

# INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Work Package 5

## Consolidated Report



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# ABBREVIATION

<b>BCI</b>	Bac Ninh College of Industry
<b>DOLISA</b>	The Department of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs
<b>DRD</b>	Centre for Disability Research and Capacity Development
<b>GSO</b>	General Statistics Office
<b>HCMC</b>	Ho Chi Minh City
<b>HVCT</b>	Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology
<b>MDRI</b>	Mekong Development Research Institute
<b>MOLISA</b>	The Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs
<b>PwD</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>PwoD</b>	Persons without Disabilities
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

People with disabilities (PwD) remain among the most marginalized groups in the world today. It is common knowledge that PwD tend to have poorer health outcomes, lower education achievements, less economic participation and higher rates of poverty than people without disabilities (PwoD). In the ten years since the United Nations adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, tremendous progress has been made in improving the lives of PwD, and thus, enabling better economic, social and psychosocial integration for them.

However, persistent obstacles still lurk in the background, causing troubles to these vulnerable individuals. Apparently, there is much work that needs to be done for PwD to help them overcome physical barriers, pursue employment, become economically independent and engaged within the community. Among many aspects relating to support for PwD, ensuring that they have secure access to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in an inclusive environment is often considered a top priority.

In that context, GIZ Vietnam conducted the study “Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bac Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City” that aim at improving educational and career opportunities for PwD through TVET and contributing to the reduction of barriers inhibiting social inclusion of PwD. The project implemented three separate surveys from January to March 2019 in Bac Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City with the participation of 80 PwD, 40 TVET college staff and teachers, 70 non-disabled students, and 20 enterprise employers.

## **Legal Background regarding People with Disabilities in TVET and the Labour Market**

*The last decade has witnessed the Vietnamese Government’s drastic efforts to introduce new legislation for the facilitation of PwD’s participation in TVET programmes.* Among them, the Law on Disability (2010) and the Law on Vocational Education (2014) have laid a solid foundation for PwD-related policies. These laws and their relevant documents have provided various regulations on incentives for PwD participation in TVET including tuition exemption/reduction, vocational training subsidy for PwD, preferential treatments such as special allowance for vocational staff, financial assistance and infrastructure support for TVET institutions that have PwD enrolment.

*The limitations of the current legal framework on PwD participation in TVET, however, are clear.* Several provisions in PwD-related laws are ambiguously worded without detailed guidelines on specific incentives and how beneficiaries can seek their legitimate assistance. Current PwD-related regulations also put much emphasis on incentives for businesses recruiting PwD but pay less attention to the responsibility of employers and employment funds for PwD. Specific regulations on discrimination in the recruitment and employment of disabled labourers are still absent. Another shortcoming is that the Government has yet to issue any

official legal document to regulate the organization, operation and management of employment funds for PwD.

*In that context, the understanding of TVET college staff and students about those policies play an important role in establishing and maintaining an inclusive educational environment for PwD.* In general, a majority of college staff and students participated in the surveys demonstrated good knowledge about policies and regulations with regard to the participation of PwD in TVET. In contrast, the percentage of college staff who were well informed about incentives for TVET institutions and teachers teaching PwD was rather low. Management staff seem to be more aware of incentives for TVET institutions and teachers than training staff. With respect to employer's legal awareness, it is surprising that all the interviewed businesses have little to none awareness about the policies and regulations stipulating the benefits that they could receive if they employ PwD.

### **Participation of PwD in TVET**

*Not many PwD participated in the survey have attended or are attending TVET programmes.* Among 12 respondents who had attended/were attending TVET institutions, only a third reported that they received integrated training together with people without disabilities. In general, the most popular fields chosen by these 12 PwD were Massage Therapy, Office Computer Literacy and Graphic Design, and Electronics.

*PwD also expressed various reasons for their TVET institution enrolment and TVET programmes choices.* The most popular reason for a PwD to enroll a TVET institution is the suitability of training courses, followed by previous experience of friends and relatives with that TVET institution and the affordability of tuition fees. Types of disabilities and gender might be considered potential factors affecting PwD's decision to attend TVET institutions. Regarding PwD's preference for TVET programmes, the choice of training fields and educational programmes were usually made based on recommendations from parents and peer pressure.

*Among 12 PwD experienced TVET programmes, no one is the HVTC or BCI student.* While management officials in these two institutions stated that there were no PwD studying in their school in recent years, 23/70 non-disabled students claimed that they thought students with disabilities studied at their school. Several teaching staff in 6 programmes in BCI and HVCT also reported that they had ever taught PwD in the past although there was just a few students.

*Although not many PwD had attended/ were attending TVET programmes, the demand for TVET among PwD were significant.* Office computing/Computer literacy and Graphic design, Electric/Electronics, and Massage therapy remained the 3 most popular fields that PwD wish to pursue. Among those who did not wish to participate or continue TVET, "PwD's physical and/or mental health conditions" was the main constraint restricting them from pursuing TVET.

### **Assessment of TVET Institutions Regarding Inclusion of PwD**

*With regard to admission policy, TVET institutions seemed to have been quite active in reaching out to potential students, including PwD.* TVET institutions were said to deliver admission information via diverse channels such as social network, mass media platforms and

career orientation events. Notably, students who were going to or had attended formal TVET institutions were less likely to receive admission counseling than those in informal institutions.

*In addition, regarding the training programmes, the answers from PwD who were receiving or had received TVET from the formal institution once again emphasized the importance of the suitability of the training curriculum to them.* Meanwhile, PwD students in BCI and HVCT were perceived by non-disabled students to be most capable of learning bamboo and rattan craft making, needle-painting, souvenir product crafting and composing & performing arts. Programmes, where PwD participation was thought to be restricted regardless of their types of disabilities, were Industrial Electricity Installation and Control Engineering, Industrial Welding, and Electric Pump Operation Technique.

*While discrimination seemed not to be a problem from perspectives of all groups of respondents, college staff and teachers generally provided mixed opinion towards integrated training for PwD.* Nearly half of them thought that PwD cannot be trained together with nondisabled students and more HVCT teachers argued in favour of integrated training for PwD than teachers in BCI. In particular, more than 50% of the respondents agreed that the participation of PwD in classes could complicate their training. *Students, on the other hand, seemed to be more positive towards integrated TVET for PwD.* 90% of surveyed students in the two colleges believed that PwD could be trained together with PwD.

*When asked about the preference for training methods, PwD expected to attend training programmes with high practicability where time spent on practicing was at least equal to that devoted learning theories.* An improvement of training methods may play a key role in designing inclusive training programmes as most of the PwD and nondisabled student assessed positively about their teacher's knowledge, skills and attitude, while many training staff themselves expressed their confidence to be able to work with students with disabilities.

*Besides training methods, the infrastructure and equipment in TVET intuitions were not in good condition to support PwD.* Most infrastructure for PwD was not available at BCI. Similar to BCI, HVCT was reportedly not equipped with the necessary infrastructure to support PwD participation in TVET although there were elevators at the school that could be used to assist people with disabilities.

*While career counseling for students was a common service in TVET institutions, the quality of labour market connection remained questionable.* Half of the respondents who were trained at either formal or informal TVET institutes revealed that almost no career orientation event.

### **Barriers to PwD Participation in TVET**

*PwD participation in TVET was seen as “challenging” to “very challenging” by all groups of respondents.* PwD, college staff and teachers, college disabled and nondisabled students also agreed on considering “poor health condition” as the most outstanding challenge. While PwD listed unaffordable tuition fees and inadequate infrastructure to support PwD as some other barriers to their participation in TVET, dim career prospect was perceived by college staff and teachers as another major constraint. Nondisabled students, at the same time, added two

more difficulties which were concerns over discrimination and training staff's poor training skills for PwD.

*The three top difficulties a TVET institution normally encounters when organizing courses for PwD are reported to be “poor supporting infrastructure”, “training staff's lack of necessary knowledge and experience to work with PwD”, and about “the design of training programmes and its suitability with PwD students”.*

### **Participation of PwD in the Labour Market**

*Only approximately half of the PwD in the survey were reportedly working.* Also, there were 10% of the respondents who were unable to work on jobs with more complicated tasks, but elementary occupations such as hand packers and odd-job persons. Among people who were obtaining employment, working as an employee in enterprises or for-profit organizations is the main form of their employment, followed by working as a self-employed.

Meanwhile, 5 out of 20 employers answered the survey said that their companies were employing a person with disabilities. Those employees were assigned difference tasks in their jobs, depending on the types of disabilities and severity levels of their disabilities.

### **Employability of PwD**

*Most interviewed businesses hold the prejudice that people with disabilities were only suitable for occupations that required little skills.* In addition, people with intellectual and mental & psychiatric disabilities were perceived as the groups least likely to take on high position. Meanwhile, mobility disability was the most chosen type of disability which had the potential to work for interviewed businesses.

When assessing the work performance of PwD who used to work/have been working for their businesses, *enterprises' general impression was positive.* Employers in general associated PwD recruitment's benefit with non-monetary value, for example company branding as a socially responsible business or open and integrated corporate culture, rather than monetary value. Furthermore, PwD's knowledge and experience appeared as the most potential factor that employers would consider when hiring.

*Finally, when identifying barriers to PwD participation in the labour market, the reasons for PwD not working seemed to arise from personal matters instead of external factors,* such as discrimination towards PwD or the mismatch between labour market demands and PwD's work skills. In addition, the lack of access to employment services was also a huge obstacle for PwD. Meanwhile, employers tend to express serious concern over PwD's ability to work given their impairment and *suspect that PwD might not have the required physical and mental health for the jobs.*

### **Recommendations**

From GIZ's perspectives, GIZ should consider various actions to facilitate the participation of PwD in TVET programmes and the involvement in the labour market. Firstly, GIZ can work with appropriate partners to design programmes and activities that support PwD health

improvement and rehabilitation. Secondly, it is necessary to support and encourage TVET institutions to upgrade several types of basic infrastructure so that school's fundamental facilities become more accessible to PwD. Thirdly, GIZ should work with BCI and HVCT to design specific training programmes on special education and training for PwD to improve college's staff and teacher skills. GIZ can also consider supporting the two colleges to design and initiate a pilot programme where suitable PwD students are selected and provided support to pursue a number of TVET programmes at BCI and HVCT. In addition, GIZ might consider providing scholarships and financial assistance to PwD students via TVET institutions. Meanwhile, the two colleges should extend their career counselling services for students. These career services should be included in the pilot inclusion programme at BCI and HVCT to ensure the comprehensiveness of TVET. Furthermore, a strengthened tie between the TVET colleges and their partner employers, with special focus on job placement for PwD students graduating the pilot programme should also be established to facilitate the transition from TVET to the labour market of PwD students.

