USAID’S DISABILITY PROGRAMS

Assisting persons with disabilities has long been one of the top priorities for the U.S. Government in Vietnam. Since 1989, with the establishment of the U.S. Agency for International Development’s (USAID) Leahy War Victims Fund (LWVF), USAID has worked to increase access to a wide variety of programs benefiting people with disabilities in conflict-affected countries. In Vietnam, U.S. assistance has helped to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities, by addressing medical and social needs, improving disability policies, and reducing physical and social barriers.

The U.S. Government has contributed more than $100 million in assistance to persons with disabilities in Vietnam. Over the course of 30 years, USAID assistance has benefited hundreds of thousands of persons with disabilities in Vietnam. More than 30,000 of these persons with disabilities received direct assistance, including assistive devices, rehabilitation services, education and vocational training, home improvements, independent living assistance, legal counselling, and/or job placement assistance. USAID supports local governments to implement the national disability law and the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Apart from influencing public policies, USAID also supports the development of legal codes to improve physical accessibility for persons with disabilities in public buildings and transportation, as well as increase access to information and technologies. Our work supporting persons with disabilities is viewed by many as contributing to successful U.S.-Vietnam cooperation to overcome the painful past shared by the two countries.

USAID continues its support to persons with disabilities in Vietnam through eight projects which aim to expand rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, increase social support, improve disability policies, and reduce environmental barriers. USAID also supports the development of local Disabled Persons Organizations and their advocacy efforts.

In the photo: A person with disabilities in Quang Nam province on a tricycle wheelchair provided with USAID support. (USAID/Vietnam)