problems. An effective learning organization will link experienced practitioners with researchers and policymakers to inform strategies at the system level and create conditions for improving practice at the local level.

IV. Teaching Competencies and Quality Teaching

Without doubt, the quality of teaching and an individual teacher’s effectiveness are best advanced through teacher training and professional development. The question is, what elements of that training have the greatest impact on student learning? The curriculum of teacher education programs covers four broad domains of knowledge: general or basic knowledge of fundamental subjects such as mathematics, language and history or civics; content of a specific subject area; pedagogy and other teaching and learning-related knowledge; and specialized teaching and learning knowledge of a particular discipline.

There is much ongoing debate around the relative consequence of these different domains of teacher knowledge and skills. Studies of teacher characteristics and determinants of student achievement such as the recent Grade 5 Performance Assessment in Vietnam show that teacher scores in reading are highly correlated with student test scores in the same subject. In other recent research, pedagogical content knowledge is the type most clearly linked to student achievement, and the one with the strongest potential for professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2002). This study examines the relative emphasis on these domains in Vietnam’s reforms. Its concluding recommendations outline some essential priorities for Vietnam to consider in developing different levels of teaching knowledge and competencies appropriate to a knowledge society.

V. Current Status of Teacher Preparation and Training

Pre-service Training

Vietnam manages teacher training at two levels: decision making is centralized; implementation is decentralized. Under the Education Law, MOET regulations are required to stipulate a curriculum framework dictating content and duration of required coursework for pre-service training. This framework includes the distribution of credit hours for general education, professional education and practice teaching, which currently consists of two weeks of classroom observation in the second year and six weeks of classroom practice in the third year. Pre-service
training is delivered solely by a national network of provincial teacher training colleges and a smaller network of university teacher training colleges. All of these colleges must follow MOET regulations and the Education Law.

**In-service Training**

In-service training in Vietnam differs markedly from that in other countries, being a long-term additional program held during the summer or over a longer period and designed to upgrade educational qualifications of those already in the teaching profession. This in-service training is offered through the teacher training institutions and provincial Departments of Education and Training (DOETs). Like pre-service training, it is regulated by MOET.

MOET recently established three new types of in-service training. The first is *directly provided by MOET* in the summer, for example, during the implementation of the new primary and lower secondary curriculum. The sessions are conducted at the central level and replicated in a cascade training model at the provincial, district and school level. Training tends to be uniform, with its content established centrally. The second type, called *frequent training*, takes place at the district level, generally consisting of monthly conferences on a subject area, and is attended by all teachers of a particular grade or subject area. Guidance for these was previously provided by MOET’s Teacher Department. In the third type, *self-learning*, teachers use materials developed by MOET to acquire new practical skills.

**Who Provides What Kind of Training?**

Traditionally, Vietnam has operated three types of teacher training institutions (TTIs): (1) teacher training schools (TTS), or *trung hoc su pham* (THSP); (2) teacher training colleges (TTCs), or *cao dang su pham* (CDSP), sometimes referred to as teacher training junior colleges; and teacher training colleges, or *dai hoc su pham* (DHSP). Until recently, either a TTS or TTC was responsible for delivering teacher training in each province; very few offered university-level training. Teacher training follows upper secondary school, with a two-year program for primary teachers (12 + 2), and a three-year program for lower secondary teachers (12 + 3). In the past, because of low education levels and a shortage of teachers, the GVN recognized various levels of preparation below the national standard. By aggressively upgrading facilities and staff at remaining TTSs to the TTC level, Vietnam was able to build a national network of TTCs that now also deliver a three-year program for primary education. As a result, although the Education Law sets the minimum standard for primary teachers at 12 + 2, the training offered new entrants is actually 12 + 3. In some areas, however, TTCs still follow the 12 + 2 program because of shortages at the primary and lower secondary levels. In remote areas, teacher training may still consist of only 9 + 3 or even less formal education.

Most DHSPs offer a 12 + 4 program ending with a bachelor’s degree for pre-service upper secondary teachers. These institutions also offer in-service upgrading to bring teachers at all levels to the 12 + 4 or master’s level. Since the phasing out of TTSs, some university-level DHSPs have begun offering pre-service training for primary education but do not yet offer lower secondary training, as that responsibility is centrally assigned to the TTCs. However, the universities will upgrade lower secondary teachers to qualify for the bachelor’s degree.
What Agencies/Entities Are Responsible for Teacher Training?

The administration of Vietnam’s complex and changing education and training is shared by three levels of government: the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) at the top, the Department of Education and Training (DOET) in each province, and the Bureau of Education and Training (BOET) in each district. Primary education, including in-service training and teacher/school inspection rests with the districts and communes, lower secondary education is managed by district but overseen by the province, and upper secondary is managed by the province under the supervision of MOET and the Provincial People’s Committees (PPCs). Pre-service and in-service teacher training for primary and lower secondary is delivered largely by BOETs and the training colleges (CDSPs), which are administered at the provincial level by the DOET and PPC but use a curriculum framework issued by MOET. Although implementation is decentralized, MOET is the ultimate decision maker and is responsible for guiding and supervising all policymaking for education and training.

Until August 2003, responsibility for teacher training policymaking, program design, operational standards, and the training of TTC administrators and teachers resided with MOET’s Teacher Department. This department was then dissolved and teacher training experts moved to the Departments of Primary and Secondary Education in order to bring training efforts more in line with the needs at each level. Since then responsibility for teacher training at the center has shifted again. The Department of Higher Education now manages all post-secondary education, including teacher pre-service education.

The entities supporting the Teacher Department in technical areas and responsible for educational research on teachers, pedagogy, methodologies and instructional materials have also been reorganized. The former National Institute for Educational Sciences (NIES) and National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and their component research centers have been merged into a new National Institute for Educational Strategies and Curriculum Development (NIESCD). This new institute, less than a year old, is in charge of guiding the implementation of Vietnam’s Education and Development Strategy for 2001–2010, specifically curriculum and methodological reforms for the primary and lower secondary levels.

Teacher Force

At present Vietnam has 353,137 primary teachers, about 12 percent of them below the national standard (12 + 2), and 238,049 lower secondary teachers, 9 percent below the standard (12 + 3). Although the teacher force increased significantly in the 1990s as Vietnam worked toward universal primary education (UPE) and expanded access to lower secondary education, the proportion of both primary and lower secondary teachers below the MOET standard has steadily declined since 1997 (see table 1).
Table 1. Public School, Number of Teachers, and Percentage of Teachers below the Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Total primary</th>
<th>Primary nonstandard (%)</th>
<th>Total lower secondary</th>
<th>Lower secondary nonstandard (%)</th>
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Because of this growth, especially at the lower secondary level, the teacher force is young: 73 percent of teachers are under the age of 40, and 40 percent are 30 or younger. Teachers are poorly paid, and most pursue secondary employment to earn supplemental income. Their average pay is 1.7 times Vietnam’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita compared with an average of 2.4 times GDP per capita in all of Asia (World Bank, 2001). Salary levels are regulated by GVN decree and are calculated from the public sector minimum salary scale. Increases are based on years of service and not on educational level, professional advancement, or performance. Since 1997, public school teachers have also been receiving salary supplements—before that, supplements were granted only for extra duties or for going to areas difficult to staff (Secondary Education Sector Master Plan). Professional advancement tends to consist of movement out of the teacher ranks and into administrative positions at the school or at district or provincial Departments of Education and Training.

Because of the profession’s low pay and other constraints, candidates often apply to TTCs as a second or third choice. At the same time, some see the tuition waiver policy for pre-service teaching programs as a means to further their education for free. And some seek training in other fields simultaneously to widen their employment options. Many qualified graduates consider the degree a ticket to other jobs related to education and training in the private sector and do not enter public school teaching. A large number of those who do teach have secondary employment. Although not directly related to the delivery of teacher training, these factors have great bearing on the efficiency and effectiveness of teacher training and teaching quality.

VI. New Orientation in Teaching and Learning

Shifting Gears from Quantity to Quality: Vietnam’s Development Goals

In the 1990s, Vietnam’s most important education priority was to achieve universal primary education (UPE). The government increased resources for education and redistributed them within the sector to improve facilities, produce new teachers, and help disadvantaged areas. In August 2000, Vietnam announced that it had achieved this objective. Although Vietnam’s idea of UPE differs from international targets (80 percent net enrolment rate (NER) versus 99 percent NER), its expansion of the education system is still a commendable achievement. Now its education goals are changing, especially in light of new international development goals.
Vietnam has drawn on two international declarations in particular—the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education for All (EFA) goals—to guide its own education development. Its development goals (VDGs) coincide with two basic MDGs and EFA goals:

- To achieve universal primary education by 2015.

The VDGs include targets for consolidating UPE and also set more ambitious targets for achieving universal lower secondary education (ULSE) by 2010. A notable distinction between MDGs for education and EFA goals is the latter’s emphasis on improving the quality of education and creating measurable learning outcomes. The VDGs emphasize this element as well, pronouncing a new national education strategy focus on improving quality besides increasing quantity.

**Justifying the Goals and Translating Them into Strategy**

In addition to formulating VDGs, MOET in 2001 announced a national education development strategy for 2001–2010 (EDS 2010). EDS 2010 identifies human resource development as a crucial factor in supporting Vietnam’s industrialization and modernization and its entry into a knowledge economy and information society. Acknowledging the success of education efforts since *Doi Mới*, EDS 2010 also sets a new course, recognizing the serious mismatch between the radically new competencies demanded of students in a knowledge society, and the teaching skills and approach instilled by the current teacher training system.

A central priority of the new strategic goals is that teacher methodologies endeavor to create student-centered and activity-based classrooms and thereby build a future workforce better equipped to negotiate the intellectual demands and changing environment of a modern knowledge-based market economy. This new orientation made its first formal appearance in the Vietnam Education Law of 1999. Clause 2, on the nature and principles of education, states: “Educational activities must be conducted on the principles of learning coupled with practice, education linked to productive labor, theory connected to experience, and education in school combined with education in the family and in society.” Furthermore, “education methods shall encourage initiative, self-motivation, and creative thinking of learners; foster self-taught ability, learning eagerness and will to advance forward.”

To improve the quality and transform the nature of education, MOET’s two main directives in teacher training efforts are to (a) upgrade the qualifications for teachers, teacher trainers and teacher training institutions; and (b) change teaching methodologies to match the approach of the new primary and lower secondary curricula and textbooks.

Vietnam has set ambitious goals for itself, both in terms of teaching students and training teachers. Its system of education and teacher training is complex, resource-poor and unable to adequately compensate its teachers. On the plus side, Vietnam’s teachers as a whole are relatively young and more likely to sustain the radical changes mandated by the plan to “teach for a knowledge society” than an older and more entrenched teacher force might do. However, the task remains a formidable one.
The Challenge: Putting Theory into Action

How does Vietnam intend to realize these goals for renovating teaching and teacher training? One step is the introduction of new curricula, textbooks and methods at the primary and lower secondary levels. That in turn means existing and entering teachers alike will need to acquire a new and more sophisticated set of knowledge and teaching competencies before students can arrive at the desired new competencies. The national Education for All Action Plan 2003–2015 cites specific subsector interventions that support the implementation of EDS 2010.

Some of these interventions address access and management issues and reinforce the importance of shifting the emphasis in strategic goals from quantity to quality. The plan also consolidates EDS 2010 teacher training objectives so that both primary and lower secondary levels will now share the following general objectives:

- All teachers will receive 30 days of in-service training per year from 2003 on; and all teachers will meet national standards by 2010.
- All teachers will receive “teaching guides” for specific grades and subjects each year.
- Curricula, teaching methods, and textbooks will be “continuously improved,” and a “continuous assessment” system will be established.

VII. From Espoused to Enacted

In theory, the rules for classroom teachers have changed dramatically. The new curricula at the primary and lower secondary levels are an attempt to break from the dominant traditional teacher-centered approach. Under the new education strategy, teachers are being asked not only to demonstrate skills, competencies and ways of thinking never taught to them but also to master these new skills in their classrooms. Vietnam’s strategic goals and proposed interventions set a course for carrying out this immense task. And by all accounts and reports, Vietnam is already doing a great deal, particularly in areas that contribute to and support teacher practice.

Current Initiatives in Teacher Training

In the past 10 years, Vietnam has devoted a high level of attention to renovating primary and lower secondary curricula, textbooks and methodologies. The new teaching and learning theories regarding student curricula also necessitate the reform of teacher knowledge and skills. In support of these requirements, the government has announced a series of strategic planning tools and implemented Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects in the area of curriculum and materials development, and teacher training and capacity building (see table 2).

These projects include major interventions to help reach national objectives. As already mentioned, new curricula is being introduced at the primary and lower secondary levels and teacher training is being enhanced to ensure competent delivery of these curricula. An effort will therefore be made to upgrade teacher qualifications, strengthen in-service and pre-service programs for teachers and principals through more intensive training, improve the delivery capacity of teacher trainers and TTIs, and establish professional standards for teachers.
Vietnam proposes to implement the new primary and lower secondary curricula by:

- developing and distributing instructional materials and teacher resources;
- expanding in-service training on a massive scale and upgrading primary and lower secondary teachers as well as teacher trainers;
- institutionalizing regular in-service training; and
- renovating pre-service training to include modules for primary-level candidates and to redesign the curriculum for lower secondary trainees.

Several supports have been proposed for strengthening teacher training:

- at the primary level, Teacher Professional Standards/Profile defining the knowledge, skills, and practices expected of teachers;
- guidelines for teacher classification and teacher training program accreditation;
- options for revised terms of service and remuneration;
- training for education managers;
- establishment of quality assurance systems; and
- improved pre-entrance qualifications for teacher candidates from ethnic minorities.
Table 2. Primary and Lower Secondary Teacher Training Projects and Related Initiatives

**New Goals, Strategies, and Action Plans**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initiative Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals/Education for All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Vietnam announces achievement of Universal Primary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>National Primary Education Development Program</td>
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**National Initiatives and Programs, 1994–2004**

1994 *Primary Education Project (PEP)*
   - Improve quality and relevance; improve infrastructure and access; strengthen management (completion 2003).

1997 *Lower Secondary Education Development Project (LSEDP)*
   - Introduce new lower secondary curriculum development and in-service training (Phase 1 completion 2004).

1998 *English-Language Teacher Training Project (ELTTP)*
   - Build capacity to upgrade teachers of English in lower secondary schools and TTCs (completed August 2003).

1999 *Vietnam-Belgium Teacher Training Project*
   - Introduce teacher trainers to the methodology of active teaching and learning (completed March 2003).

1999 *Lower Secondary Teacher Training Project (LSTTP)*
   - Begin pre-service teacher training and TTI capacity building (completion 2006).

2000 *Support to the Ministry of Education and Training*
   - Add pedagogical component in support of new curriculum and textbook implementation, along with management component that includes EMIS development (completion April 2004).

2001 *Primary Teacher Development Project (PTDP)*
   - Lay foundation for nationwide program to upgrade quality of primary teaching service (completion 2005).

2002 *Phase-in of primary and lower secondary curriculum and methodology*

2003 *Phase-in of LSTTP pilot sites for new pre-service teacher training*

2003 *Lower Secondary Education Development Project II (Phase 2)*
   - Introduce materials and in-service to support active teaching/learning methods and use of instructional materials (completion 2010).

2003 *Draft Teacher Professional Profile primary education*

2004 *Quality of Education at the End of Primary School in Vietnam in 2001*
   - Conduct Grade 5 student performance assessment.