*Above all, what is more important is that TVET institutions need to change their mindset of integrated training and enhance their can-do attitude. An open and optimistic attitude toward integrated training for PwD is prerequisite for the success of any activity in this programme.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background

### 1.1.1. Context

The study “Inclusion of People with Disabilities in Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bac Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City” is an initiative of the Programme “Reform of Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Vietnam” implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) with a view of improving technical and vocational education and training (TVET) opportunities for people with disabilities (PwD) and contributing to the reduction of barriers inhibiting social inclusion of PwD.

### 1.1.2. Phases

The action agenda for the study was put forward with three phases:

- i. Phase 1 – Situation analysis of PwD in TVET and on the labour market
- ii. Phase 2 – Implementing inclusion program:
  - Capacity development of relevant TVET stakeholders
  - Scholarship scheme/Financial aid for PwD
- iii. Phase 3 - Outreach/dissemination activities

MDRI was selected as the partner research team to conduct a study for phase 1 of the agenda, which identifies, assesses and evaluates the current situation of PwD in TVET and in the labour market at two selected colleges in Bac Ninh and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC).

## 1.2. Survey Objectives and Activities

The study contains 3 surveys:

1. **Survey 1:** Survey of PwD in working age in Bac Ninh and HCMC to assess their situation and needs concerning inclusion of PwD in TVET and in the labour market
2. **Survey 2:** Evaluation of two colleges, Bac Ninh College of Industry (BCI) and Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology (HVCT), regarding their present situation, potential, challenges and needs to improve inclusive training of PwD.
3. **Survey 3:** Evaluation of 20 employers in the technical field of mechanics, mechatronics, electric/electronics, etc. regarding their present situation, potential, challenges, and needs to improve the employment of PwD.

The purpose of the first survey is to assess the situation and needs of PwD in TVET and in labour market. 40 PwD in each selected province, Bac Ninh and HCMC, were invited to take part in the first quantitative survey, totalling 80 respondents in sample size.

The purpose of the second survey is to evaluate the TVET colleges, namely BCI and HVCT, regarding their present situation, potential, challenges, and needs to improve inclusive training

for PwD. 20 staff and teachers together with 35 nondisabled students from each college were invited to take part in the survey, totalling 110 respondents in sample size.

The purpose of the third survey is to assess the current employment situation of PwD at some interviewed employers in the technical fields of mechanics, electrical engineering, electronics, etc. and explore the opinions of these employers on the recruitment of PwD workers. 10 employers in Bac Ninh Province/Hanoi and 10 employers in HCMC/Dong Nai Province were invited to take part in the survey, totalling 20 respondents in sample size.

The following activities have been carried out for the data collection of each survey:

1. Developed data collection tools
2. Reviewed the sampling frame and selected the sample
3. Conducted the survey
4. Analysed the collected data and survey findings

## 1.3. Methodology

### 1.3.1. *Main research questions*

The study consists of three main research questions:

- What are the needs of PwD in enrolment in vocational education and training? (in terms of training program choices, enrolment process, financial support, etc.)
- What are the possibilities of PwD pursuing technical vocational education and training?
- What are the needs of PwD in the labour market in two selected provinces?

### 1.3.2. *Research tools*

For the first survey of PwD in working age in Bac Ninh and HCMC, a quantitative questionnaire with closed-ended questions was designed to collect the data from 80 respondents. For the second survey conducted at two colleges, BCI and HVCT, two quantitative questionnaires were designed to collect the data from school staffs and non-disabled students. Another qualitative questionnaire was developed to interview students with disabilities at these two schools, however, it was not used due to the fact that there were no disabled students at these schools according to the school management boards. Regarding the third and final survey, a quantitative questionnaire was designed and used as the data collection tool for 20 employers in Hanoi/Bac Ninh and HCMC/Dong Nai regions. A qualitative tool was also developed in this survey round to collect information from disabled employees who had worked/are working for these employers but it was not employed because the disabled employees did not agree to participate in this study. All quantitative questionnaires were subsequently programmed into a compatible form for tablet PC. And all quantitative interviews were conducted using tablet PCs.



### *1.3.3. Data collection*

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Before each fieldwork, MDRI research team had contacted the local leads and relevant organizations to agree on the fieldwork plan and the method of approaching potential respondents. For the first survey, potential respondents in HCMC was contacted via phone with the introduction from DRD and invited to participate in the survey. In Bac Ninh, DOLISA Bac Ninh supported the research team in contacting the respondents and collect their consent on our behalf. For the second survey, MDRI research team had closely worked with the administrators of BCI and HVCT to collect lists of staff, teachers, and students at the two colleges for sampling selection. The administrators of BCI and HVCT also referred the team to a number of their partner employers in the technical fields of mechanics, electrical engineering, electronics, etc., for the third survey whom we approached and invited to participate in the interviews.

After a detailed fieldwork plan was designed, two teams of two researchers from MDRI were in charge of conducting interviews in two distinct research areas. 2 researchers conducted the surveys in HCMC/Dong Nai region, while the other 2 researchers conducted the survey in Bac Ninh/Hanoi region. For the first survey, 2 researchers conducted the survey in HCMC in late January 2019, while the other 2 researchers conducted the survey in Bac Ninh in late February 2019. The second survey was conducted from 11th to 13th of March 2019, and the final survey was conducted from 14th to 21st of March 2019. The researchers carried out the quantitative interviews using the questionnaire approved by GIZ. All interviews were executed face-to-face, except for the third survey of employers where they are either face-to-face or via telephone depending on the preference and availability of the respondents.

Data were collected using tablet PCs with built-in 3G, and the data of all completed interviews were automatically sent to SurveyCTO server for cleaning and analyzing. The collected data were independently cleaned by an MDRI data analyst who was not involved in either the data collection process or the report writing task. Cleaned data were later analysed by the researchers who had conducted the surveys and presented into this report.

### *1.3.4. Sample Size and Survey Locations*

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The first survey (survey of PwD) was conducted in two provinces: Bac Ninh and HCMC. 40 PwD from each province were invited to take part in this survey. In Bac Ninh, we requested for assistance from DOLISA Bac Ninh in locating the sampling frame for this survey. DOLISA Bac Ninh provided the research team with a sampling frame of two districts, namely Que Vo and Tien Du, and a centre for PwD under the supervision of DOLISA Bac Ninh. Based on the sampling frame provided by DOLISA Bac Ninh, the research team has selected 40 respondents based on their age (between 15 and 40 years old), working ability, communication and health conditions, accessibility, and respondents' consent. In HCMC, we have closely worked with DRD and were introduced to 60 PwD in DRD's network. We have also selected 40 respondents based on the same criteria as in Bac Ninh. Respondents who are not in a mental and/or health condition suitable to answer the questionnaire were not



selected. In cases where respondents have difficulties in communicating with the interviewers, a sign language instructor was requested to assist the interview.

The second survey (survey of TVET college staff, teachers, and non-disabled students) was conducted in two TVET colleges: Bac Ninh College of Industry (BCI) in Bac Ninh City, Bac Ninh Province, and Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology (HVCT) in HCMC. 55 respondents from each college participated in this survey, who were classified in two respondent groups as follows:

- Staff and teacher group: 5 management staff and 15 training teachers in each college
- Student group: 35 nondisabled students in each college

The research team had requested both TVET colleges to provide lists of their staff, teachers, and nondisabled students to serve as the sampling frame for the survey. The 5 management staff were recommended by each college since it was important that the surveyed staff be those with the most precise and thorough understanding of the current situation at the college, including student enrolment, quantity and quality of training teachers, supporting infrastructure, etc. The teacher and student respondents, on the other hand, were randomly selected from the lists of teachers and students provided by the two colleges in the sampling frames. Specifically, BCI and HVCT were asked to prepare lists of all teachers and 10 randomly selected nondisabled students from each of the training programmes in Table 1. Based on these lists, the research team has randomly selected 15 teachers and 35 students from each college to conduct the interviews.

*Table 1. Professional fields of training available for PwD in the 02 TVET institutes*

Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology (HVCT)	Bac Ninh College of Industry (BCI)
Industrial electronics	Industrial electronics
Mechatronics	Mechatronics
Industrial Electrical Engineering	Information Technology
Refrigeration & Air-conditioning Technology	Corporate accounting
IT (Software Application)	Industrial automation
Computer Networking Administration	Industrial electrical installation and control technology
Food Processing Technology	Cooking
Pharmacy Technician	
Business Accounting	
Fashion Design	
Automotive Technology	
Graphic Design	

Total population sampling is used to identify participants for in-depth interviews with PwD based on the criteria that they have been studying at the two selected colleges. However, the

research team was unable to conduct any qualitative survey with PwD due to the fact that there is no PwD enrolled in any available courses at the 02 TVET institutes.

The third survey (survey of employers) was conducted in two areas: (1) Bac Ninh Province and Hanoi, and (2) HCMC and Dong Nai Province. Bac Ninh Province and HCMC are originally two key areas of this study. However, while the surveys of PwD and two TVET colleges namely BCI and HVCT were conducted only in Bac Ninh Province and HCMC, a number of employers were located in the surrounding provinces such as Hanoi and Dong Nai, hence the expansion of the survey locations to include these provinces. 10 respondents from each of the two survey areas participated in this survey. The total sample size was 20 employers. Each interview was conducted with a company representative in charge of human resource management policies, usually the company director or HR manager/executive. Additionally, the research team intended to interview all PwD employees reportedly working at the surveyed enterprises. However, the research team was unable to conduct any qualitative survey with PwD because all of the PwD identified to be currently employed by the respondents refused to participate in the interviews.

