



VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

USAID's programs to assist vulnerable groups focus on services for persons with disabilities, key populations at high risk of HIV infection, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT), Vietnamese affected by disaster, minorities, and the extremely poor. Since 1989, USAID has provided \$66.5 million to help these vulnerable populations.

SUPPORT FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

USAID activities aim to improve access to health, education and employment services to help persons with disabilities fully integrate into society. USAID support provides physical, occupational and speech therapies to increase independent living skills and create education and employment opportunities. Efforts to train health practitioners and build effective systems will improve the quality of physical, occupational and speech therapies available. Activities also support local governments to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and influence public policies that affect their lives. USAID assists in the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and enforcement of Vietnam's disability legislation. USAID has provided rehabilitation services for tens of thousands of people with disabilities, education and vocational training, job placement, support to parent associations to expand their advocacy for disability issues, and worked to enhance physical accessibility.

IMPROVING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

All USAID programs aim to ensure women are included in and benefit from Vietnam's rapid development. Two projects are specifically targeted to improve women's economic opportunities -- a savings-led micro-credit project for small women-led businesses in the Mekong Delta, and a project that aims to give women more access to land rights in two provinces in Vietnam.

BUILDING LOCAL CAPACITY AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR INCLUSIVENESS

USAID programs provide individualized technical assistance and mentoring to help local organizations better serve vulnerable populations. Organizations include those working with populations affected by HIV, persons with disabilities, LGBT leaders, and women as well as research and policy institutes, social enterprise service providers, and business and professional associations. Partnerships with these organizations and the private sector are an integral part of the USAID approach aimed at fostering innovation in and local ownership of the development initiatives USAID supports.