2004 *Pilot benchmark study on primary teacher skills using Draft Profile*

2004 *Primary Education for Disadvantaged Children*
   - Help schools meet Fundamental School Quality Standards and address the needs of highly vulnerable children.
Several supports have been proposed for strengthening teacher training:

- at the primary level, Teacher Professional Standards/Profile defining the knowledge, skills, and practices expected of teachers;
- guidelines for teacher classification and teacher training program accreditation;
- options for revised terms of service and remuneration;
- training for education managers;
- establishment of quality assurance systems; and
- improved pre-entrance qualifications for teacher candidates from ethnic minorities.

In addition to national or large-scale MOET-directed programs, there are a number of teacher training projects and activities led by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) such as Oxfam, Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services and Volunteer Service Overseas, in partnership with MOET, NIESCD, provincial DOETs, and various local education and training organizations. These tend to be smaller-scale projects centered in a subset of institutions within a region or province. They concentrate on the primary level and on the teacher skills needed to put child-centered, activity-based methodologies into practice.

**Measuring Outcomes: An Ongoing Problem**

Few measures are available to assess the outcomes of new teacher training efforts. Most programs look to educational system inputs as indicators of progress, such as the number of teachers upgraded, the number of teachers and educational managers trained, or the number of teacher texts or reference books distributed. Many also use enrollments, retention and completion as proxies for increased education quality and achievement. Despite the lack of quantitative indicators, there is valuable qualitative evidence of teacher training outcomes, as this study demonstrates. Interviews, discussions and debates with various stakeholders at various levels in the education and training system—decision makers, managers, and providers and consumers of teacher training—all provide insights into attitudes, ideas and concerns about teacher training and its effects.

**VIII. Reasons for Optimism: Promising Practice for Getting Desired Outcomes**

Training, materials and support mechanisms are difficult to assess without a baseline of established measures of teacher learning or knowledge. Vietnam is gradually building such a base to get a clearer picture of current performance and future needs. Evidence so far revealed some areas where current reforms are helping teachers meet new demands.

**Spirit and Scale of Reform**

Buoyed by centrally issued mandates and various policies and programs, the spirit of teacher training reform has spread far and wide. Ministry officials, teacher training institutions, principals, teachers and even students at the primary and lower secondary level—all are conscious of the desire to transform teaching and learning methodologies.
All provinces, districts, and schools are phasing in the new student curricula and understand that teachers should perform differently as a result. Individuals at all levels and teachers at appropriate grades have had direct or indirect training in the new curricula and methodologies. Most district officials and principals interviewed for this study confirmed that despite some late delivery of materials, they had received new teaching aids, teaching guides and teacher reference materials. Since many of the teaching materials are prescribed centrally but purchased locally, the extent to which they met the new standard varied from region to region: schools in Hanoi and HCMC, for example, had a set of materials for each classroom, whereas Bac Can in the north had one set per grade and per subject for each school.

Further signs that new teacher expectations are being reinforced appear in district and provincial evaluations of primary and lower secondary teachers. The forms used to assess primary teachers include criteria for gauging teaching strategies, attention to child development, and teacher-student relations, while the lower secondary assessment criteria include varied teaching methodologies, the use of teaching aids, and efforts to create an active classroom. The core criteria of these assessment sheets are formulated centrally and reflect a move to bring teacher assessment and evaluation in line with new expectations in teaching practice.

Perhaps the clearest sign that the government and MOET are committed to reform and are making headway in this regard is that one major NGO is reconsidering its own intervention for delivering teacher training in child-centered methodologies in view of the government’s various initiatives to this end. As the new approach becomes a core part of government training objectives, Oxfam GB may move away from direct teacher training in Lao Cai Province and begin helping officials deliver and replicate the training locally.

**Upgrading Teacher Qualifications**

One of MOET’s central priorities for improving education quality has been to upgrade and standardize teacher education and credentials at all education levels, and to upgrade teacher training institutions. Accordingly, the Regulations on National Standards for Primary Schools 1996–2000 were designed to bring all primary teachers up to or above the national standard by 2000. Hence core components of the PTDP, LSEDP and LSTTP support Vietnam’s efforts to upgrade teachers at all levels. These efforts have yielded remarkable progress: in 1997 and 2002 the proportion of primary teachers below standard fell by half, to 12 percent. A similar concerted effort at the lower secondary level reduced the percentage of below-standard teachers from 15 to 9 percent by 2002, even as the total teacher force at that level grew by more than 30 percent (EFA database, 2003). EDS 2010 reemphasizes the importance of this objective and sets more ambitious 12 + 3 targets and 12 + 4 targets for primary and lower secondary teachers, respectively.

The issue of academic qualifications is compounded by the poor capacity of teacher training institutions. Teacher trainers are often recruited as soon as they obtain a bachelor’s degree. LSTTP therefore supports upgrading teacher trainer qualifications and will send a cadre of teacher trainers off for master’s training, both overseas and in Vietnam in partnership programs with international universities. As mentioned earlier, training institution capacity had already been receiving attention in the drive to upgrade all Teacher Training Schools (Trung Hoc Su...
Pham) to the status of Teacher Training College. Vietnam now boasts a TTC in every province, a decided strength in both meeting teacher demand—since teachers are largely supplied from within each province—and in delivering continued training locally.

**Teacher Professional Profile**

A breakthrough development at the primary level is the drafting of Teacher Professional Standards or a Professional Profile for primary teachers. This profile defines the personal qualities (personality, ideology, politics), content knowledge and pedagogical skills expected in teachers. The professional standards can be applied in four critical areas: mapping and aligning teacher training courses; assessing trainees and teachers, both in terms of performance and training effectiveness; making informed decisions about teacher training needs; and creating a benchmark of skills expected of the current teaching force. The draft profile was recently approved by MOET, and the project is compiling a benchmark profile of skills for about 25,000 teachers.

Although the criteria in the Professional Teacher Profile need further examination to ensure they align with the new instructional expectations, the profile’s very existence marks an important step toward defining the characteristics and competencies required of a qualified teacher. It also forms the basis for establishing quality control measures for both teaching performance and training effectiveness.

**Grade 5 Assessment of Student Achievement**

To better understand student learning outcomes and the factors that influence them, Vietnam conducted a nationwide study of school performance and student achievement, its first endeavor of this kind. The National Institute of Educational Science (NIES), with guidance from the Primary Education Project, assessed grade 5 reading and mathematics achievement in 2001 and administered detailed questionnaires to students, teachers, households and schools. The study has generated a rich database for the analysis of student achievement in reading and numeracy, teacher performance, and the conditions that contribute to academic success (World Bank, 2003). It also establishes a baseline of student learning at the end of one educational level, provides a wealth of data for decision making at the central and provincial levels, and provides a foundation for creating a comprehensive assessment system to track student achievement. The data can be used to analyze the effects of teacher skills and knowledge on student achievement and to help principals and teachers determine teaching and learning needs.

Like the Teacher Professional Profile, student assessment results, if properly aligned with learning standards, provide a picture of performance. They can also help identify instructional needs, measure progress toward achievement goals, and evaluate the impact of instruction on student achievement.

**Redesigning Lower Secondary Pre-service TTC Curriculum**

In yet another innovation at the lower secondary level, Vietnam is redesigning pre-service teacher training for this level and has therefore proposed ways to revise the TTC curriculum
framework. While they are still awaiting MOET approval, these proposals in theory guide the pre-service program currently being phased in at pilot TTC sites.

Among its key features, the new curriculum framework proposes to redistribute units from content to pedagogy, increase units pertaining to subject minor, increase practice teaching, and integrate pedagogical instruction with practice teaching. With more practice teaching, trainees will be able to learn subject-specific pedagogical strategies in the context of actual classroom teaching and learning. As an added benefit, teacher trainers will gain experience in real lower secondary classrooms. Graduates from the new curriculum would also be better qualified to teach two subjects. Recommendations for the reform of teaching methodologies include the use of “student-active teaching approaches, self-learning and a range of assessment approaches” to parallel expectations of the new student curriculum. While these recommendations arrive somewhat late, as the first graduates of the pilot framework and materials will not enter classrooms until 2006, pre-service training must be modernized if classroom practice is to be transformed.

**Building Bridges**

In both Hanoi and HCMC, the TTCs have been seeking ways to breathe new life into the teacher training curriculum. Having few options for changing the structure of the program before MOET issues new regulations, these colleges have sought ways to shift the central directive from theory to practice. One solution has been to increase the interaction between teacher trainers and primary and lower secondary teachers. HCMC fosters such relationships at two schools in particular, which serve as “labs” for teacher trainers. These are real schools with real students, but they are staffed with teachers the TTC helps screen and recruit. The primary school is administered by the district, and the lower secondary school is administered directly by the TTC. Thus teacher trainers have a ready environment in which to hold demonstration classes or to test new methods and strategies. Pre-service students can observe classes more frequently without being burdened by bureaucratic procedures. This increased interaction is occurring on a lesser scale in Hanoi, where the TTC has invited lower secondary teachers to the college to interact with trainees and give them an idea of classroom situations; it has also invited recent graduates back to talk to trainees about their experience in entering a real classroom. These are important means of building professional dialogue and sharing knowledge across institutions in the education and training system.

Teacher training projects implemented at the provincial level also provide opportunities to build relationships between provincial DOETs, TTCs and classroom teachers. By way of example, the Vietnam-Belgian Teacher Training Project in the north and the DFID-funded English Language Teacher Training Project (ELTTP) tried to involve the many bodies responsible for education delivery—provincial education officials, district education officials, TTC teacher trainers, and primary and lower secondary teachers—so as to increase the capacity of each institution and develop partnerships among them.
Empirical Evidence and Building Blocks

A major goal of many NGOs or organizations that conduct smaller-scale training is to experiment with training models and try to show others what can be done in a low-cost, sustainable way at the district or provincial level. By demonstrating successful models of classroom practice and school learning environments, and by sharing the training tools and delivery used to achieve success, these organizations hope to spark provincial and MOET interest in replicating their innovations. Although the staff and leadership at most schools visited in this study struggled to define the basic philosophy of the new student curricula and the teacher competencies required to deliver those curricula and methodologies, in some instances effective teacher training through NGO support helped transform the teaching and learning environment.

The Dong Da Primary School in District 4 of HCMC is one of Save the Children Sweden’s (SCS) child-friendly environment sites. The project introduces active teaching and learning methods by having teachers participate in activities themselves. Teachers also learn how to make durable and recyclable teaching and learning aids from low-cost materials to supplement those provided through the state budget. Dong Da stood out sharply as a school where visitors could see and hear clear evidence of the kind of teaching and learning taking place. The school was not only colorful and vibrant, with examples of teacher and student work on the walls, but also showed concrete signs of group work and student expression and participation. The principal ascribed effective application of new methodologies to SCS’s direct and hands-on training, emphasis on the development of adult-child relationships, and very active observation, supervision and monitoring. Dong Da Primary is a disadvantaged school in one of HCMC’s poorer districts. Yet it clearly demonstrates that with good training, commitment and strong leadership even a school with limited resources can transform the school and instructional environment.

In Binh Thuan Province, the Basic Education and Teacher Training Project (BETTP) conducted by Save the Children Australia (SCA) offers interesting lessons and possibilities for provincial and district teacher training delivery. BETTP uses a Training of Trainers (TOT) model of delivery that cultivates a core local team to deliver and reinforce training. This key training team consists of one member from each of the 8 districts in the province, along with one member from each of the 40 schools participating in the project. This structure both develops the knowledge and leadership capacity of the district education office (BOET), and provides for a site-based key trainer at each school. The site-based trainers can conduct school-level follow-up trainings, observe and guide teachers directly in the classroom context, and help build a shared professional culture at the school site. BETTP training methods favor the development of practical skills and reinforcement over instructional theory. A manual of teacher-tested activities and resources for grade 1 created by this project generated so much interest and demand from other areas that MOET is arranging to publish and distribute the manual throughout the country.

The English-Language Teacher Training Project (ELTTP) was a bilateral initiative of DFID and MOET with a more local approach. It operated in 22 provinces and many of its lessons for implementing an effective training model coincide with those of the BETTP. Both projects were concerned with developing training materials relevant to MOET programs. They endeavored to provide resources and activities that engaged the new curriculum, cultivated a core of local
trainers and trainer of trainers for instructional support, focused on developing both trainer capacity and teacher instructional practice through sustained or intensive training, and used a highly practical, hands-on training approach. Both projects led with guided practice rather than theory. Teachers received intensive and sustained practical training and support and reached an understanding of theories through the effective results of their new practical approach to student behavior and learning. Projects such as these offer important insights for creating sustainable change and provide valuable tools and locally trained expertise for supporting follow-up activities.

IX. Putting Theory into Practice: Where Are The Gaps? Why?

The scale of interventions and teacher training inputs and the obvious strategic orientation in teaching and learning have made an impact on the consciousness of all stakeholders in teacher training, teacher training institutions, and schools. All are attuned to central directives to upgrade teacher qualifications and to implement the new primary and lower secondary curricula. The rhetoric of “student-centered classrooms” and “active teaching and learning” is also well established. As research demonstrates, however, a gap exists between theory and practice. Clearly, many things happening at the central level are important conditions for changing classroom practice. Some promising signs can be seen at lower levels too, particularly in the growth in regulatory and procedural awareness and in a few changes in practice. But as yet there is limited evidence that these policies and programs are producing large-scale or profound changes in the habits of mind or in the instructional core at the school and classroom level.

At the heart of this problem is a partial understanding of the new model of teaching and learning. That is why goals for improving teacher training or desired teaching competencies remain somewhat unclear and inconsistent, and no standard methods for measuring student or teacher performance have yet emerged. Thus, it is hard for those enacting change to know where they are going or where they are. This makes an immense task doubly hard, for it makes it difficult indeed to know how to get where they hope to go. From our many interviews in a diverse array of education settings, it is clear that the rhetoric of change and renovation has permeated the education system in Vietnam. What is less clear is that Vietnam’s teachers, administrators and teacher training institutions understand the practical impact and implementation methods of the new goals they have been given.

The following sections examine key factors that have prevented more radical or widespread changes in instructional practice at both the teacher training and primary/lower secondary levels:

- **Difficulties in taking aim.** Lacking a common vocabulary to define desired changes in instructional practice, both educators and administrators have a superficial view of them rather than the profound understanding needed to apply theory in practice and transfer knowledge to others; confounding factors such as weak infrastructure and technology, poverty, and ethnic minority issues make it difficult to focus on instructional goals.

- **Difficulties in taking measure.** Without predetermined criteria relating to desired outcomes in teaching practice and student learning, there is little with which to measure teacher or student performance and progress, or program effectiveness.
The challenge of changing practice. Practical materials and participatory training for teachers and teacher trainers are in short supply; under the current cascading system of dissemination, content and delivery become greatly diluted as they move down each organizational level. Current pre- and in-service efforts fall short in providing continuous and practice-based training and thus fail to create authentic and lasting changes in teaching and learning.

Weak instructional support. Because education managers and inspectors are not in tune with espoused instructional goals, they are unable to provide appropriate guidance and incentives for teachers and teacher trainers to attain such goals; teachers and teacher trainers lack a supportive community of practice to cultivate shared expertise and foster collective problem solving.

Weak linkages. As a result of the lack of communication and collaboration within and across education levels, schools as organizations, and agencies responsible for teacher training, Vietnam’s education system has not made strategic use of resources or expertise. Weak linkages between donors, donor projects and NGOs further challenge the implementation of a comprehensive and complementary reform program.

Organizational dissonance. Vietnam is struggling to reconcile its new goals of decentralization and increased local innovation/autonomy with its desire to strictly control and keep uniform the core elements of the education system such as student curricula and teacher training programs; perhaps the nature, breadth and pace of espoused reforms are far beyond current paradigms and technical capacity.