### 1.3.5. Description of Sample Characteristics

#### Survey of PwD

In the first survey, the majority of the respondents are people with mobility disability (46.3%). Regarding the degree of disability, 69.3% of the respondents suffer from severe disabilities, while the portion of respondents with moderate and extremely severe level of disability are 18.7% and 12.0%, respectively. The mean age of the respondents is 26.5 years old. Respondents in HCMC are typically younger than their counterparts in Bac Ninh. An overwhelming portion of respondents (70.0%) are single, and 27.5% are married. 50 out of 80 respondents are male. Most of the PwD surveyed are of Kinh ethnicity (96.3%) (Table 2).

Table 2. Demographic characteristics of the sample

Demographics	Characteristics	Count	%	Age mean
Type of disability	Mobility disability	37.0	46.3	26.6
	Vision impairment	13.0	16.3	24.2
	Hearing - Speech impairment	9.0	11.3	21.6
	Intellectual disability	8.0	10.0	24.8
	Mental and psychiatric disability	11.0	13.8	34.1
	Others	2.0	2.5	25.0
	Total	80.0	100.0	26.5
Degree of disability	Extremely severe	9.0	12.0	24.3
	Severe	52.0	69.3	26.4
	Moderate	14.0	18.7	25.7

Demographics	Characteristics	Count	%	Age mean
	Don't know/unidentified	5.0	6.3	32.6
Gender	Male	50.0	62.5	27.5
	Female	30.0	37.5	24.7
Province	Ho Chi Minh city	40.0	50.0	24.1
	Bac Ninh	40.0	50.0	28.8
Ethnicity	Kinh	77.0	96.3	
	Muong	1.0	1.3	
	Khmer	1.0	1.3	
	Cham	1.0	1.3	
Marital status	Single	56.0	70.0	
	Married	22.0	27.5	
	Divorced/separated	2.0	2.5	

### Survey of College Staff, Teachers, and Non-disabled Students

Regarding staff and teachers of the two schools, in HVCT, the number of female staff taking part in the survey nearly doubled the figure of male counterparts (13 female compared to 7 male staff). Meanwhile, no gender gap was observed among the respondents of BCI. The number of staff from 31 to 40 years old accounted for the greatest portion of 45% in HVCT and 60% in BCI. Less than 10% of respondents are senior staff over 50 years old. As is indicated in Table 2, there is a similarity in terms of ethnicity, marital status and education level of respondents at HVCT and BCI. In both colleges, all staff surveyed are of Kinh ethnicity, and more than 90% of them are married. Furthermore, 100% of participants have reportedly obtained a bachelor's degree or higher education. In terms of vocational training, the percentage of staff who did not attend vocational education and training in HVCT is 35%, which is half of that in BCI. However, the number of staff/teachers with a diploma of vocational college in HVCT is four times as high as the number in BCI.

*Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Staff and Teachers*

Demographics	HVCT (count)	BCI (count)	HVCT2 (%)	BCI (%)
Gender				
Male	7	10	35	50
Female	13	10	65	50
Total	20	20	100	100
Age range				
20 to 30 years	2	2	10	10
31 to 40 years	9	12	45	60
41 to 50 years	7	5	35	25
51 to 60 years	2	1	10	5
Total	20	20	100	100
Ethnicity				

Demographics	HVCT (count)	BCI (count)	HVCT2 (%)	BCI (%)
Kinh	20	20	100	100
Other	0	0	0	0
Total	20	20	100	100
Marital status				
Single	1	2	5	10
Married	19	18	95	90
Total	20	20	100	100
Education levels				
College/University	8	8	40	40
Postgraduate	12	12	60	60
Total	20	20	100	100
Vocational training level				
No vocational education	7	14	35	70
Primary vocational training	0	0	0	0
Intermediate vocational training	1	3	5	15
Vocational college	12	3	60	15
Total	20	20	100	100

Regarding the gender of student respondents, there was a shared pattern between the number of male and female students surveyed in 02 TVET institutes. More than three-fourths of the respondents are male (77.1%) in comparison with 22.9% of female counterparts. In HVCT, the age range of participants widely varies from 16 to 28 while all respondents in BCI are under 21 years old. In general, the majority of students was born in the year of 2000. Moreover, the data indicate that virtually all respondents are of Kinh ethnicity and single. The statistics show that about 91% of student respondents in HVCT and more than 80% in BCI have graduated from high school and are pursuing a vocational college degree. In HVCT, the training programmes where the greatest number of surveyed students are attending are industrial electrics (14.3%), followed by mechatronics and business accounting with 11.4% for each. In BCI, the three most popular training fields among the interviewed students are industrial electronics, business accounting, and industrial electrics, taking up roughly 23%, 20% and 17% of the interviewed students respectively.

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of Students

Demographics	HTVC (count)	BCI (count)	Total (count)	HVCT (%)	BCI (%)	Total (%)
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	27	27	54	77.1%	77.1%	77.1%
Female	8	8	16	22.9%	22.9%	22.9%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Born</b>						
1991	1	0	1	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%
1995	3	0	3	8.6%	0.0%	4.3%
1996	2	0	2	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%
1997	1	0	1	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%
1998	4	2	6	11.4%	5.7%	8.6%
1999	8	0	8	22.9%	0.0%	11.4%
2000	14	28	42	40.0%	80.0%	60.0%
2002	0	5	5	0.0%	14.3%	7.1%
2003	2	0	2	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
Kinh	34	35	69	97.1%	100.0%	98.6%
Other (specify)	1	0	1	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Marital status</b>						
Single	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>Education level</b>						
Lower Secondary	3	5	8	8.6%	14.3%	11.4%
Upper Secondary	32	29	61	91.4%	82.9%	87.1%
College/University	0	1	1	0.0%	2.9%	1.4%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Demographics	HTVC (count)	BCI (count)	Total (count)	HVCT (%)	BCI (%)	Total (%)
Vocational training level						
Vocational college	32	30	62	91.4%	85.7%	88.6%
Primary vocational training and regular vocational education (short-term vocational training)	3	5	8	8.6%	14.3%	11.4%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Specialization						
Industrial electronics	3	8	11	8.6%	22.9%	15.7%
Mechatronics	4	4	8	11.4%	11.4%	11.4%
Industrial electrics	5	6	11	14.3%	17.1%	15.7%
Refrigeration & Air-conditioning Technology	1	0	1	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Information Technology	0	3	3	0.0%	8.6%	4.3%
Computer Networking Administration	3	0	3	8.6%	0.0%	4.3%
Food Processing Technology	3	5	8	8.6%	14.3%	11.4%
Pharmacy Technician	1	0	1	2.9%	0.0%	1.4%
Business Accounting	4	7	11	11.4%	20.0%	15.7%
Fashion Design	2	0	2	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%
Automotive Technology	3	0	3	8.6%	0.0%	4.3%
Graphic Design	3	0	3	8.6%	0.0%	4.3%
Industrial automation	0	2	2	0.0%	5.7%	2.9%
IT (Software Application)	3	0	3	8.6%	0.0%	4.3%
Total	35	35	70	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

## Survey of Employers

Among 20 employers interviewed, 10 are limited liability companies, and the other half are joint stock companies. The number of years in operation of these companies range from 5 to 44 years, averaging 15.5 years. Most of the surveyed employers are private companies, and only 2 are State-owned enterprises. More than half of the interviewed employers work in the field of electrical engineering (including both civil and industrial electrical engineering) and electrical refrigeration. Although the number of surveyed firms in electronics is only half of that in electrical/electrical refrigeration, electronics companies tend to employ a large number of regular labour (workers with labour contract from 12 months). Similarly, foreign invested companies hire significantly more regular employees than State-owned and private enterprises. The average number of regular labour among all respondents is 316 employees (Table 5).

*Table 5. Demographic characteristics of the sampled employers*

Demographics	Characteristics	Count	%	Average number of years in operation	Average number of regular labour
Type of Business	Limited liability company	10	50.0	13.9	468
	Joint stock company	10	50.0	17.0	165
Ownership	State-owned enterprise	2	10.0	13.5	106
	Non-state enterprise/Private enterprise	14	70.0	15.4	123
	Foreign invested enterprise	4	20.0	16.5	1,100
Main field of business	Electrical /Electrical refrigeration	11	55.0	14.5	163
	Electronics	5	25.0	13.4	748
	Mechanics	2	10.0	29.5	275
	Others	2	10.0	11.5	120
Main customers	Domestic customers	8	40.0	15.3	106
	Foreign customers	1	5.0	15.0	3,200
	Both domestic and foreign customers	11	55.0	15.6	207
<b>Total</b>	<b>All surveyed employers</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>316</b>

## 2. LEGAL BACKGROUND OF PwD IN TVET AND THE LABOUR MARKET

As a starting point, this section reviews and assesses relevant international and Vietnam's legal background for the participation of PwD in TVET and the labour market while identifying some barriers currently threatening the implementation of equitable and fair TVET as well as the employment of PwD, thereby developing recommendations towards a more comprehensive and assistive legal system for PwD.

### 2.1. Legal Background Regarding PwD in TVET

#### 2.1.1. *Participation of PwD in TVET*

##### **International Legal & Policy Framework**

The United Nations has been prioritizing the efforts to ensure the rights of PwD, one of the most recent and noteworthy of which is the UN Convention on the Rights of PwD in effect since 2006. The document defines the responsibility of all undersigned countries to respect and protect the rights of PwD. According to the Article 27 on Job and Employment of the UN Convention on the Rights of PwD:

*1. States Parties recognize the right of PwD to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to PwD. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:*

*(a) Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;*

*(b) Protect the rights of PwD, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;*

*(c) Ensure that PwD are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others; (d) Enable PwD to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;*

*(e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for PwD in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;*



*(f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;*

*(g) Employ PwD in the public sector;*

*(h) Promote the employment of PwD in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;*

*(i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to PwD in the workplace;*

*(j) Promote the acquisition by PwD of work experience in the open labour market;*

*(k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for PwD.*

*2. States Parties shall ensure that PwD are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.*

### **Domestic Legal & Policy Framework**

The legal and policy framework in Vietnam has provided special incentives for PwD such as TVET tuition exemption/reduction, vocational training subsidy, and preferential policies for teachers, vocational support staff, etc., through a wide range of legislative texts. In particular, the National Law on Disability 51/2010/QH12 has one chapter regulating education for people with disabilities. The Decree 49/2010/ND-CP governs school fee exemption and reduction for students with disabilities while the Decision 23/2006/QĐ-BGD&ĐT regulates inclusive education for people with disabilities. Theoretically, the existing policies have mentioned all related subjects in many areas, including the educational support system for PwD.<sup>1</sup> These policies not only aim at facilitating PwD's equal rights but also providing them the opportunities to approach TVET without inducing any implicit bias or discrimination against their nondisabled counterparts.