Difficulties in Taking Aim

Lack of a Shared Vocabulary. As just mentioned, Vietnam does not yet have a standard language for new teaching and learning theories. In addition, few are experienced in defining or assessing teaching and learning characteristics and performance. Principals and district officials, for example, find it easier to discuss the rankings of teachers than their relative strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. Before the new curricula and methods were introduced, a measure of teacher performance was whether the teacher covered the lesson in the allotted time and had good penmanship. Teaching was dominated by a single instructional approach—which was didactic, teacher-centered, and geared to learning by rote. The new curricula for both primary and lower secondary grades embody new concepts such as “student-centered classroom” and “active learning,” yet few at the lower organizational levels—and even some at the upper levels—have a sound understanding of how they relate to new teacher competencies or new student learning.

Whatever their position in the education and training system, most educators do not have the vocabulary to talk concretely about new methodologies and competencies. Phrases such as “student-centered classroom,” “active learning,” and “knowledge economy” are used in official documents and by central officials as if the concepts they represent are common knowledge. Although researchers at the national level may be more familiar with these approaches, few of them have been clearly defined, and few resources have been available to implement them. Hence few personnel at any level, including the school level, really understand what they mean.
for changing practice. What does a student-centered classroom look like? What is active learning? What will teachers have to know and do differently? What educational strategies will they have to learn and apply, and what competencies are needed? When we asked these questions, educators at all levels struggled to get past general terms.

Education officials at both the central and provincial levels in all locations expressed concern about the degree to which the new curricula and methods would be implemented. Many were reluctant to acknowledge that they or even teachers failed to understand it; instead they said “the theory was not that difficult to absorb.” The only question was how to apply or transfer that knowledge. Of course, to be able to explain a concept or transfer understanding one must have a deep understanding of the subject and practical application skills.

Similarly, teachers and principals stated it was not difficult to “absorb new knowledge” but acknowledged that teachers struggled to apply the concepts in the classroom. According to the findings of this study, application was in fact weak, and few respondents fully understood the underlying theory of action—why particular activities or techniques should be used, and how they benefit student learning and development. With little exception, interviews at the school level showed that few understood or could explain that wanting students to be “active” means creating an animated learning environment and not just having students physically move around the room, or that “group work” is intended to foster collaborative learning habits, or that the new requirement of conducting “multiple activities” in class is asking teachers to select and constantly review pedagogical methods to address different student learning needs.

This study revealed evidence of these misconceptions or tenuous understanding across many levels and stakeholder groups. One principal remarked that her school knew it was supposed to give multiple-choice assessments instead of essays or writing assignments, the old way of assessing. But she did not understand that the problem with the former assessment approach was not that essay writing was bad, but that teachers had expected students to memorize and regurgitate information. She failed to see that writing can also encourage students to analyze information and formulate arguments and conclusions. To give another example of the poor understanding of the new regulations, when teachers were asked how much time they spent on different types of teaching strategies, some went so far as to say they never lectured to students. Didactic instruction is certainly problematic when used as the only method, but in the appropriate contexts multiple strategies are an essential part of the new methods. An official at the central level challenged the notion that implementing the new methods at the lower education levels required parallel changes in the delivery of teacher training.

Teachers expressed a wide range of assumptions and concerns that have implications for translating theory into practice. Some felt that organizing group activities “wasn’t teaching at all” and questioned whether students, left to their own devices, were really able to discover knowledge on their own. Those with a better understanding of group work argued that it demanded far too much of teachers in terms of additional preparation and was too difficult to organize. Some were reluctant to adopt the new methodologies in fear of inspectors, who still evaluated in the old style or believed that the group work allowed lazy students not to do any work. One teacher said that if students were not successful in the new style, they and parents would criticize the teacher for not “teaching.” Perhaps the most revealing concern was whether
the new methods could even be applied to some subjects, like history, which were not open to interpretation.

Because Vietnam has a decentralized system of implementation, it is even more important that each level understand the changes intended in classroom practice. In the final analysis, the quality of education depends on what happens in the classroom. General goals such as “improving teaching” or even “ability to apply new methodologies” do not provide a shared vision for instructional improvement. Unless the main changes in teaching and learning strategies are fully understood and the new competencies that these strategies demand are defined, policies and programs will be initiated and administered without any idea of the changes they are supposed to bring about.

Confounding Issues. A primary concern about the new curricula and methods in the poorest provinces was the lack of equipment and facilities, rather than instructional issues/teacher competencies. The extent of infrastructural needs can be seen in the facilities visited in the northern mountainous provinces, where schools have mud and bamboo walls, thatched roofs and no electricity in classrooms. It is easy to see why stakeholders, from teachers and principals to DOET personnel, focus on external/material needs rather than instructional issues. Increased physical and financial resources will undoubtedly improve the general quality of education, but instructional improvement cannot wait for the problems of poverty to be solved.

All stakeholders at the school and teacher training institutions, regardless of facilities or location, found infrastructure inadequate and felt poorly prepared for new technology; in the poorer provinces, they tended to see technology as the silver bullet for improving education quality. Given the importance of technology in the functioning of today’s modern society and economy, ICT will inevitably be an important means to accelerate learning or extend understanding. However, computers alone will not solve the problem. The critical question is how will they change instruction? Respondents seemed unaware of the applications of technology in instruction, apart from being more visually interesting for students and enabling teachers to prepare presentations ahead of time rather than write on the chalkboard (the same can be said of overhead projectors). Their answers reflected an overall poor grasp of the purpose of the new approach—which is to apply methods, teaching aids and computers alike to develop student learning. Many lower-tech and less costly instructional strategies can be just as effective in helping students acquire the foundational thinking skills necessary for success in the new knowledge economy.

Another complicating factor was the issue of ethnic minorities. In one province visited where ethnic minorities account for about 80 percent of the population and 75 percent of its teachers, stakeholders at all levels attribute the poor quality of teaching, TTC candidates, or student learning to this factor. Some teachers also questioned whether the new methods would benefit minority students. Other donor and government studies have already established that ethnic minority participation and performance are greatly affected by language acquisition, competing opportunity costs at home, or conditions of poverty or remoteness. In the past, the solution was to offer students a differentiated and less demanding curriculum. Now that Vietnam has moved to a uniform curriculum at the primary level, it must decide how to use the best strategies available to ensure that all students receive high-quality instruction and that those who are most
disadvantaged do not get even less. Although this issue falls somewhat outside the scope of this study, it bears careful examination as Vietnam implements the new student curricula and instructional methods.

*Lack of Clear, Uniform, Instructional Goals.* However strong the desire to change teaching and learning in Vietnam, the education system as a whole has not fully established what forms of new knowledge and competencies are essential in a knowledge economy. Central officials, researchers, and experts in teaching methodology certainly have a sense of desirable goals for student learning but as yet have failed to define uniform standards of what students and teachers need to know. Without such standards, stakeholders at the provincial, district and school level must rely on central regulations for clues to recommendations of the central experts, but this in turn generates muddled priorities. As a result, interventions may not aim at instructional goals and thus may not achieve their promised outcomes.

Since 1997 Vietnam has focused heavily on upgrading teacher degrees and credentials to bridge the major gaps in teaching skills. This objective was recently reinforced in the EFA Action Plan. Nevertheless, it makes no explicit mention of developing new competencies—or even core subject knowledge standards—for teachers. Although it is not misguided to want to improve the academic qualifications of teachers, one cannot assume that a diploma or certification is necessarily synonymous with desired competence. Even developed countries where 100 percent of the teacher force holds a university degree put great effort into improving teacher quality to ensure that candidates acquire the skills or content knowledge needed for high-quality teaching. In Vietnam, education officials and the press have roundly criticized the TTCs for being backward and turning out teachers with insufficient knowledge and teaching skills. The TTCs themselves admit that their curricula are not yet in line with new requirements. Thus, enacting the new policy without first ensuring that such institutions have the understanding and expertise to deliver appropriate and quality training can mean an enormous waste of resources. Teachers are likely to receive more training that is neither effective nor relevant to improving instructional practice.

Although Vietnam has launched a program of teacher in-service training for 2002–2005 as part of the implementation phase of the new primary and lower secondary curricula to introduce more modern methods of instruction, officials and managers still emphasize upgrading over implementing new teaching and learning theories. They do not treat the two initiatives as complementary strategies aimed at a single instructional goal beyond “improving education quality.” Indeed, they offer few concrete goals for increasing teacher qualifications beyond “gaining more knowledge.” For them, upgrading degrees and certifications is an easier, more tangible, and more quantifiable goal than giving teachers the skills to implement the new curricula and methods, and allows them to skirt this more elusive goal. Without a clear understanding of what they need to do differently, most teachers, too, do more of the same.

Although on a smaller scale, Vietnam has followed this tactic of pressing for a quantifiable output without a clear focus on an instructional outcome—with troubling results. The Primary Education Project distributed more than 400,000 student learning kits to the poorest communes, but without accompanying teacher training in how to use them. The project completion report itself suggested this oversight diminished the benefits. Another lesson perhaps still being learned
is the folly of rushing to upgrade all TTSs into a national network of TTCs which required enormous resources to both staff and equip. Although provinces that have experienced this upgrade consider it instrumental in improving their teacher quality, the TTCs have been criticized at all levels for having low-quality teacher trainers and for producing low-quality graduates. According to a recent article in *Dai Doan Ket* (Solidarity), the investment was fruitless, especially now that pre-service recruitments are shrinking and hence facilities and teaching staff are going unused.

**Difficulties in Taking Measure**

*Performance.* Teachers and teacher trainers need more knowledge, but what kind of knowledge? Teacher training institutions are being asked to strengthen their training quality, but by what measures? What are effective practices in training teachers? How good is good enough? And how will the new curricula and methods change student learning? How does one recognize a classroom that is successfully applying new teaching and learning theories? A major shortcoming of the massive efforts to improve education in general and teacher training in particular is the lack of clear performance measures.

This makes it all the more difficult for Vietnam to build the knowledge base necessary for good teaching. Current pre-service curriculum frameworks allocate a substantial number of credits for basic knowledge to accommodate the variable quality and level of education of incoming teacher candidates. Yet when the national grade 5 assessment analyzed the levels and determinants of reading and math achievement, it found a significant correlation between wide variation in teacher knowledge in these subjects and student achievement levels. The study also found few differences in the kinds of teaching methods that teachers say they use. The report expressed concern over “an unquestioning conformity to the ‘rules’ for teaching that they have been given and very little initiative being taken by teachers to adapt to the different needs of pupils.” This narrow conformity in the classroom is the result of many complex factors: the educational system stresses compliance over instructional effectiveness; low pay forces teachers to take on additional employment to subsist; instruction is teacher-centered by tradition; and training continues to emphasize theoretical knowledge rather than its practical application in a classroom.

*Accountability.* Traditionally, Vietnam’s educational standards have focused on inputs into the system, and not on learning outputs. Not surprisingly, then, questions posed in this study about the quality of teaching or effective practice elicited few comprehensive answers. District or provincial officials felt they could not talk about specific changes or improvements in teacher practice, pointing to MOET as the body responsible for conducting evaluations. MOET’s departments suggested that project offices may have mechanisms to evaluate teacher performance. But project offices admitted that there were still no good measures to assess teacher performance in the classroom or for the project to assess the effectiveness of new teacher training being delivered.

A critical problem facing Vietnam, as best described by Vice Minister of Education and Training Nguyen Van Vong on MOET’s website, is that “the current campaign of new teaching methods is not accompanied by any incentives, supervision or monitoring instruments. After launching, it is up to teachers to do or not.” Indeed, this study found that education officials and school
managers were mainly concerned about things that can be measured and reported, namely, their
targets for upgrading degrees and certifications. The attention given to the new teaching methods
varied considerably, depending on the degree to which stakeholders at all levels, including the
classroom, understood these methods and their benefits. Such problems can be alleviated through
common instructional goals, which serve not only to measure progress and inform policy and
programs but also help mobilize collective commitment and accountability for enacting change.

*Alignment.* Since student assessments are not yet in line with the new curricula and all but final
exams at each level are locally designed and administered, no consistent measures are available
to help educational managers compare teaching performance across classrooms and schools or to
identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching practice. The Grade 5 Reading and Math
Assessment is an important step forward in Vietnam’s capacity to establish a student
performance system. Without an institutionalized system along these lines, there is little
information to assess performance and progress from year to year, the value added to student
learning by teachers, or the results of reform efforts. Moreover, student evaluations will not
reflect the new curriculum, and teachers, who have long used preparation for exams to direct
their teaching, will be less motivated to change their classroom practice.

**The Challenge of Changing Practice**

*Practice Makes Perfect.* Teachers are not getting the practical training and resources they need
and want. Echoing many past studies and needs assessments, those interviewed from all levels,
but especially the school level, consistently indicated that they wanted practical training and help
in how to apply the new methods. Although “learning by doing,” a common maxim of student-
centered, active-learning approaches around the world, is not yet espoused in Vietnam, educators
do say that students should learn to discover knowledge and that teachers should conduct
activities that create a rich environment for learning. It is a mistake to think that learning to teach
can remain static when trying to transform classroom practice. Yet teacher training continues to
be highly theoretical. The LSED P midterm review notes that although in-service workshops are
sufficiently prepared, “several trainers did not meet the requirements of implementing the new
training methods to encourage the trainees to be active and produce results” (in SESMP).

Among those reluctant to deliver practical hands-on training, some argue that training methods
do not necessarily need to be changed in order to renovate teacher practice. A MOET official put
it this way: “[The teacher trainer]’s responsibility is to give trainees updated information on the
textbook reforms,” but this does not require a parallel change in methods. Some also feel the new
methods are not appropriate to their level. One NGO trainer reported that observers from a
teacher training college mocked the childishness of workshop activities, hence were unwilling to
participate and perhaps intended to continue with a more academic theoretical approach in their
own teaching. In addition, experts who have researched the new theories extensively but have no
practical classroom experience may feel ill-equipped to use “active learning” strategies. In fact,
most of Vietnam’s teacher trainers and curriculum/textbook authors have limited practical
classroom experience; they are often creatures of the old system that they are supposed to be
changing. Although many have a deep theoretical understanding of modern methodologies,
designing a textbook or classroom lesson or training exercise that applies these methods can be
an entirely different matter.
In addition to calling for practical training (and despite the observed resistance to it), all stakeholders below the central level also state they need more practical resources. For example, when a textbook suggests new methodologies be used, saying something like, “Conduct a group activity here, such as role play, discussion, or game,” it is assumed that teachers have a repertoire of such activities or know how to select and conduct them, which is not necessarily true. Teachers want more explicit instructions. In this case, the textbook might instead say, “Here is a sample dialogue showing you how you might guide a student through solving an algebra problem to help the student identify and self-correct mistakes.”

This practical problem can be illustrated by comparing a MOET-developed teacher self-learning manual and the Binh Thuan BETT teacher resource manual. The first is a highly detailed discussion of the theoretical basis for the new methods. Although two Vietnamese university-level instructors who reviewed the text found the contents informative, they both felt it would take a great deal of time and a dedicated mind to translate the manual into practical classroom applications. The other resource book, developed using teacher-tested materials, is a collection of usable games, teaching and learning aids, and examples of activities that are explicitly connected to student curriculum content and that describe (and then demonstrate) different strategies. Training that incorporates the manual spends at least half the available time on participatory learning, using the tools introduced, and taking turns facilitating activities in small groups. Vietnam is not without clear models showing practical materials and delivery mechanisms. Small-scale projects concerned with child-centered and active learning have been in place for nearly a decade in some parts of the country. Experts charged with developing new materials for these methodologies would be wise to draw lessons from experience with existing local and international resources tested through time.

The practicum or formal practice teaching component of pre-service training merits special attention. Current regulations allot two weeks in the second year of training for observations and six weeks in the third year for classroom practice at the both primary and lower secondary levels. Although the regulations also say that students should lead eight classes in this six-week period, by all accounts three to four classes were closer to the norm. Every stakeholder group interviewed wanted this requirement in the pre-service program to be increased. The same suggestion was made as early as 1998 in the Stakeholder Analysis performed in preparation for the Primary Teacher Development Project (PTDP). As discussed earlier, the 2000–2001 Technical Assistance to the Lower Secondary Teacher Training Project went a step further and suggested a new curriculum framework credit distribution that would significantly increase practice teaching from 8 to 17 units, with elements of practice teaching beginning in the first year (the final proposal does extend practice teaching but substantially scales back the increase). TTCs are ardent in their desire for more practice teaching, but say they must wait for specific MOET guidelines.

It is not only practice teaching and pre-service training that must follow this mantra of “learning by doing.” In-service programs at every level should employ practical training. Not only would this reinforce the most current views and practices, but it would let participants experience the new methods in real applications. Nonetheless, even in-service training delivered at the central level, which can expect the highest degree of expertise and understanding of the new methods
and competencies, does not generally use or demonstrate the new methods. In-service teacher training conducted to update teachers on the new curricula and methods appears not to have changed much from the out-of-date, teacher-centered, lecture-based approach. The consumers of in-service training at the provincial, district, and school level report that they “do a lot of sitting and listening,” and that the trainers “talk, talk, talk.”

This academic approach to in-service delivery points to at least two of the current system’s weaknesses. First, it shows that the experts are unable to apply theory in practice or to recognize that the old methods simply do not communicate how to apply theory; it also indicates that the leaders in this new movement are experiencing difficulty in changing their own practices. Second, as the key source of guidance and expertise, training of this nature falls short in conveying the practical skills necessary to transform classroom practice. And it provides little experiential enforcement of the benefits of the new methods. Thus those implementing the reforms at teacher training colleges and in schools must struggle alone to bridge this gap between theory and practice. Some genuinely try to apply new techniques they may understand only superficially, whereas others apply them formulaically in an effort to meet new regulations, without understanding how they might improve student learning.

False Positives. If teachers are to be responsible for creating the conditions and building the skills and capacities required in a contemporary knowledge economy, there must first be reciprocity in equipping them with the capacity to do so. Shifting from a teacher-centered, lecture-based, rote teaching and learning approach to an active and student-centered one must entail more than introducing content knowledge or the new approach will not go beyond token gestures. Without sufficient training, practice and reinforcement, teachers may alter surface features or adopt new ones without changing the fundamental nature of instruction.

This study found that even in schools that felt they understood the new expectations and were proud of their reforms, observed practice often demonstrated only a superficial grasp of intended methodologies. Both international and Vietnamese NGO project officers and trainers who have conducted extensive classroom observations report seeing token changes and limited genuine application, even when schools or teachers in question were considered model cases. Teachers might ask open-ended questions, for example, but then provide the answers before students had time to respond to or discuss them. Asking rhetorical questions and offering answers or using questioning that tries to elicit a correct answer can be only a slightly less passive form of didactic teaching. Another frequent pattern was to divide students into groups, but otherwise show no evidence of preparing them for collaborative learning or a specific group activity.

The Signal Degrades. If training at the central level employs new methodologies only half-heartedly, by the time practices reach the district and school level, many times removed, they will be substantially diluted. Even when goals are clearly defined and an efforts is made to design and deliver training so as to effectively communicate the new theories and learn how to apply them, the current model responsible for disseminating training from MOET down through the provinces to the district and then to schools leaves room for significant signal degradation.

As mentioned earlier, in-service training in Vietnam employs the Cascade Model to introduce new curricula and textbooks. This means the content and goals of training originate at the central
level, which is where provincial educators, including provincial DOET and TTC personnel, attend training sessions. These individuals are responsible for training others at the provincial level, and then for organizing training for the next level down or the district education office personnel. District participants, in turn, train others across the district, then are responsible for training teachers, either by having all teachers of a subject or grade attend various sessions, or by training some teachers who are then responsible for retraining the remaining teaching staff at their school.

By the time a primary or lower secondary teacher receives training in the new curriculum and methods, the information might be as much as six times removed from the original training. In most cases, provincial and district staff try to replicate training exactly as they received it. But no matter how effective training materials or experience may be, information can always be lost along the way. Furthermore, who can guarantee that trainers at every level will have the skill to apply newly learned methodologies well enough to deconstruct them to explain them to others or to demonstrate their practical application? According to one informant working at the provincial level, the current mode of delivery means that “information is collected by a few and often not shared with the many.”

The other shortcoming of current in-service training for disseminating new curricula and methods is that the sessions are one-time events. As MOET phases in new texts at the primary and lower secondary level, it introduces one grade at each level each year: for example, grades 1 and 6 in 2002–03, grades 2 and 7 in 2003–2004. In 2005 training will begin for grades 3 and 8. Training consists of four to five days of training per subject at the lower secondary level and three to four days per subject at the primary level. This may be enough time for someone to become familiar with a new teaching concept but certainly not enough to create lasting change in practice. Nor is it long enough to learn new content, theory, and application well enough—even temporarily—to then transfer that knowledge to others. Since the in-service is targeted each year to the new grades being introduced, if the period of MOET training for grade 1 was 2000–2001 and a teacher graduated from TTC in 2001, then he or she has missed the boat because subsequent years are devoted to the next grades.

Although some informants mentioned monthly district meetings are being scheduled to discuss subject areas, it is not clear what guidance is provided to help reinforce or develop teaching competencies. These meetings were to form the basis of a new model of school-based in-service implemented by the LSEDP, using centrally provided materials and school-based mentors who received training and support from the district and from provincial TTCs. While teachers and district personnel acknowledged that the monthly event does take place, there was little evidence of focused professional development. Teachers referred to these events as “meetings” rather than training sessions or opportunities for learning.

New Blood in the Teacher Force? The problem of diluted in-service training is compounded by two practices at TTCs. First, except for project pilot sites, most TTCs have not appreciably altered their curriculum or approach to match the new methodologies. Their teacher trainers attend training sessions on the new student curricula at the same time as primary and lower secondary teachers. Thus new graduates continue to enter the classroom without having any exposure to the new methods. Students are also getting mixed messages in their coursework and
their practice teaching, rather than having practice teaching reinforce and provide a real context for academic theory. And even the institutions that are piloting the new lower secondary teacher training curriculum as part of the LSTTP will not graduate new teachers trained in the new methods until 2006.

An additional concern is that teacher surpluses in many areas have forced TTCs to drastically reduce recruitments. No sooner have resources been poured into training institutions to raise the academic qualifications of their trainers or to improve facilities than the institutions have had to curtail enrollments. This is not only a waste of resources but the opportunity to infuse the teacher force with teachers trained in the new curriculum is extremely limited. This also increases the burden of in-service training as the main mechanism for ensuring that teachers will master the necessary competencies for effective classroom teaching. What happens in in-service training is all the more critical when one considers that most teachers have little access to outside references or resources besides the textbooks and possibly a teacher’s guide or manual.

**Weak Instructional Support**

*Mangers and Inspectors.* Teacher training is not just left to teachers and teacher trainers. Managers and inspectors are involved in the process, and those who do not fully understand new methods and demands can reduce the effectiveness of training by failing to provide reinforcement or support for the new methods. At the local level, this includes school principals and in the case of primary and lower secondary education, district staff in charge of inspection and in-service training. At the central level, it includes those responsible for developing guidelines and regulations for classroom observation and teacher assessment.

Although the new espoused theory of teaching and learning emphasizes formative feedback over grades and encourages self-reflection, a constant refrain in the research was that the teacher evaluation process is not yet aligned with these objectives. Teachers have admitted that they do not use new methods when they are being observed because it might negatively affect their ranking. Inspectors who do not understand active methods may deduct points for noise level or for furniture out of place. Or they may pay more attention to the quality of handwriting used in lesson plans or regulated timeframes for activities than to eye contact, questioning techniques and the learning outcomes of the lesson. For example, when asked to describe the characteristics of an effective classroom, one principal cited adequate school supplies for every student, good penmanship and class discipline. At the other end of the spectrum, inspectors who are unfamiliar with the nature of group work may reward a teacher with full points for having students sitting in groups, even if there is no evidence of collaborative learning.

District and school administrators, whose primary responsibility is to evaluate and inspect teachers and schools, use MOET criteria in classroom observations with some attention to new methods (see appendix D). However, it is not clear to what extent this is the case across schools and districts. Most of these criteria appear to be quite broad, as in “Applies the active teaching/learning methodology,” “Ability to make group discussion,” or “Effective use of teaching/learning aids.” Furthermore, these criteria have equal standing with older ones such as neat handwriting and finishing the lesson in the regulated time. An evaluator must have a deep understanding of the new methodologies to determine whether teachers are actually meeting such
criteria. Examples of criteria that engage elements of teaching practice more concretely can be found in LSTTP’s TA Final Report and in some NGO project evaluations.

Another problem is that both kinds of criteria are presented as a checklist of items scored on a scale of 0–2 (lower secondary) or 0–10 (primary), followed by a ranking based on point total. No standards are provided to explain what type of performance might earn a particular score. Again, this leaves a great deal up to the knowledge and discretion of the evaluator. It also provides the teacher with little feedback as to his or her specific strengths and weaknesses and relies on classroom observations as a ranking tool, rather than as a learning tool for improving instruction. No principals or district officials responsible for inspections who were interviewed could clearly articulate, much less deconstruct, these criteria.

Pedagogical Supervision. These weaknesses in instructional support can be traced in part to the lack of an organizational home for pedagogical supervision and support. According to a recent organizational capacity assessment of the Ministry of Education and its provincial and district offices, DOETs and BOETs have “inspectorate” units, but they focus largely on compliance to MOET regulations and standards, rather than on instructional assessment and support for teachers. The report concludes that the inspection function sits outside the primary or secondary education professional units because it is seen as a technical rather than educational matter. Given the shifts in national strategic goals to raise the quality of education, this arrangement is probably a serious drawback.

Professional Community. Inasmuch as all teachers must follow a more or less prescribed curriculum and principal and peer evaluations are well established, it is surprising that schools do not have a stronger shared professional culture. One MOET official remarked that while teachers had frequent teaching demonstrations and monthly meetings to discuss common issues, these could be more symbolic exercises rather than examples of true teamwork. Teachers admit that they do their lesson planning alone, and according to teachers and administrators alike, the system has structural barriers to working together, such as multi-shifting or the outside employment taken to earn supplemental income. One trainer questioned whether this isolation in teacher practice was also due to competition. Currently, an important part of teacher ranking and evaluation is the actual lesson plan each teacher produces, down to the quality of the handwriting. Especially in the early phase of implementation of the new curriculum and methods, when teachers are clearly struggling to apply a new approach, design activities for group work, and make teaching and learning aids, the lack of a shared practice is a salient deficiency.

Weak Linkages and Cross-Coordination

Because of the weak linkages within and between levels of Vietnam’s education system, schools as organizations, and teacher training institutions, the reform program is somewhat incoherent and has not made strategic use of the expertise and resources available. Similarly tenuous linkages on the international side—between donors, between donor projects, and between donor projects and NGO projects—make it all the more difficult to implement a comprehensive and complementary sector-wide reform program. Together, these problems weaken institutional capacity and productivity.
This can be seen at the central level, in the two projects responsible for developing the in-service (LSEDP) and pre-service (LSTTP) programs to support to new lower secondary curriculum and textbook implementation. Although both are funded by the same donor, informants point out that in-service and pre-service reform efforts have various problems with sequencing and separation. Like other major donor projects, each has its own Project Coordination Unit (PCU) at the central level to manage the project and oversee operations, procurement, and the like. Separate executing bodies and highly formalized channels of interaction within MOET and other government agencies further support the system of silos of activity with little cross-fertilization across projects. Fragmented data collection projects also create inefficiency and weaken the capacity for analysis and programmatic coordination.

Provincially implemented projects have the added challenge of establishing partnerships that include all educational and administrative institutions, and of coordinating centrally executed initiatives with provincial institutions and local resources and expertise. For example, the BETTP in Binh Thuan Province works closely with the provincial DOETs, district BOETs, and schools across each district but has been unable to engage TTCs in the training program. Thus teacher trainers are notably absent from the core of key trainers in the province, and the model for professional development and instructional support proposed by the project and widely implemented across the province is not introduced during pre-service education.

Across Vietnam, the TTCs have not been well equipped to lead the implementation of the new primary and lower secondary curricula and textbooks. Teacher trainers expressed concern about attending in-service training in the new curricula alongside classroom teachers when the TTCs are supposedly responsible for delivering quality and up-to-date pre- and in-service training. To cite another example, MOET identified BETTP’s grade 1 activity book and ELTTP’s grade 6 lesson plan book as important resources for supporting the provincial introduction of the new curricula and textbooks. Yet there has been no move to build on these foundations and use the available local tools and expertise to produce much needed-practical training material relevant to the new curriculum being implemented in subsequent grades.

International reform efforts also suffer from insufficient coordination and networking between NGO projects, and few links have been established between NGOs and the larger bilateral or multilateral donor-funded projects. As a result, there is less cross-learning and more overlapping of or gaps between projects. Again, coordination with MOET and provincial governments is too limited to ensure that projects follow shared objectives and make the most efficient use of resources and expertise.

Organizational Dissonance

Sequencing and Coordination. A resounding complaint voiced by the TTCs and also by provincial education officials down to principals is that there are problems with the sequence of reforms. In 2002 Vietnam introduced new curricula and textbooks at both the primary and lower secondary levels to modernize the content and methods of teaching and learning. At the same time, it launched a parallel program of teacher in-service training to implement the new curricula and new instructional strategies. Yet another concurrent program focuses on the development of new pre-service training materials and modules at both the primary and lower secondary level.
Inadequacies at the training level have remained a bottleneck for an overarching transformation. In-service training does not prepare teacher trainers to facilitate retraining or classroom teachers to follow the new student curricula. In many cases, lecturers from TTCs must attend training sessions alongside primary and lower secondary teachers because even the TCCs’ own training has still not been brought in line with the new curricula and methods. Pilot programs to redesign pre-service materials and curricula are just under way in a limited number of provinces, so only a handful of new lower secondary teachers are being trained under the new system and will not graduate until 2006. Not only has the sequencing of reforms been problematic but in-service and pre-service training models are also being developed separately under separate projects. This makes it all the harder to plan the relative responsibilities of pre-service training and in-service professional development.

Mixed Messages to the TTCs. The TTCs’ concern about the sequencing and roll-out of the new methods reflects a deeper tension between them and MOET. The TTCs are in a particularly uneasy position in Vietnam’s tension between centralization and decentralization. The GVN’s stated intention is to move toward decentralization while maintaining authority over policy. The precise steps Vietnam has taken in this direction are to decentralize financing and some areas of administration while maintaining control over key elements of the education program, such as student curricula, examination requirements, and teacher training. A policy on the implementation of the new student curricula says that schools should use ministry documents as a guideline in their innovations, but in reality (because MOET still controls education curricula and exams), most provincial and district education departments follow MOET guidelines to the letter.