From 2006 to 2018, 05 Decrees related to education and training for PwD were issued by the Government of Vietnam, 08 Decisions were issued by the Prime Minister, 35 Decisions, Circulars and Joint Circulars were issued by relevant Ministries and governmental agencies. These legal documents comprehensively cover different aspects of TVET for PwD, including support for PwD in accessing education and training such as tuition exemption/reduction, support for TVET establishments in enrolling PwD, support for teachers when participating in education and training for PwD. However, there is still a lack of supporting documents to further guide the implementation of these provisions, for example, guiding documents on required procedures for PwD-specialized vocational training establishments to receive financial supports from the State for investment in infrastructure and vocational training equipment.

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<sup>1</sup> Retrieved from VNU Journal of Education Research, Vol. 29, No. 2 (2013) 24-33

It is stipulated in Article 32 of the 2010 Law on PwD on Vocational training for PwD as follows:

- 1. The State ensures that PwD are provided with free vocational counselling, can select and train according to their abilities, capacities as equally as others.*
- 2. Vocational training establishments shall issue diplomas, certificates, recognition of vocational training when PwD have completed their training programmes and fully met the conditions prescribed by heads of State management agencies in charge of vocational training.*

The 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Article 27) and the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 2013 (Article 61) both state that it is necessary to encourage and support PwD in vocational training. Notably, in 2006, the legal framework regulating vocational training for PwD in Vietnam was presented as a major part of the 2006 Law No. 76/2006/QH11, which dedicated an entire Chapter VII to the topic of “Vocational training for disabled and handicapped persons”. The law was later replaced by the Law No. 74/2014/QH13 on Vocational Education in 2014, which omitted this Chapter. In this law, TVET for PwD was specially emphasized in Article 6, Clause 7:

*Article 6. State policies on development of vocational education and training*

*7. Support people having contributions to the revolution, demobilized soldiers, ethnic minority people, people from poor and nearly poor households, people with disabilities, orphans and children without care, distant-water fishermen, rural labours, labourers of the households having farm land collected, and other groups of people eligible to special social care in order to provide them opportunity of vocational education and training for finding job, self-employment, developing themselves and setting up their careers, in realization of gender equality in vocational education and training.*

Other Clauses related to PwD in the 2014 Law on Vocational Education included necessary conditions that vocational education establishments for PwD must satisfy for the training of PwD, policies to encourage and create favourable conditions for the operation of PwD vocational education institutions, businesses’ rights in organizing vocational education activities for PwD, policies for teachers who teach PwD, and policies for PwD who participate in training courses. Compared to the 2006 Law, these clauses are less specific and comprehensive.

In 2012, the Vietnamese government officially approved a scheme of assistance to support PwD during the period 2012 – 2020 in Decision No. 1019/QĐ-TTg. Key targets of the scheme are to support PwD in developing their abilities to meet their own needs and creating conditions for PwD to achieve equality when participating in socio-economic activities so that they can actively contribute to the development of the society. To realise these targets, the scheme has put forward nine main activities, specifically including assistance in access to education, vocational training and job creation. Some notable targets on TVET for PwD are quoted below:

*a) The 2012 - 2015 period*

- 250,000 disabled people who are in working age and have ability to work receive vocational education and have suitable employment.

*b) The 2016 - 2020 period*

- 300,000 disabled people who are in working age and have ability to work are enabled to receive vocational education and have suitable employment.

However, accomplishing these targets appears to be a tough challenge since the implementation of the Project in practice over the 2006 - 2010 period, given its initial target of providing vocational training and job creation for 80,000 PWDs, did not yield the desired results (only 50,000 PwD were trained and 15,600 PwD found a job)<sup>2</sup>. According to the Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs of Vietnam, many targets of the scheme have not been achieved due to the fact that some ministries and local authorities have not actively allocated budgets to perform assigned tasks and implemented the Project's plan in accordance with scheduled deadlines, not to mention that the budget for supporting PwD is not adequate enough to solve the current issues. Moreover, while the government seeks to help about 70% of children with disabilities participate in formal learning, there were only 24.2% of disabled children being able to go to school, especially in rural areas. In remote areas, most children with disabilities could not go to school. The number of management staff and teachers for PwD is merely sufficient to meet demands in regions where the projects are carried out, hinting at a serious lack of PwD professionals across the country.<sup>3</sup>

### *2.1.2. Support for PwD and Teachers and Facilities for PwD in TVET*

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With regard to policies governing vocational training institutions, vocational trainers, teachers and staff, the 2010 Law on PwD (Article 29, 32), the 2006 Law on Vocational Training (Article 62, 70, 72), Decree No. 43/2008/ND-CP detailing and guiding the implementation of Article 62 and Article 72 of the Law on Vocational Training, Decree No. 28/2012/ND-CP detailing and guiding the implementation of a number of Articles of the Law on PwD, the 2014 Law No. 74/2014/QH13 on Vocational Education (Article 58) detail preferential treatments in terms of salary, training and enhancement of professional skills and teaching methods for vocational trainers of disabled and handicapped people, as well as incentive policies for teachers in specialized schools or regions with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions. Teachers of vocational training for disabled and handicapped people shall also enjoy allowances as specified by the Government.

To support vocational institutes, the 2010 Law on PwD (Article 32), the 2014 Law on Vocational Education (Article 27) and the preceding 2006 Law on Vocational Training (Article 70) stated that specialized vocational training institutes for PwD shall receive financial

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<sup>2</sup> Electronic newspaper of the Communist Party of Vietnam, "The work of helping people with disabilities achieved many important results", March 10<sup>th</sup> 2011, <http://dangcongsan.vn/preview/newid/61889.html>

<sup>3</sup> Four-year review of the implementation of the support people with disabilities project and orientations. Retrieved from <http://www.molisa.gov.vn/vi/pages/chitiettin.aspx?IDNews=5699>

supports from the State for investment in infrastructure and vocational training equipment. Besides, specialized vocational institutes might be given the right to use land without paying fees or are able to rent land in areas convenient for vocational training of disabled and handicapped people.

Regarding support for PwD, the 2014 Law on Vocational Education (Article 62, 5) stipulates the regulation to encourage and establish favourable conditions for disabled and handicapped people to participate in vocational training. The article states:

**Article 62. Policies toward learners**

*5. Learners who are ethnic minority people from poor households, near poor households, people with disabilities; learners who are of Kinh ethnicity from poor households, near poor households or are disabled people who have permanent residence in areas with particularly difficult socio-economic conditions, ethnic minority areas, border and island areas; students of ethnic minority secondary schools boarding when participating in intermediate and college-level training programmes are entitled to boarding policies according to the Prime Minister's Decision.*

### **2.1.3. Barriers for PwD in TVET**

Existing international and national legislative documents on vocational training and job creation for PwD have expressed governments' special concern for PwD. This legal background has helped to encourage and create favourable conditions for PwD to assert their position and unique role in society, to exercise their inalienable political, economic, cultural, and social rights and to prove their capability to live a secure life, integrate into community and take part in social activities. A report of Vietnam Social Policy Bank (SPB) showed that in 2016, more than 2,365 projects of PwD and enterprises employing disabled labourers were able to take out loans and thus created jobs for 2,540 disabled workers.<sup>4</sup> According to the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), among PwDs who receive vocational training and job support, almost 41% of them receive vocational training and job counselling while nearly 18% are exempted from tuition fees. Notably, the number of vocational training institutions in Vietnam has increased in both quantity and quality. Up till now, there are 156 vocational training institutions providing vocational training for PwDs, including 55 specialized vocational training institutions, 200 establishments providing vocational training for PwDs and over 500 business establishments employing PwDs.<sup>5</sup>

Nevertheless, it remains a difficult task to tailor specific provisions and detailed guidelines on needed infrastructure, funding, or professional training for teaching staff in vocational training institutions; specific support for PwD when participating in TVET; the availability of financial support for PwD trainees and how they can receive the funding; how to raise awareness for

<sup>4</sup>Disabled people need more support <https://vietnamnews.vn/society/426237/disabled-people-need-more-support.html#5mESqb2LbfszuKdt.97>

<sup>5</sup>Sustainable life for people with disabilities.  
<http://www.molisa.gov.vn/vi/Pages/chitiettin.aspx?IDNews=27352>

vocational training institutions and businesses in order to eliminate prejudices and stereotypical beliefs about PwD. For example, Article 58 Clause 6 stated that “*The State has developed policies to invest in training and retraining in expertise, skills and pedagogical methods for vocational teachers for PwD*”. However, there are currently almost no other legal documents specifying when, where and how these training sessions might take place, or which agency is responsible for organizing and funding the training.

There should be guiding documents providing details on requirements to be eligible for tuition fee exemption and reduction, vocational training subsidy, food and accommodation allowance, means of transport and other activities in vocational training for PwD. The level of support should depend on the degree of disability and be in line with current market conditions to reduce external burdens as well as motivate and encourage PwD to actively participate in vocational training, enhance their skills, take advantage of the readily-available employment opportunities and bring stability to their life. The level of support for PwD in TVET should also be consistent with the State's policy on subsidies for beneficiaries of social security. Although the 2010 Law on PwD mentions some preferential treatments for vocational training institutions for PwD, there are hardly any legal documents specifying how these preferential policies should be implemented.

## 2.2. Legal Background Regarding PwD in the Labour Market

### 2.2.1. Incentives for Businesses in PwD Recruitment

In relation to motivations for enterprises to engage in PwD recruitment, the 2012 Labour Code stipulates that: “The State protects the rights to work and to self-employment of the disabled persons, and shall formulate policies to encourage and provide incentives for employers to create jobs for and employ disabled persons in accordance with the Law on Persons with Disabilities” (Article 176, Clause 1). On the other hand, the 2010 Law on PwD stipulates: “The State creates favourable conditions for PwD to restore their working ability, to receive free employment counselling, to be employed and to do jobs suitable to their health and characteristics” (Article 33, Clause 1).