Although MOET continues to dictate the curriculum framework and develop textbooks/materials for pre-service and in-service training, most entities in the education and training system, including MOET itself, consider the TTCs to be the main institutions responsible for training teachers. In the ministry’s view, teachers will be best prepared if the TTCs use MOET’s general curriculum framework to make pedagogical decisions and innovations. That means TTCs are expected to provide the road map for helping teachers implement the modernized instructional methods of the new primary and lower secondary curricula. Yet our research bears out that the TTCs themselves feel bounded by the MOET curriculum framework and textbooks and are therefore behind in actually reforming teaching and learning. Except for the more prominent TTCs whose faculties were involved in designing the new curricula and textbooks and were therefore better equipped to anticipate needed changes in teacher preparation, teacher trainers mostly learn of the changes to student curricula and teaching methodologies through MOET’s in-service training program.

In a public statement, Vice Minister Nguyen Van Trong identified this very problem as one of the main barriers to education reform, pointing out that pre-service students spend too little time on methods and learning how to teach, as well as on practice teaching in real schools. However, in accordance with the Education Law, MOET is required to define the framework curricula for teacher training. This includes the distribution of credits for subject content, training duration, and proportion of time allocated between basic and specialized subjects and between theory, practice, and practicum. How much flexibility TTCs have to develop specific curricular content or to allocate credits differently is unclear. TTC administrators surveyed were adamant about
having very little flexibility and being able to make only small changes to a prescribed set of “basic knowledge” courses, or to choose the topic of an elective class on social issues. Admittedly, the perception of central control may be greater than the reality. In the case of practice teaching, however, MOET officials supervising primary and lower secondary teacher training agreed that it fell under the “core” curriculum, which was fixed for all institutions.

Perhaps a more important question to answer is who is responsible for training the trainers? Even with the dissolution of the Teacher Department, that responsibility ostensibly remains with MOET. While certain administrative responsibilities have devolved to the provincial DOETs and the Provincial People’s Committees, they have not included making decisions about the instructional core. Teacher trainers are as much in need of intensive retraining, reinforcement and monitoring as teachers at the primary and lower secondary levels. As in the case of upgrading the qualifications of classroom teachers, upgrading the degrees of TTC lecturers alone will not bring about the profound changes needed to modify deeply embedded beliefs and instructional practices.

To reiterate, Vietnam’s stated policy of decentralization and the messages in the current reforms for the design and delivery of in-service and pre-service training and for the implementation of the new student curricula are oftentimes at odds with actual practice of maintaining strict control over the pace and content of innovation. This contradiction between policy and practice helps explain why educators are having difficulty turning the theory of new teaching methods into the reality of changed classroom behavior.

*Mixed Message to Practitioners.* Whereas previous studies have recommended bringing in-service training decisions closer to the consumer (World Bank, 1998), Vietnam has kept them under central direction and uniform for all teachers. This perhaps makes sense for a comprehensive program like the one for introducing the new curricula and methods. But why should in-service training for upgrading teacher qualifications or for “frequent refreshing” follow a pre-set program in which teachers and schools have little voice in selecting further training? Instead, they are generally told when and where to go to and what training they will receive. A rigid approach fails to identify or address the learning needs of schools or individual teachers. It also sends a mixed message to teachers, who are asked to be more self-reflective in their practice, on one hand, but are not allowed to exercise control over their own professional development, on the other.

Where the new methodology would have teachers think differently and more flexibly and creatively in delivering instruction, educational managers complain about the noise level in classrooms and inspectors penalize teachers for straying from a regulated timetable. On the training side, they are introduced to new theories and told to apply them flexibly; on the curriculum side, they are issued strict guidelines on what is to be covered in each 35- or 45-minute period and which components must be included in their lesson plan. This conflict between an independent and prescriptive approach not only causes practical difficulties but also hampers the creativity and innovation of teachers. At the primary level, where teachers are responsible for multiple subjects, they face the additional problem of being trained by (and having regulations set by) different experts in each subject area. Thus they have little flexibility to apply cross-cutting strategies in teaching multiple subjects to the same group of students.
All in all, a prescriptive approach to noninstructional details such as formatting and penmanship on lesson plans, the number of minutes spent on each subactivity, or the physical arrangement of the classroom, is not what teachers need or request. What they desire, as discussed in greater detail in the recommendations section, is rigorous guidance or instructions on how to deliver a new activity or how to apply a new method through clear, structured practice.

X. A Fundamental Contradiction

Vietnam will have difficulty achieving the desired effect of its educational reforms without a transformation in thinking and doing. As a nation, it has placed great emphasis on education. As a result, it has a relatively well-educated, literate population and a fairly equitable education system. However, it will take more than a mere “updating” of discrete professional knowledge to change current conceptions and methods of teaching and learning to prepare the country’s youth to perform competitively in a knowledge society and economy. Unless issues such as the lack of a common vocabulary or outmoded beliefs and assumptions about how people think and behave are addressed, theory will not be translated into practice.

A recent MOET statement cites “teacher dependence on old habits” as the chief barrier to the reform of teaching methods (www.moet.edu.vn). But teachers are not just being asked to change teaching habits but to build entirely new competencies. The current teaching force was not brought up or educated under a system that encourages or cultivates these competencies and thus needs to learn that change entails more than switching from one method to another. Rather, teachers themselves need to first acquire and master those competencies now expected of students in order to perform differently. Blaming their habits assumes that teachers have been given the necessary tools and capacity to operate differently but choose not to use them.

For instance, a teacher’s manual produced to support the implementation of new methods in teaching geography, history and civics states: “The characteristic of history is that history is a series of events that happened in the past, that exist objectively, and no one can predict or elaborate on the happening of these past events.” This statement appears to contradict that knowledge is constructed out of alternative interpretations, and such considerations are one critical element of historical analysis in knowledge societies. Similarly, a political tradition of ruling by consensus encourages individual departments or levels of administration to avoid taking the initiative in proposing innovations, and instead to adhere to centralized regulations.

XI. How Can Teaching and Teacher Education Be Improved in the Context of a Knowledge Society?

The hallmarks of a functional knowledge society are an ability to analyze, adapt and apply knowledge to new problems; the initiative to develop new professional insights from shared enterprise, common concerns and pooled expertise; and the capacity of workers and practitioners to operate flexibly and innovatively. Knowledge is not a constant but a dynamic and iterative product, generated through action and interaction between people. This concept of learning by doing together assumes cooperation and collaboration between individuals and across traditional divisions in organizations. Cultivating, accumulating and managing knowledge within and across
an organization are levers for change and improvement, and for increasing learning, capacity and outcomes (Hargreaves, 2002; O’Dell and Grayson, 1998).

Ultimately, what Vietnam wants is a broader curriculum and instructional approach for students that includes more practical, relevant, and applied content and skills. What Vietnam needs is for teachers to build a repertoire of teaching and learning strategies to help students acquire and apply knowledge, develop insights, and be able to think “logically, resourcefully and imaginatively” (Adler, 1984). In other words, Vietnam needs to change the instructional core—that is, how and why students are taught. If at the end of whatever interventions or investments teachers act no differently, then changing curricular objectives, rewriting textbooks, supplying teacher training institutions with laptops and Ph.D.’s, wiring schools for internet access, or even increasing the hours of classroom instruction will have little effect on the overall objective—which is to increase student learning in ways that reflect and help manifest a knowledge society in Vietnam.

**Recommendations for Learning to Teach in a Knowledge Society**

The following recommendations are intended to help advance Vietnam’s efforts to encourage and build a knowledge society through its reforms in the education sector. They reflect a few core themes that must be approached in combination to cultivate and support sustained and widespread changes in the practice of teaching and learning. These themes pertain to teacher and instructional development (practitioner requirements) as well as policy supports and socio-political environment (systemic and cultural tensions) that Vietnam must address in order to move toward a true knowledge society. Each general recommendation is followed by some specific suggestions for action based on current conditions in Vietnam.

- **Teacher and Instructional Development Should Emphasize Shared and Continuous Learning Through Practice, Reflection and Leadership.**
  - Ensure an adequate knowledge base; promote pedagogy and practice.
  - Build a toolbox for examining practice.
  - Create a culture of shared practice and shared knowledge.

- **System-level scaffolds should focus on instructional goals and the new vision of teacher practice:**
  - Introduce a standards-based system.
  - Build accountability for performance and progress.

- **A critical step in the state, school and teacher professional context is to address social, economic and ideological inconsistencies:**
  - Tackle centralization/decentralization, supply/demand tensions.
  - Redefine teachers’ professional environment and incentives.

- **Equity and excellence should be unyielding twin goals.**

*Teacher and Instructional Development Should Emphasize Shared and Continuous Learning Through Practice, Reflection and Leadership.* This recommendation envisions teaching as more than a job or part-time job, but as a profession of skilled and shared practice whose members are able to learn and advance together. In Vietnam, where baseline qualifications vary greatly,
teacher training efforts must pay careful attention to the entire continuum of teacher development, from strengthening the content knowledge and basic pedagogical skills of practitioners to cultivating the professional competencies and shared practice of a knowledge society.

**First Things First.** In view of Vietnam’s strategic goals, which call for a revolution in teaching and learning and for new methodologies to develop analytic and problem-solving competencies for a knowledge society, education leaders must not get caught up in making sure teachers are conducting group activities or using manipulatives and forget to ask if they can do the math they teach. Nor should they be sidetracked in developing the theoretical basis for a new approach or methodology and forget about how that theory applies to practice. Owing to the demands of Vietnam’s fast-growing enrollment and teaching force, there are big differences in levels of teachers’ formal education; however, the recent shift in policy emphasis from access to quality means Vietnam must work to ensure a well-prepared teacher force. While Vietnam has been wise to make the upgrading of teachers, teacher trainers, and teacher training institutions a clear priority, steps must also be taken to identify the specific skills, knowledge and capacity that this upgrading should produce.

The first of the three specific recommendations under teacher and instructional development is to ensure an adequate knowledge base. Research has shown that a knowledge of subject matter matters a great deal in Vietnam. In the recent grade 5 assessment of the 2004 initiative titled Quality of Education at the End of Primary School in Vietnam, teachers’ scores on both reading and mathematics tests were the largest predictor of student achievement in both subjects. Yet teacher performance differed greatly across schools and provinces, with some 12 percent of students scoring higher than 30 percent of teachers. This finding has grave consequences for basic student achievement. Hence before underskilled teachers can even be expected to adapt to new instructional demands, they must be given targeted support that is accompanied by clear measures of improvement, which must be the same across schools and provinces and for teachers exiting pre-service training. Vietnam’s current reforms already specify what is considered below-standard certification or education level; courses and programs designed to upgrade teachers must articulate at least a baseline mastery of subject area knowledge. Furthermore, an effort should be made to identify for training teachers who are already “at standard,” yet who still lack sufficient subject knowledge.

A teacher’s subject area knowledge goes well beyond a minimum baseline or merely knowing as much as what students are expected to learn. While those are clearly fundamental requirements, research has demonstrated that effective and fluid problem solving in teaching depends on a thorough knowledge of a subject. As one study of Chinese elementary school teachers has shown, a profound understanding of basic mathematics allows practitioners at this level to approach teaching problems flexibly and respond to students using different learning styles and other variable contextual factors (Ma, 1999). Chinese elementary school teachers are not only more adept at doing the math they are expected to teach but they also know the concepts well and the best ways to teach them. This teaching knowledge has helped Chinese students consistently outperform U.S. students on international comparisons of mathematics competency even though Chinese teachers have far less formal education than their U.S. counterparts. In China, much of the teacher’s expertise is learned on the job. Given the substantial variation in
formal education of its current teacher force, Vietnam should focus on how it can develop this kind of critical knowledge base needed for accomplished teaching rather than simply push for more schooling or diplomas.

A second specific recommendation is to promote pedagogy and practice. The surprising degree of sameness in how teachers teach suggests they have only a small repertoire of pedagogical skills with which to operate within the rules they are given and to adapt instruction to different student needs. In order to improve teaching and learning strategies and outcomes, Vietnam must address a persistent problem of the current education and training system and the most readily agreed upon gap in putting theory into practice: the shortfall in practical resources and practical training. Both pre- and in-service training must introduce new expectations for teachers’ classroom performance and new approaches for meeting them. This training should be grounded in practice, with concepts and strategies focused on how they will be used in teaching and learning, and materials and activities relevant to the curriculum. To get beyond a narrow attempt at conformity or compliance, it is important to respect the Confucian adage, “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand.”

Build a Toolbox for Examining Practice. As should be evident by now, Vietnam needs to cultivate a knowledge base for teaching and learning in a knowledge society. Once teachers have demonstrated mastery of baseline subject area knowledge and basic pedagogical skills, they must learn how to observe and analyze classroom and teacher practice with a critical eye. They must also learn how to evaluate and discuss student work. Having the tools for examining, discussing, and learning from practice will help them build a repertoire of approaches and strategies that will allow them to better judge and respond to different instructional contexts and problems.

As a first step toward building this capacity in the existing teacher force, teachers must be given an opportunity to practice how to do things differently with the aid of modeling, support, and reinforcement. Sharing empirical evidence or model sites that actively demonstrate the benefits of new methods is one strategy with which to challenge teachers to question or reassess underlying beliefs and existing practices. This is especially important in view of stakeholder reports of teacher resistance to new methodologies in teaching and learning. Demonstration sites are not merely a model for replication but are useful in building confidence in and an appetite for a new vision of professional practice.

Even if convinced of the necessity of doing things differently, before teachers can shift from the regulatory and transmission-based paradigm that currently dominates Vietnamese education to a problem-solving one, they must possess a solid repertory of teaching skills and develop the tools necessary to operate and communicate under the new paradigm. Chief among these is the capacity for reflective practice, which, contrary to the rigid recitation of the technocrat, requires practitioners to be innovative and responsive to changing conditions. Such reflection includes learning to evaluate and interpret the classroom context, to critically examine both teacher and student work for evidence of effective teaching and demonstrated learning, and to articulate and debate instructional choices (Schon, 1983). While reflective practice, done right, is an essential tool for informing and improving instruction, Vietnam must take care not to let theory get ahead of practice. An analysis of the ELTTP approach warns that assuming core skills are there when they are not increases the danger of “getting teachers to reflect on thin air” or worse, of reaching
faulty conclusions about instructional strategies. For example, without core classroom management skills teachers cannot research the efficacy of group work in a large class.

Appendix F offers an example of a generic but substantive framework for examining teaching practice. It can be used as a starting point for helping teachers reflect concretely on their own practice and can be further developed in a community to define a common understanding of effective practice. The case study approach, long in use by law and business schools, is another method by which to train practitioners. This method draws on an existing body of real-life scenarios to examine the comparative advantages of different instructional approaches or to analyze instructional problems in a dramatized context to practice finding solutions to unexpected classroom situations.

In Vietnam, classroom observations have traditionally been used to check teacher adherence to regulations and ranking rather than to provide information about improving practice. Likewise student assignments have been used for scoring and ranking students. Observations of teacher and student work can also be used to foster professional development. By observing classroom practice and analyzing instruction, teachers can learn more about the effective application of different methodologies in a practical context. At the same time, by analyzing student work they can learn to define common expectations of student learning as well as measure student success in specific learning outcomes, and thereby identify the areas of teaching that need greater attention. More broadly, such interactions will help stimulate teachers’ instructional initiative and provide practice-based professional development. However, they must begin in pre-service teacher training. The ministry should therefore respond to the solid consensus from across the education system calling for more practical training, particularly more practice teaching in pre-service training.

There is a growing body of knowledge and expertise in Vietnam among researchers, provincial education officials, NGO project staff and trainer core, and effective classroom practitioners that should be tapped to help evaluate current practice and generate new learning to improve that practice. A clear priority must be to reshape the resources, activities, and mentorship of an extended practice teaching experience so that it instills responsive and reflective behavior and lays the foundation for a culture of shared, collaborative practice.

Create a Culture of Shared Practice and Shared Knowledge. Vietnam must overcome its traditional isolation of professional practice by providing time, clear expectations, and guidance for conversation and collaboration on issues of instructional practice, shared expertise and shared responsibility. Teachers must learn to interact with one another to establish rapport and trust so that they can examine teaching practices and student learning in collaboration. It is essential to create a culture of professional knowledge and collaboration if schools, teacher training institutions, and teacher development are to be improved. Institutions and organizations can promote such a culture by establishing clear linkages within and across education levels to ensure coherence and coordination in the planning and implementation of initiatives, and in the use and development of material and human resources.

The first specific recommendation here is to create a community of practice. Although common to organizational development, knowledge management and human capital development, the
concept of a community of practice is unfamiliar to teacher education institutions, schools as organizations, or education systems at large, even in countries operating in an established knowledge society and economy. Yet it is a bulwark of a shared professional practice that works to advance and improve teaching and learning. Simply put, a community of practice is a group of professionals who share a common sense of purpose, common problems, and employ common practices and tools in pursuit of solutions. Members recognize their peers as valuable stores of learning and expertise. By finding ways to learn what each of them knows—sharing what is explicit and making sense of what is tacit and intuitive—the network helps its members to work more effectively and to acquire a deeper understanding of their work. A community of practice is not merely a collection of peers exchanging ideas and benefiting from each other’s expertise but consists of colleagues committed to jointly developing better practices (Community Intelligence Labs and others). Vietnam can stand to learn from the rationale and components of a working community of practice.

An important first step toward building such a community among teachers is to establish a model for school-based professional development, as proposed in project documents for the LSEDP. Professional development should take place at the school site and during school time so that the work is firmly rooted in practice. The education system thus asserts that professional development is not extraneous but rather essential to teacher practice. Teachers can also interact in real time about common lessons, assignments, or assessments. An additional benefit of examining practice within the teacher’s classroom and school context, and not during theoretical discussions or isolated summer workshops, is that the results are locally tested. This maximizes the sharing of internal knowledge and best practice and reduces the tendency to use the “we’re different” argument. In the school as an organization, it leads to greater confidence in joint solutions and willingness to participate in the improvement of existing collective practice.

The Japanese lesson study approach provides another example of shared reflection and practice designed to transform practitioner knowledge into professional knowledge. In this model, teachers work together regularly over a long period of time to define an instructional problem; then they plan, teach, critique, revise, teach again, and finally reflect together on the shared results of their joint lesson. The professional learning is context-rich, and the group works constantly to develop new knowledge based on student thinking and effectiveness in achieving learning goals. The final lesson and reports of a lesson study group are shared publicly and include theories linked with examples from practice. Hypotheses about helping students reach particular learning goals are accompanied by detailed descriptions of activities, anticipated responses of students, and suggested responses by the teacher (Heibert, Gallimore, and Stigler, 2002; Stigler and Heibert, 1999). Just as in a community of practice, teachers participating in lesson study conduct their research for the development of the profession, not just for their individual benefit.

Identifying and tapping local expertise is another key objective of a community of practice. Teaching knowledge is by nature highly context-specific, difficult to systematize, and experiential. Furthermore, research on heuristic knowledge suggests that expert practitioners have such a deep knowledge of their field (representing a marriage of profound content or book knowledge with experiential knowledge) and that they do not always use logical analysis for problem solving. That is to say, expert practitioners—and expert teachers—rely on familiarity
with a subject and reflexive adjustments to their practice based on tacit, intuitive knowledge to make sense of complex or ambiguous situations (Dreyfus and Dreyfus, 1985). This tacit knowledge of expert teachers or the expertise of any teacher is what can be articulated and made public through shared engagement over a common instructional problem. In Vietnam, where local instructional resources and support are in short supply, this type of shared expertise across a school or faculty would be an invaluable asset and engine for developing local competencies and capacity with an eye to improving teaching and learning.

A few critical elements for establishing school-based collaboration are already in place in Vietnam. One is the prescribed national curriculum, which provides teachers with a common basis for examining practice and for planning and developing lessons jointly. Another is the culture of open classrooms and frequent peer observations, but these need better mechanisms for feedback and learning. The time is also ripe for cultivating shared learning and a common purpose in light of the demands of implementing the new student curricula and methodologies. Teaching contests that currently encourage individual competition might be transformed into opportunities for groups of teachers to showcase the results of their collaboration. Another element now in place focuses on one of the most common barriers to creating school-based continuous professional development: the lack of time for teachers to do this work together. Vietnam has set aside time each month for “frequent training” that could be used more effectively to support dialogue on challenges and strategies of the new instructional methodologies. Schools also reported having weekly meetings to discuss subject areas that could be linked with instructional rather than administrative issues. The gradual move toward full-day schooling and a revised compensation package for teachers should also support more flexibility in scheduling school-based professional development and greater engagement of teachers in improving practice.

The second specific recommendation is to introduce participatory training and trainer networks. The Binh Thuan BETT project illustrates an effective province-wide effort to develop shared practice and build professional knowledge; it also offers a hopeful model for bringing this practice to scale. To begin with, the project developed a training manual from teacher-tested resources and linked it to the new grade 1 curriculum, thus ensuring that individual knowledge and strategies would be shared and made public. Its participatory training procedures also help make the tacit knowledge of how to apply and use those resources explicit so it can become part of the teachers’ professional repertoires. MOET recently responded to the demand for the Binh Thuan resource manual by publishing it for national dissemination, in effect challenging the old idea of letting central-level “experts” conduct research while administrators disseminate the new findings or policies to practitioners. Instead, experienced practitioners guided and generated new professional knowledge and informed learning at the system level.

Now in its ninth year, the BETT model has also successfully developed a local trainer network, with a trainer positioned in each district office (BOET) and at each school, and hence offers a number of interesting possibilities for effectively scaling up shared practice. With an established network of trainers that includes both teachers and education managers and offers ongoing school-based support for teachers, this model promotes sustainable changes in practice. Second, a professional network of trainers can develop its own community of practice, linking trainers who share common roles and concerns across sites. A trainer network can accelerate the
accumulation and application of instructional expertise across varied contexts, as well as build a knowledge base specific to effective training and instructional support. Third, the province now has a seasoned cadre of leaders who can help seed and cultivate its vision, culture and practice. A fourth promising factor that will facilitate the exchange of knowledge and concerns across traditional barriers is the participation and cooperation of trainers across the provincial, district and school levels.

The ELTTP offers parallel lessons in its training model. Like the BETTP, it works intensively with a trainer core to build local capacity for supporting and sustaining education efforts. The training in new methods in English-language instruction, for instance, used materials developed to support the new grade 6 curriculum. It is also instructive to note where the two programs differed in lessons learned. BETTP recognized the need to engage local TTCs in reaching pre-service instructors to sensibly broaden its cadre of core trainers and develop institutional teaching knowledge. By contrast, ELTTP noted its method of increasing capacity by targeting individual teachers had limitations. An evaluation of the project concluded that schools need to be involved in training as an entity, either through school-based supports or by having teachers attend training sessions in school teams rather than individually, in order to help change the culture of teaching and learning.

A third specific recommendation is to expand clinical practice. The intense interest in extending pre-service practice teaching provides opportunities to build teacher training as a shared clinical practice. One of the shortcomings of TTCs is that many of their trainers have little or no practical classroom experience. Coordinated interaction between trainers and teachers during the student practicum would not only address this problem but would also empower teachers, by giving them greater ownership over their practice. A new approach being piloted in the United States is to rotate experienced and effective teachers into TTCs as clinical instructors. This is intended to help teacher trainers and trainees alike gain experience in practical applications while providing classroom teachers with opportunities for leadership and further learning. Like Binh Thuan’s instructional resource book generated from teacher experience, this allows practitioners to directly inform the training of new teachers as well as cross-pollinate their practical expertise with current research and scholarship.

Back in Vietnam, both Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi have institutionalized some clinical learning by attaching pedagogical or lab schools to a training or research center. As discussed earlier, HCMC’s TTC has a formal relationship with a primary and lower secondary school where teacher trainers can demonstrate and experiment with instructional strategies. In Hanoi, the National Center for Education Technologies runs a semiprivate school at each level, from kindergarten through high school. These schools serve as a lab for research on instructional methodologies, adolescent development, child psychology and school environment. These models should be examined more closely as possible sources of learning for all, and as potential models for cooperative partnerships between the provincial teacher training institutions and neighboring schools. As a cautionary note, although officially belonging to the ministry, the Hanoi research center operates largely at the margins. Its research and training materials on student-centered learning have by and large received limited dissemination.
A fourth recommendation is to “build bridges”. In addition to bridging boundaries between schools and teacher training institutions, Vietnam could support many other interactions across its education system and with outside agencies that would build a stronger knowledge base for the teaching profession. Better channels of communication and networks across district or province or bridging research, policy, and practice would both improve relevance and reduce redundancy. Shared learning between NGOs and TTCs and between NGOs and donor organizations would in the first instance introduce TTCs to innovative or alternate materials and training design and in the second would enable NGOs to streamline their local activities with larger donor project objectives. For their part, donor organizations would gain a sense of NGO experience in the Vietnamese classroom and in working with various levels of the education and training system, which could be used to inform project design and evaluation. Shared learning across all stakeholder groups would strengthen instructional definitions and values, and give improvement efforts a more coherent structure.

As the executing agency for Vietnam’s numerous education and teacher training initiatives, MOET is well-positioned to look across the many projects under way and determine where related initiatives need to be coordinated and reinforced, and how to reduce misalignment between different project objectives or activities. It is imperative for educational leaders and managers to follow up on projects showing early signs of inducing changes in instructional practice, so the educational system can capitalize fully on the resources and expertise being developed and projects can have a lasting impact after they close or external funding ends.

Shared knowledge across projects funded by different donors or even a single donor can also help make project objectives and activities more coherent and their implementation more efficient. For example, strategies for pre-service curriculum development and delivery could be shared across the primary and lower secondary levels (PTDP and LSTTP), as could a mapping of how critical competencies are developed across pre- and in-service training at the lower secondary level (LSED and LSTTP). Some projects could introduce useful new concepts and innovative approaches, while strategic information in the form of a unified and integrated education data system or a joint dialogue about quality assurance or accountability mechanisms could improve current practice. These actions could lead to a more efficient use of resources, more informed planning for all partners, less overlap, fewer gaps and a more programmatic (as opposed to project–based) approach to education assistance.

System-Level Scaffolds Focusing on Instructional Goals and the New Vision of Teacher Practice. The following recommendations outline two conditions for putting into operation a focused, aligned and accountable system, and for ensuring the desired improvements in specific student learning outcomes and related teacher competencies.

**Introduce a Standards-Based System.** Changing the discourse on teaching and learning takes time and cannot proceed without consistent guidance and reinforcement from within the educational community, as well as consistent messages to families and society at large. Because Vietnam implements education services in a decentralized fashion, it is even more critical to have explicit criteria and benchmarks to give direction to and to measure its progress toward an instructional goal. A standards-based system would introduce a common language with which to
formulate common expectations for learning, allow concrete and precise communication about effective practice, and build commitment and accountability into the system.

Certainly, some individual schools and small-scale projects demonstrate effective practice in a knowledge society sense even without systemic supports. To ensure that practice is sustained and works at scale, local attempts to cultivate knowledge sharing and communities of practice must operate in concert with system-level policies. This is the best way to create conditions that will encourage and enable teachers to tackle instructional problems and will keep channels open so that learning can be shared across levels, agencies and actors in the education system. In a manner of speaking, one must act both locally and globally.

At present, Vietnam does not follow a standards-based system but uses uniform textbooks and materials and tight regulations to “guide” lesson planning down to the minute and exercise. By contrast, and contrary to common perception, the term “standards-based” does not refer to standardization. Although some education systems have implemented standards in a prescriptive way, a standards-based system does not call for scripted curricular content or dictate a single approach to teaching or learning in accordance with stated standards. What it does aim for is transparency in the types of competencies and skills expected of educators, students and the community, and a sense of how good is good enough. These objectives not only provide a common instructional focus but also ensure equity across the education system and provide a sound basis for devising external accountability measures to ensure that institutions meet centrally set standards and performance targets. In this way, a standards-based system creates an environment that allows institutions and practitioners to have more flexibility and autonomy in choosing specific curricular content and instructional strategies or activities.

Vietnam has already taken steps in this direction by drafting teacher professional standards at the primary level under the PTDP. The ministry should not only apply lessons from the development of the primary education teacher profile to the secondary level but should attempt to establish cross-curricular teaching competencies critical to teaching in a knowledge society—meaning ones that extend across all levels of education and across subject areas. Appendix F provides an example of such a framework for teacher professional practice. It offers a comprehensive breakdown of professional domains, with concrete components identified in each. Originally derived from a performance assessment for teaching licensing, it demonstrates how such a framework can serve as a guide for discussions of practice and as a tool for designing an evaluation of teacher training or teaching practice.

**Build Accountability for Performance and Progress.** In accordance with the maxim “There is nothing you can measure that you can’t manage,” Vietnam needs to institutionalize student and teacher performance assessments. Student achievement is used to measure performance and progress, and to establish accountability measures based on agreed performance targets. Once general content standards have been established to specify expectations for student and teacher knowledge, skills and understanding, the next step would be to set performance standards articulating levels of mastery and specifying how good is good enough.

Although education data have become more available in Vietnam in the past decade, little pertains to student achievement. One finding of this study is that provincial and district officials
are neither familiar with nor fully understand the importance of having good data. However, the grade 5 assessment and study of reading and mathematics achievement conducted under the Primary Education Project demonstrates that Vietnam has the capacity, at least at the central level, to design and implement a comprehensive assessment system. Likewise, with the aid of an Education Management Information System (EMIS) that collects comprehensive educational data, administrators will be able to make more informed decisions about policy and instructional needs. Some recent projects supported by UNESCO, the European Community, Asian Development Bank and others already feature an EMIS component. Vietnam will need to determine what mechanisms and indicators would constitute a comprehensive and integrated data system across education levels (primary, secondary, higher) and across levels of education administration (national, provincial, district, school).

Vietnam must also establish measures of both student and teacher performance. Currently, each TTC sets and marks its own exit examinations, so standards vary across the primary and lower secondary pre-service teacher training system. This is not a new recommendation. An original subcomponent of the LSTTP that so far has not materialized calls for the establishment of a national system for teacher certification. An external assessment mechanism would ensure that institutions prepare teachers to meet the same competencies and are able to measure their effectiveness on a common scale; it would also promote equity in a system where teachers are trained and deployed locally. Minimum performance standards for certification would also address a chief concern raised in this study: namely, that institutions upgrading teachers should be producing candidates who demonstrate required competencies. This study reemphasizes the PEP grade 5 study’s entreaty that those in charge of upgrading and certifying teachers make this a top priority.

A Critical Step in the State, School and Teacher Professional Context: Address Social, Economic and Cultural Inconsistencies. This last pair of recommendations addresses broad systemic issues that Vietnam must resolve in order to support and not obfuscate innovation, adaptation, problem solving and strategic thinking in its education and training workforce.

Tackle Centralization/Decentralization, Supply/Demand Tensions. If Vietnam wants to move into a modern, swiftly changing and competitive knowledge economy and society, it will have to resolve internal tensions between centralized and decentralized administration and decision making. Current constraints, mandated by law and compounded by tradition and perception, allow little institutional autonomy or flexibility in education and training activities. Although Vietnam has a vertically decentralized system of managing education, responsibilities are not neatly divided, and decision making in the areas of curriculum development, examinations and teacher training is centralized, which means that management enjoys little true decentralization except in simple administrative operations.