The 2010 Law on PwD designates Chapter V for Vocational Training and Employment, which lays out the incentives for businesses employing PwD as follows:

#### **Article 34.** *Production and business establishments employing many persons with disabilities*

*Production and business establishments which employ persons with disabilities accounting for 30% or more of their total employees may receive supports for improvement of their working conditions and environment suitable to persons with disabilities; be exempt from enterprise income tax; borrow loans at preferential interest rates under production and business development projects; receive priority in land, ground and water surface lease and be exempt from rents of land, ground and water surface to serve production and business activities in proportion to the percentage of employees with disabilities, the degree of their disabilities and the size of enterprises.*

Decree No. 28/2012/ND-CP detailing and guiding the implementation of a number of Articles of the 2010 Law on PwD includes regulations on encouraging the self-employment of PwD and households to create jobs for PwD through the following preferential policies:

*Article 8. Encouraging self-employment of the disabled and households to provide employment for the disabled*

*1. Self-employed disabled people and households employing the disabled are eligible for the following policies:*

*a/ Taking low-interest loans from Social Policy Banks for production and business. The loan conditions, terms and amount must comply with current regulations on loans for job creation projects;*

*b/ Receiving instruction in production and business and support in technology transfer and product sale.*

In addition, Article 9 of Decree No. 28/2012/ND-CP further explains Article 34 of the 2010 Law on PwD, saying that production and business establishments employing 30% or more of employees with disabilities as stipulated in Article 34 of the Law on PwD shall enjoy preferential policies such as:

*Article 34. Law on PwD*

*a/ Receiving support for improving working conditions and environment suitable for the disabled as prescribed by the Ministry of Labour, War Invalids and Social Affairs. The support level depends on the number or official disabled employees working in the production and business establishments, their impairment level and scale of production and business establishments as prescribed by the Prime Minister. [...]*

*b/ Exempted from enterprise income tax in accordance with law provisions on tax;*

*c/ Receiving low-interest loans under the production and business development project from Social Policy Banks. The loan conditions, period, amount and interest rates must comply with current provisions on loans for job creation projects;*

*d/ Being prioritized when renting land and water surface as prescribed by law;*

*dd/ Exempted from land and water surface rents for production and business establishments that employ disabled people accounting for at least 70% of total employees. Receiving 50% reduction of land and water surface rents for production and business, for production and business establishments employing disabled people accounting for 30% to under 70% of total employees.*

According to the Vietnamese Private Enterprise Association, a large number of enterprises (9 out of 10 enterprises)<sup>6</sup> when in need of recruitment, are reluctant to employ disabled people because of the common belief claiming that their work capacity is not as productive as people without disabilities: these people cannot stand the high pressure of work, are unable to travel

<sup>6</sup> 90% of businesses are unlikely to recruit people with disabilities. Retrieved from <https://vtv.vn/xa-hoi/90-doanh-nghiep-khong-man-ma-tuyen-nguoi-khuyet-tat-20151203221649084.htm>



far and have weak health physically... In addition, businesses that hire PwD have not been able to fully enjoy their supposedly preferential treatments or favourable conditions, as compared with other businesses, even though this has been stipulated by law. Mr. Huynh Thanh Tuan, Director of Tobacco Factory of Company 27-7 in Ho Chi Minh City, said that his business had not been granted tax exemption or reduction as stated in Article 34 of the Disability Law 2010. The slow implementation of policies and law practices is the factor that hinders the employment of PwD<sup>7</sup>. Although, the Government has had major efforts to create favourable conditions for PwD to get jobs through preferential policies and laws for employers of PwD, according to Ms. Dinh Thi Thuy - Deputy Chief of Office of the National Committee for People with Disabilities Vietnam, support policies for businesses that employ PwD are not really effective since many businesses still refuse to recruit PwD. This is even more alarming in the context where many localities still face their own difficulties, thus unable to develop their own policies to support employment for PwD.<sup>8</sup>

### 2.2.2. Regulations on the Recruitment of PwD

#### General Regulations

While the 2012 Labour Code does not specify the recruitment and job placement for PwD, the 2010 Law on PwD has highlighted that:

#### *Article 33. Employment for persons with disabilities*

1. *The State shall create conditions for persons with disabilities to have their working functions rehabilitated, to receive free job advice, to be employed and perform jobs suitable to their health and characteristics.*
2. *Agencies, organizations, enterprises and individuals may neither refuse to recruit persons with disabilities who fully satisfy the recruitment conditions nor set recruitment criteria in violation of law in order to restrict working opportunities of persons with disabilities.*
3. *Agencies, organizations, enterprises and individuals employing persons with disabilities shall, depending on their specific conditions, arrange jobs and ensure the working conditions and environment suitable to these persons.*
4. *Agencies, organizations, enterprises and individuals employing persons with disabilities shall comply with the labor law concerning employees with disabilities.*
5. *Job placement organizations shall provide vocational training and job advice as well as job recommendation for persons with disabilities.*
6. *Self-employed persons with disabilities or households creating jobs for persons with disabilities may borrow loans at preferential interest rates for production and business activities and to be guided in production, technology transfer and receive support in product sales according to regulations of the Government.*

<sup>7</sup> Pham Phong (2017, December 4). "Businesses should be encouraged to employ people with disabilities". Retrieved from <https://doanhnhannhanviet.net.vn/doanh-nhan-doanh-nghiep/can-khuyen-khich-doanh-nghiep-nhan-nguoi-khuyet-tat-lam-viec-147.html>

<sup>8</sup> The Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs (2012, December 17). "The Need to supplement mechanisms and policies related to employment issues for people with disabilities". Retrieved from <http://www.molisa.gov.vn/vi/Pages/chitiettin.aspx?IDNews=25986>

Earlier before, the amended and supplemented 1994 Labour Code specified the proportion of disabled workers that enterprises must employ for some occupations and jobs, and the sanctions against enterprises that fail to comply with the regulations, including the obligation of contributing a sum of money to the employment fund to help resolving employment issues for PwD. At present, the 2012 Labour Code has abolished this regulation and replaced it with Article 176, stating that “The State protects the rights to work and to self-employment of disabled persons, and shall formulate policies to encourage and provide incentives for employers to create jobs and employ disabled persons in accordance with the Law on Persons with Disabilities” (Clause 1). Sharing the same spirit, the 2010 Law on PwD also does not enclose any provisions on a fixed proportion of PwD that an enterprise must employ but only incentives for businesses of which disabled employees accounts for 30% or more of its total number of employees.

It is noted these laws mainly encourage and incentivize employers to create jobs for PwD, but hardly impose any responsibility on enterprises for the employment of PwD. In fact, businesses are often reserved from hiring PwD for various reasons, including difficulties in communication due to their functional impairments<sup>9</sup>. Therefore, a regulation detailing the proportion of disabled workers that businesses are obliged to employ defined by sector and occupation suitable to PwD is likely to strengthen the opportunities for PwD to participate in the labour market.

### **Protecting the Welfare of PwD**

Protecting the welfare of PwD when they engage in labour relations is about guaranteeing their rights to limits on working time, rest periods and breaks, occupational safety and labour hygiene; helping PwD during their recovery and regenerating labour power; making them feel secure to work and commit to the production and business environment in the long run.

#### *i) Regulations on working time and rest periods*

Previously, the old 1994 Labour Code stipulated that the working time of workers with disabilities would be one hour less than their able-bodied counterparts, or no more than 7 hours per day. The current 2012 Labour Code, however, just sets out general working time for all employees without taking into account their physical conditions: “Normal working time must not exceed 08 hours per day or 48 hours per week” (Article 104, Clause 1). Workers with disabilities are thus treated similarly with their able-bodied counterparts and not given any preferential treatments on working time. The implementation of the 1994 Labour Code’s provision on preferential working time for disabled workers in practice has shown that employers had a negative disposition to recruit PwD because of their work-time limits. Although the new regulations in the 2012 Labour Code aim to create equal employment opportunities for PwD and other workers, it might be considered unfair in practice, especially for those with severe disabilities (possibly equivalent to a 41% decline in physical working capacity or more). A

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<sup>9</sup> Pham Phong (2017, December 4). “Businesses should be encouraged to employ people with disabilities”. Retrieved from <https://doanhnhannhanviet.net.vn/doanh-nhan-doanh-nghiep/can-khuyen-khich-doanh-nghiep-nhan-nguoi-khuyet-tat-lam-viec-147.html>



classification of working time limits by degree of disability of workers should be integrated in the Labour Code to better accommodate PwD participation in economic activities.

Although there is no priority in working time limits, the 2012 Labour Code still allows a greater number of annual leaves with full salary of 14 days per year for PwD instead of 12 days for other workers. This is an improvement of the 2012 Labour Code compared to the preceding 1994 Labour Code. The 2012 Labour Code also stipulates a ban on “employing a disabled person who has lost 51% or more of his/her working ability to work overtime or work at night” (Article 178, Clause 1).

#### *ii) Regulations on occupational safety and hygiene*

The 2012 Labour Code stipulates that: “An employer must ensure working conditions, working tools, occupational safety and hygiene standards suitable to disabled employees and take regular care of their health” (Article 177, Clause 1). In addition, Article 178, Clause 2 of the Law also prohibits “*Employing a disabled person to perform a heavy or dangerous job or a job exposed to toxic substances on the list issued by the Ministry of Labour - Invalids and Social Affairs in coordination with the Ministry of Health*”. This provision serves the purpose of ensuring the labour safety and health of PwD.

#### *iii) Regulations on health care*

Due to their physical impairments, PwD always need special attention, care, and rehabilitation to take control of and stabilize their lives. The 2012 Labour Code specifies: “Annually, an employer shall organize periodical health checks-up for employees, including apprentices and on-the-job trainees, obstetrics and gynaecology checks for female employees, and health checks-up at least once every 6 months for employees doing heavy and harmful jobs and disabled, minor and elderly employees” (Article 152, Clause 2).