The knowledge society paradigm is based on core values and practices such as professional autonomy, diversity, mobility, inquiry and informed critique. Practitioners must grasp every opportunity to join shared enterprises in an effort to understand and improve practice, and the GVN must develop more incentives and supports for teacher engagement and investment. To drive the reforms in teacher training and practice forward, Vietnam needs to do more than introduce knowledge society norms. It must also strengthen the organizational capacity of the
education and training offices across all administrative levels. With the education sector’s priorities shifting from access to quality and relevance, there is greater demand for specialized expertise from education officials. However, provincial DOETs and district BOETs are understaffed and have too few officers to provide adequate educational supervision in their regions. They are also weak in technical expertise, especially in the area of pedagogical supervision. Thus schools and teachers receive limited and sometime contradictory professional guidance and feedback on how to implement new curricula and requirements.

The first specific recommendation here concerns *TTC practice and institutional autonomy*. As the primary institutions responsible for training new teachers, the provincial Teacher Training Colleges play a critical role in developing the competencies teachers need to prepare students for success in a knowledge society. The TTCs, however, are generally perceived as low quality institutions that lack a sufficient knowledge base to effectively support learning to teach in a knowledge society. The strategy for developing TTCs and teacher trainers is no different from that recommended for developing new competencies in primary and lower secondary teachers. The objective in both cases is to strive for shared and continuous learning through practice, reflection and leadership.

The foremost priority is to build shared practice and expertise within and across TTCs. Like teachers at the lower levels, TTC lecturers need to develop a common language of practice and new ways of interacting with one another and with teachers. Networks of TTCs, clustered around the regional TTCs, which have a longer institutional history, more experienced instructors, and a research faculty, will lend essential support to newly upgraded TTCs, whose teachers have almost no practical teaching experience in the levels they are preparing to teach. Furthermore, many are recent university graduates with little or no operational expertise in teaching or providing training at any level. TTC should also develop relationships with primary and lower secondary schools, so they can have a clinical context for exchanging instructional strategies with classroom teachers and for observing and testing new ideas. TTCs can also learn from trainers experienced in the new instructional methodologies, such as the trainer core at Binh Thuan or at other such project sites. In this way, the TTCs will gain from the varied experiences and pooled expertise of other TTCs, schools and NGO-developed trainers, while all levels and agencies will gain from the network or community of practice being built among them.

Another critical shift that could help TTCs innovate or at least evaluate current practice is to promote alternatives to central level curricula and activities that are appropriate for local circumstances. If MOET is able to establish the accountability measures discussed earlier, then TTCs can be held to common standards for the quality of teacher candidates they produce, in exchange for a measure of institutional autonomy. Typically a market competitive strategy, exchanging flexibility for accountability, with MOET monitoring quality and content, may well be what Vietnam needs to promote incentives to develop problem-solving skills or focus on student development. If the TTCs are to remain a vital delivery mechanism for pre-service education and in-service upgrading and training, they must be given the necessary instructional resources and supports from MOET and allowed to develop adequate mechanisms for meeting required outcomes.
A second specific recommendation is directed at teacher recruitment and deployment. Past research indicates that some confusion surrounds the policy governing recruitment and deployment of teachers. This study recommends further study of teacher supply and demand across the provinces, and a clearer analysis of current teacher recruitment and deployment policy and how it has changed in light of other recent educational reforms. A troubling contradiction in the purported provincial recruitment policy has arisen because annual needs analyses performed by district DOETs do not jibe with the significant teacher surplus currently being experienced by many provinces. One proffered explanation is that because the demand-based strategy was only implemented over the past decade, under the threat of shortages following UPE and expansion at the lower secondary level, TTCs recruited numbers that far surpassed what actual growth demanded.

Granting schools or districts some authority over both hiring and firing could help motivate changes in professional behavior and stimulate mechanisms to reward higher performance and career advancement. Teacher deployment could also be made more flexible if distribution is to become more efficient. With more mobility in teacher assignment, more quality candidates would be attracted to the teaching pool. Current restrictions on interprovincial assignments deter competitive candidates who wish to relocate. Such candidates are likely to seek jobs in semi-public or private schools or pursue other private sector opportunities. Restricted mobility also has an adverse effect on the functioning of the learning organization, since people cannot be flexibly moved to distribute knowledge, leadership and expertise as needed across the system.

A third specific recommendation for the state, school and teacher context has to do with the question of who should make decisions about curriculum and professional development. Greater local decision making in this regard could enhance curriculum delivery, depending on whether a standards-based system is in place to measure both student achievement and teacher performance. Curriculum refers to the content or course of study followed toward a learning goal. If Vietnam established public standards concerning what children were expected to know and be able to do and ways to measure their performance and progress, then MOET could be more flexible about the terms of precise curricular content, delivery and timing. As in the case of TTCs, this would bring greater attention and innovation to teaching and learning strategies and would create local ownership of and responsibility for producing learning.

Currently, teachers, schools, and districts are not encouraged to think imaginatively about or to take responsibility for teacher professional development. In fact, the continued use of the term “in-service training” underscores the difference between the enacted system and the one desired. Vietnam wants a flexible and inquiring teacher force that can direct the growth and evolution of professional knowledge and skills. Yet this is not possible under the current training system, which is uniform for all teachers, may or may not be relevant, and is delivered in the form of a one-size-fits-all. A professional development model based on the recommendations calling for a more appropriate knowledge base and a toolbox for examining practice would give rise to a community of practitioners that, given the flexibility, would be skilled in identifying instructional needs and be able to take collective responsibility in meeting those needs to raise student achievement.
Redefine Teachers’ Professional Environment and Incentives. In creating a professional community, it is also important to update policies governing recruitment, salaries, professional advancement and contractual duties, all of which affect the morale and responsiveness of the teacher force. In view of the profession’s low salary and lack of a career ladder, a great proportion of its members must see teaching as a part-time job. Most teachers must hold a secondary job or supplement their income by charging students for “supplemental” tutoring sessions. Vietnam must find ways to improve teacher compensation and working conditions to better attract and retain a competitive and committed workforce that can prepare Vietnam’s youth to participate in and contribute to a knowledge society.

Since the current Primary Teacher Development Project proposes to develop a guideline for teacher professional classification and options for revised terms of service and remuneration, the recommendation here will be limited to an example of a different type of incentive—cultivated teacher leadership—that can encourage teachers themselves to try to improve their practice.

Like the Binh Thuan model introduced in this report, professional development that is supported by a site-based facilitator (or coach or trainer—all different names for the same role) not only allows teachers to learn directly in the context of their practice but also encourages them to take on leadership roles in their school or district. In the words of the BETT project coordinator interviewed in this study, “Trainers themselves are all classroom teachers, and that was the design, to take classroom practitioners who were having some success, give them more tools to have more success, give them training and professional development, and then have them lead a series of local meetings to provide training to their colleagues.” Teacher trainers may earn an extra stipend for their training duties, but a more important reward is professional advancement in the teacher ranks that does not further siphon qualified practitioners into administration. As teacher leaders, these individuals will support teachers in improving instruction and will reinforce the overall message of continuous learning.

Ensure Equity and Excellence. As Vietnam turns its attention to improving the quality of education, it must remember that equity and excellence are twin goals, and that they do not add up to a zero-sum game. Many areas of Vietnam are currently caught in a cycle of compounding disadvantages because old practices are still in effect. A remote area, for example, may have an ethnic minority group in which an earlier generation of children did not attend pre-school and did not speak Vietnamese on entering primary education. Because of the difficulties created by language and other barriers, they would have been given a shortened curriculum at the primary level, which would not have adequately equipped them with the skills needed to advance to lower secondary. Of the few who made it to grade 5, then, fewer still would have been able to continue to grade 6 and beyond. Although the national standard for teacher training was 12 + 2, requiring students to finish upper secondary, because of the shortage of teachers willing or able to teach in the remote regions, students completing grades 9 or 10 or even less were considered local success stories and were put directly in a teacher preparation program. Upon completing their training, these underqualified teachers were then placed back in their communities, where they found a new crop of students grappling with the same difficulties they had once faced: difficulties in language acquisition and reading, inadequate facilities, and teachers who were not well-equipped to help students overcome those barriers.
As Vietnam advances toward a knowledge-based economy, market forces and continued decentralization may compound inequity. Communities forced to rely on local resources for educational infrastructure may be less able to produce conditions that can attract high-quality teachers from other locations. Even with more flexible teacher recruitment or deployment policies, systems will have to be closely monitored to ensure that they support the development of ethnic minority candidates as well as an adequate distribution of qualified teachers. Some of Vietnam’s regional and national TTCs are already helping to prepare candidates from disadvantaged provinces, although their own candidates—whether for primary or lower secondary education—go to the $12 + 3$ level, whereas candidates from the disadvantaged provinces only go to the $12 + 2$ level. Again, those who need and can benefit from qualified teachers the most are often given less.

How can Vietnam break this cycle as it continues to expand its education system to include all students—poor, remote, ethnic minority and disabled? In moving along this course and also pursuing other poverty-reduction strategies, it must continue to stay focused on equity. It must make sure that whatever programs are initiated to help improve educational quality, clear goals have been established for improving instructional outcomes for all groups. Above all, it must hold itself and other institutions accountable for providing a quality education for all.
References


______. [no date.] “New Prescriptivism: A Presentation of the English Language Teacher Training Project Approach.” Toronto: Department for International Development.


______. [no date] *Workshop Program for Key Team and Supplementary Resource Book for Primary Teachers.* Camberwell, VIC.


APPENDICES
Learning to Teach in a Knowledge Society

Appendix A: A framework for Teacher Education policy choices

Appendix B: Completed Research/Interview List

  B-1: Central level interviews
  B-2: Provincial, district and school visits

Appendix C: Protocols

  C-1: Detailed interview protocol
  C-2: Summary of key questions
  C-3: Sample questionnaire

Appendix D: Teacher Evaluation Forms

  D-1: Primary teacher assessment form
  D-2: Lower secondary teacher assessment form

Appendix E: Lower secondary TTC curriculum framework recommendations

Appendix F: Framework for Teacher Professional Practice
APPENDIX A: A Framework for Teacher Education Policy Choices

Each of the categories below contains several policy alternatives or choices which, taken together, can point to the different scenarios possible in a given country. These categories would be valid to analyze and characterize any sort of pre-service or in-service teacher training program, and would also help as a tool for policy making. The following Table would be the result if we cross each of the policy choices with the three basic types of implications: Financial, Political, and Quality implications (in terms of effectiveness and efficiency).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Policy Choices</th>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>Policy Implications</th>
<th>Quality Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A. Overarching principles: | 1. Centralization-Decentralization  
2. Regulation – Deregulation  
3. Internal Motivation – External Motivation  
4. Supply driven – Demand driven  
5. Teacher as a civil servant – Teacher as a customer | Increasing cost  
Decreasing cost  
Cost sharing among the different ed. administrations  
Incentives linked to in-service training | Local-Regional-National educational competences at stake  
Social status and social reward of teachers. Civil servants or not | Local needs and quality  
Teachers’ responsibility of their own training |
| | 6. Single Permanent Structure – Multiple Institutional & provisional supports  
7. Secondary Level – University Level – Mixed secondary and university | | | |


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Contents of Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Isolated contents – Wide, long-term training itineraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Integration of theory and practice – Focusing more on theory or on practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Focus on content knowledge – Teaching professional knowledge – Pedagogical content knowledge.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D. Modes of training (Student support, methodology and delivery system)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Seminar-oriented – Balance between different contents and modes of training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Face-to-face and Residential – Distance education and On-line options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E. Training and Career development: Who is in the focus of training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Individuals – Groups of teachers (by subject, innovation projects) – Whole school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Training Credit-hours piggy-bank – Professional and Staff development</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>F. Teachers educators for teacher training:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. Managers of Training – External support agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. University academics – Experienced teachers and administrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Ad-hoc and Provisional – Stable and professionals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Planning Teacher Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## APPENDIX B: Completed Interview List

### B-1: Central Level Interviews (MOET, NGO, etc.):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder Category</th>
<th>Agency/Organization</th>
<th>Name/Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Department of International Cooperation</td>
<td>Prof. Nguyen Ngoc Hung, Deputy General Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Higher Education Department</td>
<td>Nguyen Ba Khoa, Higher Education Department, Supervisor for DHSP, CDSP Teacher Training for Primary and Lower Secondary Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Secondary Education Department</td>
<td>Nguyen Hai Chau, Vice Director, Secondary Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Lower Secondary Education Development Project</td>
<td>Mr. Ngo Huu Dung, Project Director Mr. Nguyen Dang Thin, Deputy Vice Director in charge of Teacher Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Lower Secondary Teacher Training Project</td>
<td>Mr. Nguyen Ba Kim, Director International Coordinator, Andreas Dernbach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>Primary Education Teacher Project</td>
<td>Mr. Nguyen Tri, PCU Director Ms. Thuy Phuong, Procurement Specialist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOET</td>
<td>National Institute for Educational Strategies and Curriculum Development</td>
<td>Mr. Nguyen Huu Chau, Director Professor Do Dinh Hoan Dr. Lai (LSTTP) Dr. Tran Nhu Thin (USTTP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam National University</td>
<td>Center for Educational Research Development and Quality Assurance</td>
<td>Ms. Nguyen Phuong Nga, Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Asian Development Bank—Headquarters, Manila ADB Vietnam Resident Mission</td>
<td>Yasushi Hirosato, Senior Education Specialist ADB Lower Secondary Projects Ms. Nguyen Tuyen, VRM Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>Belgian Technical Cooperation</td>
<td>Iris Uyttersprot, coordinator Vietnam-Belgium Teacher Training Project in 7 Provinces of North Vietnam (May 1999 - March 2003) currently co-director Basic Education and Teacher Training Project, Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donor</td>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Steve Passingham, Senior Education Advisor Neil Baumgart, Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Oxfam UK—Lao Cai and Ha Tinh Primary Teacher Training Project</td>
<td>Mandy Woodhouse, Director Vu Thanh Hoa, Senior Education Program Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
<td>Nguyen Dieu Anh, Project Officer Education Program Nguyen Ngoc Huan, Consultant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Save the Children Australia—Binh Thuan Primary Teacher Training Project</td>
<td>Fiona Farley, Project Manager Tricia Tibbetts, Evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Save the Children Sweden—Inclusive Education Project, teacher training and TTC component</td>
<td>Ms. Ta Thuy Hanh, Program Officer Inclusive Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Save the Children UK—Ethnic Minority Education Project, teacher training component</td>
<td>Ms. Nguyen Thi Bich, Deputy Program Director Ms. Thao, Program Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO)—Lower secondary teacher training (English language)</td>
<td>Agneta Dau Valler, Acting Program Director Helen Seed, Teacher Trainer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### B-2: Provincial, District and School Visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Institution/Agency</th>
<th>Stakeholder Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bac Can</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Bac Can | Department of Education and Training | Vice Director  
Director of Personnel and Training  
Director of Training/Secondary Programs |
| Bac Can | Teacher Training College (Cao Dang Su Pham) | Vice Director and selected Deans  
Some teacher trainers  
Some pre-service students |
| Bac Can | **School visits:**  
Ha Vi School, Bach Thong District (LS)  
Huyen Tung School, Bac Can City (LS)  
Thi Tran School, Ba Be District (LS) | Representatives from district offices  
Principals  
Some teachers |
| **Hanoi** | | |
| Hanoi | Department of Education and Training | Chief of Personnel Section  
Mr. Bui Van Khoi  
Mr. Huy |
| Hanoi | Cau Giay District Office of Education and Training | Vice Director |
| Hanoi | **School visits:**  
Le Quy Don School, Cau Giay (LS)  
Yen Hoa School, Cau Giay (LS) | Principal  
Vice Principal  
Some teachers |
| Hanoi | Hanoi Teacher Training University | Director  
Director of Primary Training  
Vice Directors of Teacher Training  
Director of Research |
| Hanoi | Teacher Training College (Cao Dang Su Pham) | Vice Rectors (2)  
Director of Science and Research  
Director Personnel  
Director, Foreign Language  
Director of Training  
Vice Dean, Social Sciences |
|---|---|---|
| Ho Chi Minh City | Department of Education and Training | Vice Director  
Head of Primary  
Head of Lower Secondary  
Head of Teacher Training and Professional Education |
| Ho Chi Minh City | Teacher Training College (Cao Dang Su Pham) | Vice Rector  
Vice Director Physics Department  
Vice Director Literature Department  
Director, History Department  
Director, Physics Department  
Director of Training  
Director, Biology Department  
Some teacher trainers  
Some pre-service students |
| Ho Chi Minh City | School visits:  
Dong Da School, Q4 (PE)  
Le Quy Don School, Q3 (LS)  
Luong Dinh Cua School, Q3 (PE)  
Van Don School, Q4 (LS) | POET representatives  
District office representatives  
Principals  
Some teachers |
| Thai Nguyen | Department of Education and Training | Director  
Vice Director of Regular Training Department  
Director of Regular Training Department  
Director of Lower Education Department  
Director of Nursery Education Department  
Vice Director of Personnel Department  
Officer of Regular Training Department  
Vice Director of Thai Nguyen District Office of Education and Training, |
| Thai Nguyen | Teacher Training College (Cao Dang Su Pham) | Rector  
Director of Training Department  
Director of Admin Department  
Director of Personnel and Student Management Department  
Director of Natural Science Department  
Some teachers  
Some pre-service students |
|------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Thai Nguyen | Thai Nguyen University Teacher Training College (Dai Hoc Su Pham) | Rector of Thai Nguyen College of Education.  
Vice Rector  
Head of Training - Scientific Research - International Relations Department.  
Deputy Head of Training - Science Research - International Relations Department.  
Dean of Mathematics Faculty  
Head of Pedagogy, Literature  
Head of Pedagogy, Mathematics  
Head of Literature Faculty |
| Thai Nguyen | School visits:  
Chien Thang School (PE)  
Phuc Xuan School (LS) | Provincial representatives  
District office representatives  
People’s Committee representatives  
Some teachers  
Some parents |
APPENDIX C: Protocols