Still, the 2012 Labour Code fails to set out requirements on medical examination and treatment allowances that employers are obliged to provide employees who are disabled due to labour accidents or occupational diseases in accordance with their degree of working capacity loss. For example, the Law on Social Insurance No. 58/2014/QH13 dated November 20, 2014 stipulates the rights to health care and rehabilitation support of PwD caused by labour accidents and occupational diseases through the provision of annual daily-life aid equipment and orthopaedic devices based on the conditions of their injuries or diseases (Article 49). In addition, the Law also specifies the attendance allowance for labour accidents and occupational diseases, saying that: “Employees suffering a working capacity decrease of 81% or more, such as spinal paralysis, total blindness, paraplegia, amputation of two legs or a mental disease, are entitled to not only the allowance specified in Article 47 of this Law but also a monthly attendance allowance equal to the basic salary” (Article 50). Likewise, there should be guiding decrees to further explain the Labour Code’s provisions on medical examination and treatment allowances for PwD, as well as to facilitate the implementation of these regulations in practice.

In addition to provisions on employer’s responsibility for subsidizing health care and rehabilitation for disabled workers, it is desirable that the Labour Code will cover regulations on health care and rehabilitation support for PwD using resources from the State budget, such as from employment funds for PwD. As PwD themselves are burdened with serious health problems which significantly constrain their working capacity, many of them still face with extreme economic difficulties. A provision promoting formal support from the State budget could

help ease some of PwD's major difficulties and motivate them to participate more actively in economic activities as well as to work more effectively.

*iv) Protect the honour, dignity and reputation of PwD*

The 2012 Labour Code strictly prohibits any forms of discrimination on the basis of disabilities (Article 8), which is in accordance with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These principles were set to govern labour relations in order to prevent discrimination against PwD from employers, protect the honour, dignity and reputation of PwD, and ensure equality between PwD and their able-bodied counterparts through guaranteed labour rights.

However, the 2012 Labour Code does not clearly define acts of discrimination, leaving loopholes for employment discrimination against PwD not easily identified. This is inconsistent with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities where a comprehensive list of discriminatory acts in employment are defined: "Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions" (Article 27, Clause 1, Point a). It is important that lawmakers learn from international best practices and appropriately adapt the rules to the national context, thereby developing unified definitions of discriminating acts against PwD in employment to ensure compliance and assist the inspection, supervision and timely handling of violations of the rights of PwD in the labour market.

The 2012 Labour Code also has provisions that prohibit infringement on the honour, dignity and reputation of workers in general, but does not put much emphasis on the protection of honour, dignity and reputation of PwD when they engage in labour relations given their disadvantageous and vulnerable status. While the related provision applies to all workers, disabled and able-bodied alike, there are hardly any regulations on specific sanction schemes to protect their rights and interests when they are violated. It is vital that the identification of acts of violation on the honour, dignity and reputation of workers, particularly those who are disabled, along with a comprehensive sanction scheme against such acts be further laid out in future guiding documents.

Furthermore, the 2012 Labour Code also prescribes that "An employer shall consult with disabled employees before deciding on matters involving their rights and interests" (Article 177, Clause 2), which complies with the principles of international law on the protection of PwD rights. Preferably, employers should also consult with legal representatives and organizations representing PwD, such as trade unions. Given PwD's physical and/or mental disadvantages, they might not be in the best condition to comprehend and be well-informed of all labour issues and their protected rights. It is necessary that relevant representatives and organizations represent PwD and their legitimate rights and interests to ensure objective decisions of the employers and protect the rights of the disadvantaged in labour relations.

## **Regulations on Sanctions for Violations of the Rights of PwD**

The application of sanctions is one of the highly deterrent and effective measures to prevent and handle violations of the rights of disadvantaged groups, including PwD in labour relations. Administrative responsibilities may apply to organizations and individuals that violate the rights of PwD but not to the extent of being examined for penal liability in accordance with the law.

Decree No. 95/2013/ND-CP dated August 22, 2013 stipulates the sanctioning of administrative violations against labour regulations as follows: “Discrimination by gender, race, social class, marriage, religion, discrimination against HIV sufferers and the disabled shall carry a fine of from 5,000,000 VND to 10,000,000 VND” (Article 25, Clause 2). Furthermore, this decree also stipulates the level of penalties for administrative violations with all acts of infringement on the rights of workers in general. However, given PwD’s personal and physiological characteristics, they are entitled to special protection measures of the law to ensure equal rights with their able-bodied counterparts in participating in labour relations. To compare, Articles 9 to 17 of Decree 144/2013/ND-CP on Regulations on Sanctioning Administrative Violations on Social Protection & Support and Children's Protection And Care provide more specific regulations on penalties for violations of rights and interests of PwD, with examples including discrimination, physical abuse, not guaranteeing facilities in teaching, vocational training, working environment, refusing to recruit PwD, etc. Decree No. 95/2013/ND-CP also fails to clearly define discriminatory acts that are considered violations of the rights of workers with disabilities, which legally serves as the basis for law enforcement agencies to identify and determine violating acts and appropriately apply the sanctions.

Improvements should be made to the legal system regarding sanctions for violations of the rights and benefits of workers with disabilities. Recommended tasks shall include supplementing the definitions of discriminatory acts against PwD, standards of essential infrastructure and facilities for vocational training and working environment by different types of disability. This will better engage TVET centres and enterprises in promoting TVET and employment for PwD, without violating the rights and benefits of PwD. At the same time, this will assist law enforcement agencies in supervising compliance and appropriating administering law enforcement measures.

### *2.2.3. Barriers for PwD in the Labour Market*

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According to *Elimination of Discrimination - Views and Assessment of People with Disabilities* (ISEE, 2017), among the interviewees that are working, almost half (20 out of 42 people) had reportedly been discriminated because of their disability while working. Discrimination behaviours might take many forms, but they often involved some form of exclusion or rejection in terms of recruitment, wages, employment contracts, working hours, or vocational training opportunities. Yet, the Vietnam Labour law system have not provided specific regulations on discrimination in recruitment and employment of disabled labourers, and the regulations on employment for PwD are incomplete and often lack binding mechanisms to ensure enforcement. In addition, a number of provisions in the Labour Code on the rights of PwD such as regulations on working time, rest periods, health care, and welfare for PwD, etc. have not been elaborated with guiding documents, which leaves loopholes for debate and chances for violations of the rights of PwD arising in implementation in practice. Regulations on monitoring mechanisms and methods to strengthen enforcement are also missing.

The provisions of the 2012 Labour Code on employment for PwD just provide fairly general orientations of the responsibilities of the State in policy making, yet do not detail regulations

on recruitment regimes or the responsibility of employers in creating jobs for PwD. For example, the law does not prohibit employers from checking the disability status of applicants before recruiting for jobs where disabilities do not affect work performance, or conducting behaviours suggesting discrimination of applications, etc. PwD often suffer certain degrees of working capacity loss, so it is desirable that the labour law stipulate the responsibilities of the State and employers in rehabilitating their working capacity along with providing other support to help PwD sustain their employment and life.

One barrier for PwD is their lack of access to information on their legal rights and benefits. Many PwD are not fully informed of their rights and benefits in TVET and employment for reasons such as being underrepresented in the community, lack of communication, etc. These PwD might thus not be aware even when their legal rights and benefits are violated; also in cases where they understand that their rights are being violated, they usually lack knowledge of where and how to file a complaint to reclaim their rights and benefits. According to the results of consultations over the right to access information for people with disabilities in 4 groups in Hanoi, the Counselling Centre for Disabled Persons in Hanoi (ICC) shows that there are up to 85% of people with disabilities unaware of the right to access information and only 23% of people with disabilities said they were able to respond to the information - while the information was demanded to reach at least 92% of people with disabilities in total.<sup>10</sup>

Another shortcoming is that the Government has not yet issued an official document to regulate the mechanism of development, managing and administering employment funds for PwD in place of Decision 71/2005/QĐ-TTg (on the Mechanism of Managing and Administering the Loan Capital of The National Fund for Employment) and Decision No. 15/2008/QĐ-TTg (Amending and Supplementing a Number of Articles in Decision 71/2005/QĐ-TTg). Article 176, Clause 2 of the 2012 Labour Code regulates that: “The Government shall stipulate the policy on providing concessional loans from the National Employment Fund for employers who employ disabled persons”. However, there have not been any documents guiding the implementation of this regulation in the Labour Code. Moreover, State agencies have yet to implement the regulations on management and use of the fund, and very few provinces across the country have developed employment funds for PwD. It is crucial that the Government issues guiding documents on the implementation of employment funds for PwD to provide the basis for enforcement and effective use of this fund.

Although PwD are prioritized with preferential treatments on labour policies such as those on working time and rest time, it is debatable that such preferential treatments for PwD could on the contrary become a potential barrier for them in the labour market. With more protected rights and preferential treatments attached with disabled workers, the employers will likely be incentivized to instead opt for non-disabled workers to get away with obligations regarding PwD. This in turn limits PwD participation in the labour market, which is counterproductive to the intentions of the policy makers. In order to resolve the issue, policy makers might consider

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<sup>10</sup> Ensure the right to access information for people with disabilities Retrieved from <http://daibieunhandan.vn/default.aspx?tabid=81&NewsId=408196>

leaving some room for discussion and mutual agreement between employers and PwD on working conditions such as overtime employment, night work, etc., provided that some basic requirements are met, for example: employers must ensure safety conditions for PwD, or disabled workers are guaranteed to be in healthy condition to perform the jobs. Instead of setting out a rigid ban, the provisions should lay the ground for monitoring and accommodating PwD employment in a way that should strike a balance of interests between both the employers and disabled workers when taking part in labour relations.

As Mr. Dao Van Tien - Head of the Regular Vocational Training Department addressed, the policies providing tax and loan incentives for organizations and businesses employing a certain percentage of PwD did motivate businesses in recruiting PwD, but that alone did not suffice. One must accept that PwD are usually at a disadvantage to their able-bodied counterparts when it comes to labor productivity. Policy makers must thus study policies to support 10 to 20 per cent of labor wage norms to businesses to ensure their disabled workers are not discriminated in terms of wage. An alternative is to support the costs of social insurance, health insurance for workers with disabilities, which is currently applied to ethnic minorities. These recommendations of policies all aim to better support enterprises when they recruit PwD, which in turn promises better job opportunities for PwD (Family & Children Magazine, 2014).

### 3. PARTICIPATION OF PWD IN TVET

Following the above review of the statutory framework that supports PwD attendance in career and educational programmes, further discussions are needed to explore how the provisions on PwD in TVET are understood and translated into practice. Indeed, the surveys conducted in Bac Ninh and HCMC have brought about some valuable information regarding the participation of PwD of the two localities in vocational training – which may provide some insights into the overall picture of the participation of PwD in TVET and implications for future improvement of PwD training.

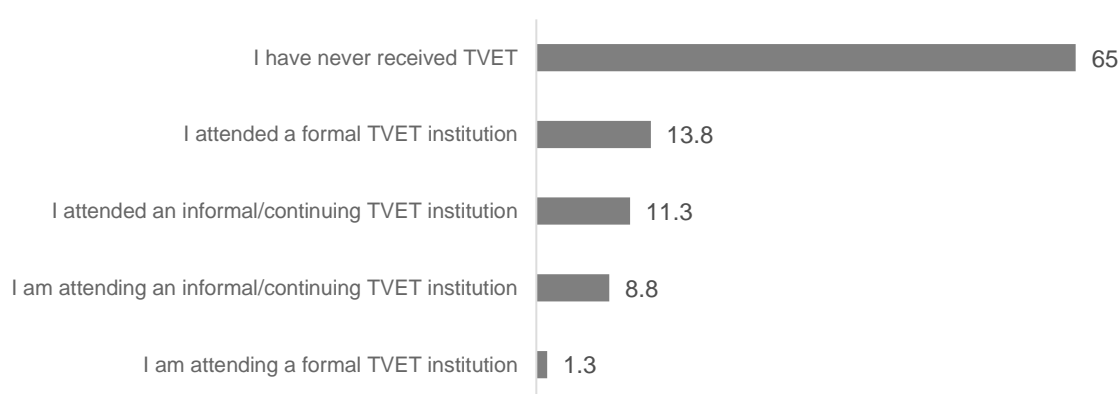
In particular, the first sub-section provides descriptive data on the general status of PwD enrolment in TVET in the two surveyed provinces, such as types of TVET institutes and degree or reasons for TVET enrolment. Apart from interviews with local PwD, the research team also collected information about the current situation of PwD's participation in two TVET colleges through observation of college staff, teachers, and their nondisabled students to add up more realism to the arguments. Finally, PwD's future needs for TVET is one of the elements that this initial evaluation should include to be considered reasonably well-rounded. Therefore, the section will end with a short summary of PwD's educational aspirations with respect to their desirable future careers.

#### 3.1. Current Situation in Bac Ninh and HCMC

##### 3.1.1. *Types of TVET institutions and Degree*

##### Types of TVET institutions that PwD attended

Figure 1. Participation of PwD in TVET (unit: %)



Out of 80 respondents from the two surveyed provinces, only 12 have attended/are attending a formal TVET institution, 16 have studied/are studying in an informal TVET institution, while 52 have never participated in TVET at all. The participation rate in formal TVET is reportedly higher in HCMC than in Bac Ninh Province, with 75.0% of respondents already trained or undergoing training at formal TVET institutions residing in HCMC. Most of the respondents

with hearing losses and/or speech disorders have participated/are participating in TVET at informal institutions. On the other hand, 71.4% of people with vision impairment who have been trained or are undergoing training have attended/are attending formal TVET institutions.

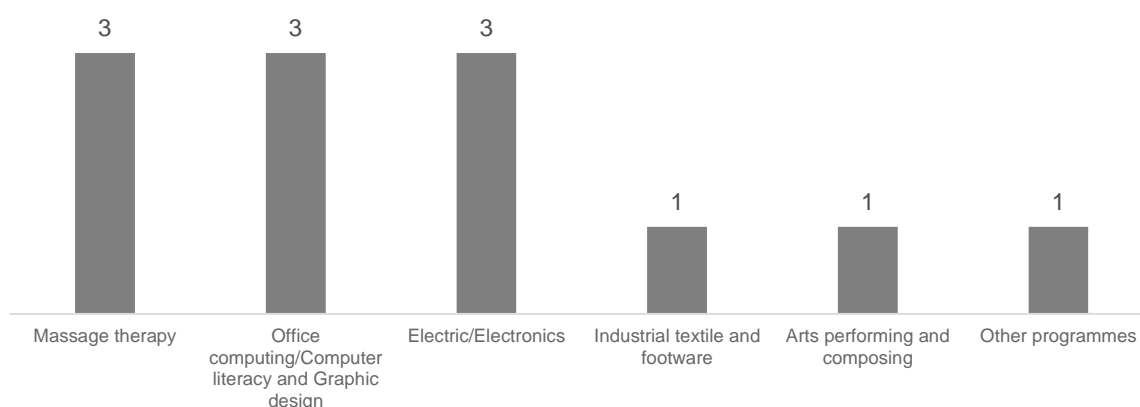
### Degree levels that PwD obtained

Out of 12 PwD who have participated/are participating in TVET, 7 have taken short-term training courses, 2 have obtained vocational high school diploma, and only 1 have graduated with vocational college degree. Most of the respondents with severe and extremely severe disabilities only received short-term training (80.0% and 66.7% of the two groups, respectively), except for one case where a person with very severe vision impairment has obtained a vocational college degree. PwD who have participated/are participating in TVET in HCMC are mainly short-term trainees. Nevertheless, the number of PwD in Bac Ninh spread more evenly between all vocational levels (1 person obtained short-term certificate, 1 person obtained vocational high school diploma, 1 person studied at a vocational college but dropped out after 1 year).

### TVET programmes that PwD attended

Among 12 respondents who have attended formal TVET institutions, 4 have received integrated training together with people without disabilities, and 8 have attended special TVET courses exclusively for PwD. One third of the PwD who have attended these special courses are people with vision impairment. In terms of gender, all female respondents have attended special courses exclusively for PwD, while 4 out of 7 male respondents have received integrated training. 7 out of 9 respondents who received exclusive training are from HCMC.

Figure 2. TVET programmes enrolled by respondents



*Massage therapy, Office Computing/Computer Literacy and Graphic Design, and Electric/Electronics are the most popular fields that surveyed PwD have attended or are attending at formal TVET institutions. When categorised by type of disabilities, respondents with mobility disabilities have attended/are attending Office Computing/Computer Literacy and Graphic Design programme (2 out of 5 people), Electric/Electronics programme (2 out of 5 people), and Industrial Textile and Footwear programme (1 out of 5 people); Respondents with vision impairment have chosen Massage therapy programme (3 out of 5 people), Arts Performing*

and Composing programme (1 out of 5 people) and IT Programming (1 out of 5 people); One respondent with mental and psychiatric disability has taken Electric/Electronics programme. The results imply a rough idea of the TVET programmes that PwD of each type of disability may have perceived as suitable for them.

### 3.1.2. Types of TVET Institutes and Degree

#### Choosing TVET institutes

Among reasons for choosing a TVET institution, “The TVET institution provides TVET courses suitable for PwD” is the most popular (chosen by 6 out of 13 respondents), followed by “Friends or relatives have previously attended courses at the institution”, “the tuition fees are affordable”, “the TVET institution has supporting equipment and infrastructure for PwD”.

Figure 3. Main reasons for choosing TVET institutes (Unit: % of choices)



*People with different types of disabilities have different motivations for attending the institution.* Among the 6 respondents who chose to attend the institutions because of the availability of suitable courses, 4 people are those with visual disabilities. People with mental and psychiatric disabilities seem to care about the experience and referral of their family and friends, while people with mobility disabilities consider the training costs and facilities of the institution. Surprisingly, people with mobility disabilities did not choose to attend the institution for its travel convenience, instead, they cared about other factors such as affordable tuition fees or recommendations from family and friends. The two reasons least chosen by respondents are “convenient location for traveling” and “job opportunities after graduation”.

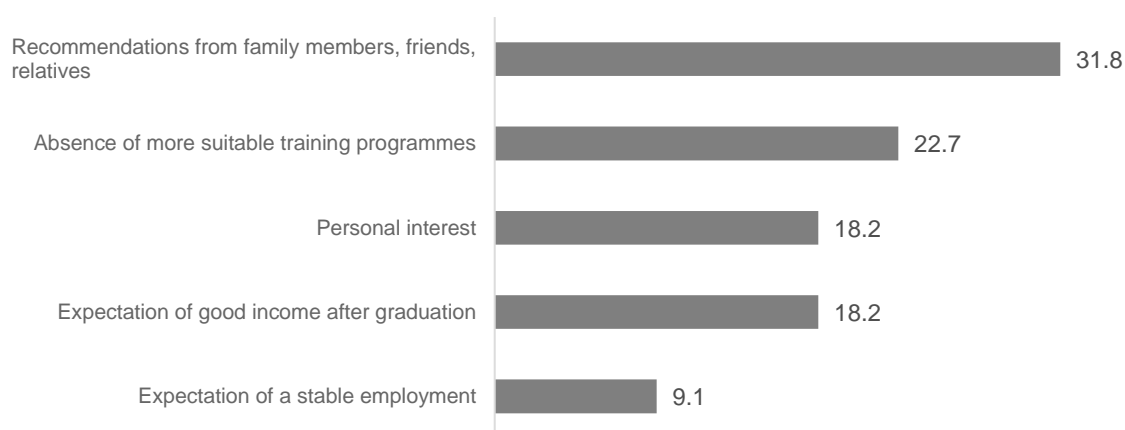
*Gender differences in motivations for enrolling at TVET institutions have been recorded.* Male respondents are mostly motivated to attend the institute because there are suitable programmes for them whereas female respondents prefer to enrol in an institute where their relatives or friends have previously attended, or where the training expenses are affordable, or where equipment and facilities display good quality.



## Choosing TVET programmes

Most respondents confirmed that they heard about the TVET programme through family members or friends (7 out of 12 respondents). One third of the respondents sought information on the internet themselves, and one fourth learned about the programme on mass media (television, newspaper, etc.). Access to information from social media, career counselling centre, locally organized career-oriented events, or former teachers and school staff seems not common as only few to none of the respondents mentioned these sources. 3 out of 4 respondents in Bac Ninh reported that their source of information about their enrolled programmes were family members and friends, while the frequently discussed information source of those in HCMC were family members and friends, and the internet (each was mentioned by 4 out of 9 people).