C-1: Detailed interview protocol (modified for different stakeholder groups)

Learning to Teach in the Knowledge Society
Vietnam: Detailed Interview Protocol

A. Objectives/expectations of teacher training for primary/lower secondary:

- What are the expectations of learning to teach at the lower secondary level?
  - What informs these expectations?

- What are the most important priorities for lower secondary teacher training?
  - What objectives or recent policy developments drive these priorities?

- Describe Vietnam’s greatest strength in current teacher training.

- What is the biggest challenge to achieving your objectives for lower secondary teacher training?

- If you could improve one thing in the current lower secondary teacher training system where would you start?

B. Learning to teach in the knowledge society

- Lower secondary students
  - How have expectations of student learning for Vietnam’s lower secondary students changed? (What are the new expectations of learning for a knowledge society?)
  - How well equipped are teachers to help student achieve these competencies?
  - What challenges confront teachers in helping student to acquire such competencies?

- Teaching primary/lower secondary
  - What skills and knowledge are essential in learning to teach at the primary/lower secondary level? Why? (Link to new student expectations in knowledge society.)
  - How well equipped are teacher trainers in preparing primary/lower secondary teachers with the teaching competencies they need?

- Professional culture: Describe the level of team work and professional interaction at the school level.

- Shared knowledge: Are there ways to help teachers’ accumulated practical knowledge become part of the knowledge base for learning to teach (pre-service and in-service)?
Instructional challenges: How do teachers respond to teaching and learning problems? How well does teacher training prepare teachers to deal with real life teaching challenges? (e.g., large class sizes, inadequate teaching/learning resources, second language speakers, special learning needs)

C. Good training practices:

- What are some examples of effective practice in training lower secondary school teachers (distinctions between pre-service and in-service)? How do you know?

D. Pre-service training

- How are current priorities of teacher training institutions supporting policy aims? Where are they laying their emphasis in the training process?

- Curriculum of primary/lower secondary teacher training: (who determines/regulates?)
  - What proportion of the teacher training curriculum is dedicated to each and why?
    - a) subject matter knowledge
    - b) pedagogical content knowledge
    - c) general pedagogy or curricular knowledge
    - d) other areas (specify)
  - To what degree is the (new) primary/lower secondary curriculum integrated into the teacher training curriculum for lower secondary teachers?

- Student/practice teaching:
  - How long are students of primary/lower secondary teacher training required to practice teach in a real school/classroom?
  - What are the factors that make practice teaching an effective training tool?

- What kind of relationship exists between the schools/staff where practice teaching take place and teacher training institutions/instructors?

- What kind of relationship exists between the teacher training institutions and the primary/lower secondary schools where their teacher candidates are assigned?

E. In-service training

- What are the primary objectives of in-service training at the primary/lower secondary level? Which skills and knowledge do in-service training aim to upgrade?

- Who decides what in-service training is offered? Who decides what in-service training a teacher or school receives? Why do these decisions reside where they do?

- What are the challenges to delivering in-service training that is effective in improving teachers’ capacity to promote student learning? (examples?)
F. Policy solutions

- Changes/actions in place
  - Explain new/recent policies implemented in teacher training system at the **primary/lower secondary** level. Why were these changes implemented?
  - Have you seen any impact? How will you know if these policies are effective?

- Future policy
  - What are the key tenets of current teacher education policy?
  - What direction should **primary/lower secondary** teacher training policy take?
    - What area is most in need of immediate attention? Why?

C-2: Key Questions

Key Questions for Teacher Training Research Study
Learning to Teach in a Knowledge Society: Vietnam

- Core competencies, skills, learning objectives expected of primary/lower secondary students in a new knowledge society?

- Core competencies, skills, learning objectives necessary for learning to teach to these new student expectations?

- What are the most important priorities for primary/lower secondary teacher training—pre-service and in-service?

- How is your provincial teacher training institution doing differently as a result of new policies implemented in the teacher training system at the primary/lower secondary level?

- What are the primary objectives of in-service training at the primary/lower secondary level? Which skills and knowledge do in-service training aim to upgrade?

- What are the challenges to delivering pre-service/in-service training that is effective in improving teachers’ capacity to promote student learning? Examples?

- Describe the balance/distribution of core teacher training curriculum components.

- What are the main skills or training gaps: for teacher trainers? for teacher trainees?

- Assessment/evaluation criteria or process: for trainers? for trainees? for program effectiveness? How do you determine whether your candidates have mastered required competencies?

- What are some examples of effective practice in training primary/lower secondary school teachers (distinctions between pre-service and in-service)?
What area of primary/lower secondary teacher training is most in need of immediate attention? Why? What direction should teacher training policy take?

What resources/expertise/support do you need to better achieve your objectives in improving the quality of teacher training?

C-3: Questionnaire (administered where possible to teachers, teacher trainers and education managers, with questions modified accordingly)

Learning to Teach:

A. How well do you feel the following issues were addressed during your training to become a teacher? [please √ one box for each item]

B. To what extent do you feel you have mastered each of the following competencies?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>very well</th>
<th>adequate</th>
<th>not adequate</th>
<th>not at all</th>
<th>adequate mastery</th>
<th>minimal mastery</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lesson planning</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>classroom management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>basic principles and concepts of subject content area</td>
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<tr>
<td>subject specific teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>methodology and techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>organizing learning through group activities and tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knowledge of students varied</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>approaches to learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>considering alternate/differing viewpoints in class discussion</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructing assessment instruments to evaluate student progress/competence in subject</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adapting/modifying lessons/instruction to different student learning needs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>analyzing and dealing with students’ misconceptions with the subject</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>understanding prescribed curriculum and textbooks in subject area</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adapting curriculum content/textbook examples to local context</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cooperating with other teachers to plan and teach subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing gender issues in teaching and learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing issues of ethnicity/culture in teaching and learning</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies to deal with difficult teaching situations: large class size, inadequate resources, second language speakers</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To what degree was the time spent in the following areas adequate in learning to become a teacher? [please √ one box for each item]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General knowledge</th>
<th>More time needed</th>
<th>Time sufficient</th>
<th>Less time needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSE subject majors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project work, research in education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your teaching, how often does each of the following practices occur? [please √ one box for each item]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class discussion</th>
<th>Every lesson</th>
<th>At least once a week</th>
<th>At least once a month</th>
<th>Rarely/never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual work on reading or assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher lecture or talk to students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group activity/project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student presentation of work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D: Teacher Evaluation Forms

D-1: Primary teacher assessment form (MOET/Primary Teacher Development Project)

TEACHER ASSESSMENT SHEET (PRIMARY LEVEL)
(For the National Excellent Teacher Competition)

[Teacher background information here.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Areas</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Maximum Points</th>
<th>Assessment Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| I. Professional Skills (30 points) | 1.1 Clear understanding about subject’s features and lesson’s type, such as theory, exercise, and practice.  
1.2 Choose suitable ways to organize classroom in which create opportunities for children to actively engage in the learning process  
1.3 Apply the active teaching/learning methodology  
1.4 Ability to solve unexpected classroom situation, and be able to stimulate children’s learning abilities  
1.5 Clear, accurate and emotive explanation  
1.6 Handwritings are clear and tidy. Effective use of blackboard  
1.7 Effective use of teaching materials and equipment and teaching/learning aids.  
1.8 Set time during the lesson effectively. Ensuring the lesson finished in the timeframe. | 10             |                  |
|                        | TOTAL                                                                                                                                     |                | 30                |
| II. Knowledge (20 points) | 2.1 Ensuring the accuracy and logic of the lesson and suitable to children’s psychology.  
2.2 Ensuring to provide enough knowledge and key teaching point of the lesson.  
2.3 Practical and relevant to children’s experience  
2.4 Attitudes and emotions.  
2.5 Suitable to different learning levels of children in the classroom, including excellent children, talented children, children with low learning ability and children with difficulties. | 10             |                  |
|                        | TOTAL                                                                                                                                     |                | 20                |
| III. Teacher’s Attitudes (10 Points) | 3.1 Professional behavior, close and devoted to children.  
3.2 Treat children in the classroom equally. | 10             |                  |
|                        | TOTAL                                                                                                                                     |                | 10                |
| IV. Effectiveness (40 points) | 4.1 Children are natural and relaxed during the lesson. No rote learning.  
4.2 Children understand the key points of the lesson.  
4.3 Children could practice well the lesson.  
4.4 Teacher’s evaluation is suitable to children. | 10             |                  |
|                        | TOTAL                                                                                                                                     |                | 40                |

NOTE: Ranking the lesson

**First level:** above 9 points (no criteria is given 0 point). It must show teacher’s renewal and creativity in criteria 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7)

**Second level:** Between 7.5 and 9 points (no criteria is given 0 point)  
**Total points** ........../100

**Third level:** Between 5 and 7.5 points (no criteria is given 0 point)  
**Change** ........../10

**Satisfactory:** Below 5 points.

The criteria 4.2 could be assessed through the evaluation result at the end of the lesson.  
**Rank** ...............
**D-2: Lower secondary teacher assessment form**

[Similar versions of this form were collected from three Districts offices and 2 lower secondary schools across 3 Provinces]

Name of teacher:…………………………Class:…………….School:…………………………
Subject:…………………………Lesson:………………………………………………………………
Name of evaluator:……………………………………………………………………………………

**ASSESSMENT FORM FOR LOWER SECONDARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td>1. Scientific accuracy (subject, viewpoints)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Systematic assurance, comprehensive content, raising the key issues</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Content should be related to the reality and in educational manner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Methodologies</strong></td>
<td>4. Using suitable teaching methodologies for different subjects and different types of lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Combining different teaching methodologies for teaching and learning activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Medium/Means</strong></td>
<td>6. Using and combining different teaching aids which fit to contents of different kinds of lessons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7. Nice hand-writing, nice pictures, clear speaking, well-prepared lesson preparation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>8. Suitable time delivery for each part of the lesson</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9. Ability to make an active classroom, group discussions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>10. The majority of students understands the lesson, knows the key questions of the lesson and be able to apply the knowledge to many areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Ranking</th>
<th>Total points ----------- /20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1 <strong>Very good</strong>:</td>
<td>Total points from 17-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The item no. 1,4,6,9 gains 2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 <strong>Good</strong>:</td>
<td>Total points from 13-16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>requirements no. 1,4,9 gains 2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 <strong>Fair</strong>:</td>
<td>Total points from 10-12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Requirements No. 1,4 gains 2 points each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 <strong>Weak</strong>:</td>
<td>Total points of not more than 9 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E: Lower Secondary TTC Curriculum Framework Recommendations

Lower Secondary Teacher Training Project: Technical Assistance for Teacher Training and Capacity Building, Final Report

Recommended changes for lower secondary pre-service teacher training curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Curriculum Component</th>
<th>Credit Allocation [1996 TTC Curriculum Framework]</th>
<th>Recommended Credit Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Subjects</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Knowledge (compulsory)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Knowledge (optional)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(70)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(55)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Education:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major 1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major 2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pedagogy</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
<td><strong>45</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(100)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(115)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
<td><strong>170</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommended changes for credit allocations in Pedagogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Credits 1996 Curriculum Framework</th>
<th>Recommended Credit Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General psychology</td>
<td>Child development and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogic and age psychology</td>
<td>Learning teaching and assessment (pedagogy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogic communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching activities in LSE schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education activities in LSE schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ho Chi Minh Young Pioneers’ Union</td>
<td>Ho Chi Minh Young Pioneers’ Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2 units now required)</td>
<td>Education research methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education research methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School visits</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice teaching</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching methodologies for Major 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching methodologies for Major 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>38</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F: Framework for Teacher Professional Practice


Domain 1: Planning and Preparation
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Students (age group, varied approaches, student skills/interests/background, etc)
- Selecting Instructional Goals
- Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources (teaching and learning aids)
- Designing Coherent Instruction (activities, materials, groups, lesson)
- Assessing Student Learning (alignment with instructional goals, performance standards, use for planning)

Domain 2: The Classroom Environment
- Creating and Environment of Respect and Rapport (teacher/student attitudes)
- Establishing a Culture for Learning
- Managing Classroom Procedures (groups, transitions, materials, duties)
- Managing Student Behavior (expectations, monitoring, response)
- Organizing Physical Space (teacher position, student arrangement, draw plan)

Domain 3: Instruction
- Communicating Clearly and Accurately
- Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques (level of interaction, participation)
- Engaging Students in Learning (content, activities, assignments, grouping, materials, structure and pacing; % of time for lecture, group, individual activities)
- Providing Feedback to Students (accurate, constructive, specific, timely)
- Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness (adjustments to lesson, response to students, persistence)

Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities
- Reflecting on Teaching (accuracy, use in planning)
- Maintaining Accurate Records (student assignments, student progress)
- Communicating with Families
- Contributing to the School and District (relationship with colleagues, service and participation)
- Growing and Developing Professionally (content knowledge and pedagogical skills, service and leadership)
- Showing Professionalism