Figure 4. Main reasons for choosing TVET programmes (Unit: % of choices)



The choice of training fields and programmes were usually made according to recommendations from parents and peer pressure, or the respondent's personal interest, or in the expectation of a decent income after graduation. 4 out of 5 respondents with visual disability did specify their expectation of good income for their choice of training programme. This implies that Massage therapy, Arts Performing and Composing, and IT Programming are careers that are believed to provide a good source of income to visually impaired respondents. On the contrary, all of the 5 respondents with mobility disabilities did not choose "Expectation of good income after graduation" as their motivation for enrolling in their chosen training programme. "Expectation of a stable career after graduation" was notably not chosen by any of the respondents with mobility disabilities either.

Gender wise, 5 out of 7 male respondents admitted that they attended the chosen training programme because they were advised by parents and friends. Among female respondents, "absence of more suitable training programmes" is the most popular reason answered by 4 out of 5 respondents. More than half of the respondents did not regret their vocational training decision.

### 3.1.3. PwD Enrolment in BCI and HVCT

The predecessor of HVCT is the Central Vocational School for Handicapped people II, established by MOLISA in 1987, which was a specialized vocational school for PwD. By 2007, the school was upgraded to Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology which includes training programmes for people without disabilities. Since then, most students of HVCT are non-disabled, and according to its management staff, in recent years, *there have been no students with disabilities studying at this school*. Also, on the same note, when asked if there were any PwD attending vocational training at the college, *BCI management officials stated that there were no PwD at their school*. As claimed by BCI staff, the number of PwD in the community has recently decreased because of the development of medical technology, especially, prenatal screening which has helped eliminate birth defects. Cases of disabilities due to accidents still exist but in much smaller number. In addition, the province also has developed many centres for vocational training and support exclusively for PwD. Therefore, the key management staff at BCI believed that most PwD had entered specialized vocational training centres for PwD, and that the number of PwD in regular vocational training institutes was negligible, hence the absence of PwD at BCI.

However, the answers collected from students at the 2 surveyed schools are quite different from the information provided by the schools' management boards. *Of the 70 students interviewed, 23 answered that there were students with disabilities at their school* (17 students in HVCT, 6 students in BCI), 27 answered that there were no students with disabilities at their school (8 students in HVCT, 19 students in BCI), and 20 were not aware of the status of PwD at the college. All of the 23 students who claimed that there were students with disabilities at their school also confirmed that the school allowed inclusive education.

Of the 40 school staff and teachers interviewed, 37 have been teaching or have taught vocational training programmes in the past 5 years. Industrial electronics is the programme most participated by the respondents, with 18 out of 37 people having been engaged in the programme, followed by industrial electrical engineering (15 out of 37 people). 6 out of 18 teachers in Industrial electronics also reported that they had experienced training PwD students, while the figure for Industrial electrical engineering is 5 out of 10 people. Other programmes where PwD have participated include Corporate Accounting, Air Conditioning Engineering, Information Technology and Graphic design, although the number of PwD who have been trained in these programmes are only one to two people (Table 6).

Table 6. Programmes with PwD Participation

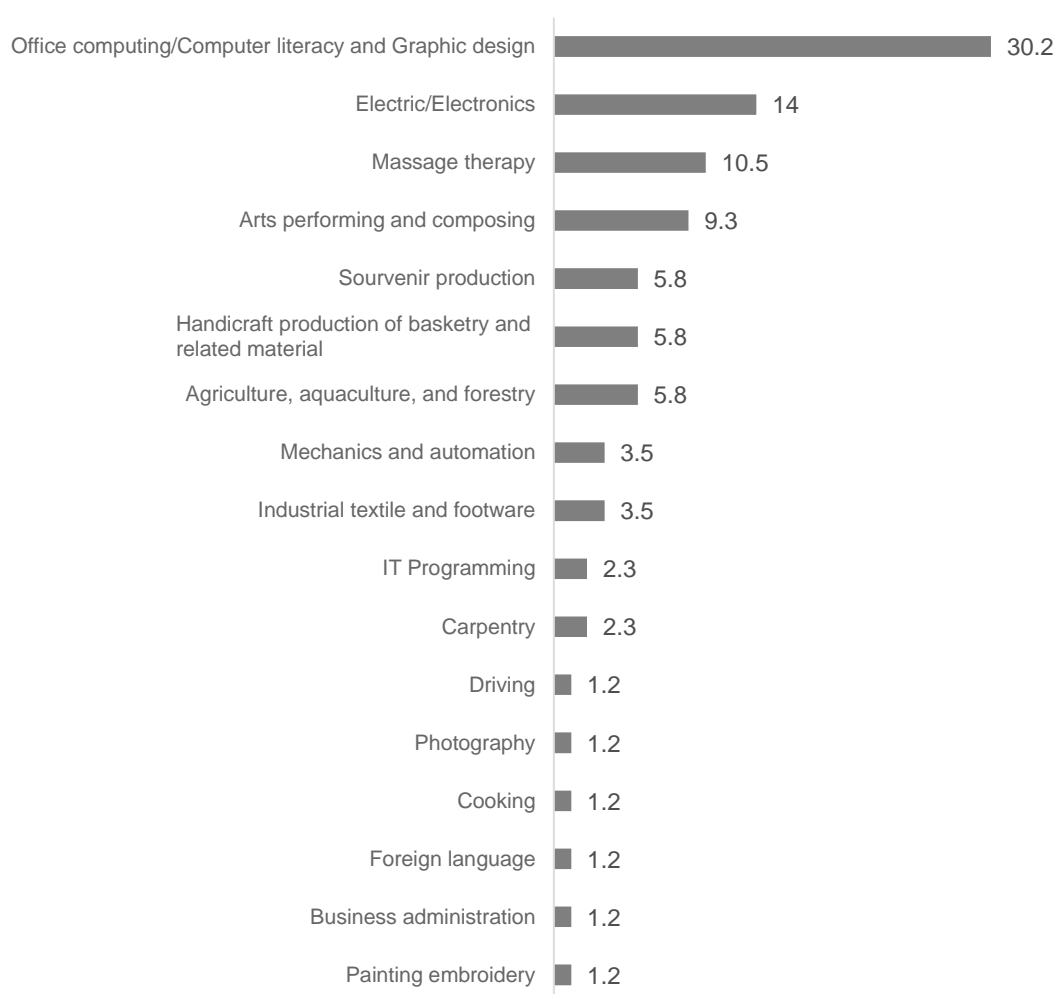
Programme	Have you participated in training PwD in this programme?		
	Yes	No	Total
Industrial Electronics	6	12	18
Industrial Electricity	5	10	15
Corporate accounting	2	2	4
Air conditioning engineering	1	1	2

Programme	Have you participated in training PwD in this programme?		
	Yes	No	Total
Information Technology	1	2	3
Graphic design	1	0	1
Others	0	28	28
Total	55	16	71

### 3.2. Future Needs for TVET

The demand for TVET has been observably significant: 63.5% of the respondents who have never participated in TVET wish to be trained, and 75.0% of those who have already received TVET wish to continue their TVET (further TVET participation includes training in a different field at a different TVET institute from the programme and institute that the respondent attended). *Respondents with mobility disabilities and those with vision impairments typically expressed stronger aspirations for TVET or further training than those with mental and psychiatric disabilities and intellectual disabilities. Surveyed PwD under 30 years old also seem more interested in pursuing TVET or further training than those already in their 30s.* Among the respondents who have never received TVET, HCMC respondents are apparently more enthusiastic about participating in TVET than those in Bac Ninh, which can be attributable to the demographic differences between the two provinces: respondents in HCMC are typically younger than those in Bac Ninh, and all visually impaired respondents reside in HCMC while those with mental and psychiatric disabilities and intellectual disabilities are all from Bac Ninh. 47.7% of those who want to receive/continue to receive TVET wish to be trained on-the-job at their workplace, while 36.4% consider going to a formal TVET institute.

Figure 5. TVET programmes that PwD wish to pursue (Unit: % of choices)



*Office computing/Computer literacy and Graphic design, Electric/Electronics, and Massage therapy remain the 3 most popular fields that PwD wish to pursue. Craft making comes in next, including work such as souvenir making, handicraft production of basketry and related materials. Although both are in the technical field, unlike electric/electronics, mechanics and automation are reportedly not appealing fields for PwD, accounting for only 3.5% of all answers, since many respondents consider this a strenuous job not suitable for their physical and mental conditions.*

Office computing/computer literacy and graphic design seems popular among both male and female respondents and favoured by the majority (66.7%) of respondents with hearing losses and/or speech disorders, those with mobility disabilities (60%), and vision impairments (60%). On the other hand, electric/electronics is preferred by respondents with mental and psychiatric disabilities and intellectual disabilities (50%) and those over 25 years old. Remarkably, while office computing/computer literacy and graphic design is popular in HCMC, with 71.9% of HCMC respondents wishing to pursue this field, 56.3% of respondents from Bac Ninh favour electric/electronics (the figure for HCMC is less than 10%). Despite being among the top 3

most popular fields, massage therapy is prominent mostly among visually impaired respondents and more appealing to female respondents than their male counterparts. Notably, no respondent from Bac Ninh wished to pursue handicraft production of basketry and related materials, despite the province's being home to many traditional craft villages.

Among those who do not wish to participate or continue TVET, 41.7% stated their physical and/or mental health conditions as a discouragement from TVET. Other reported reasons for their lack of interest in TVET including desire to enter the labour market immediately (20.8%), and little or no intention to pursue further study as the respondents believed they had obtained sufficient knowledge and skills for their job (12.5%). Poor health conditions are more commonly mentioned by respondents with mobility disabilities and mental and psychiatric disabilities, those in their 30s, and male respondents. Notably, no respondents from HCMC cited their health conditions as the reasons they did not want to pursue or continue TVET, likely because HCMC respondents are typically younger than those in Bac Ninh.

## 4. ASSESSMENT OF TVET INSTITUTE REGARDING INCLUSION OF PwD

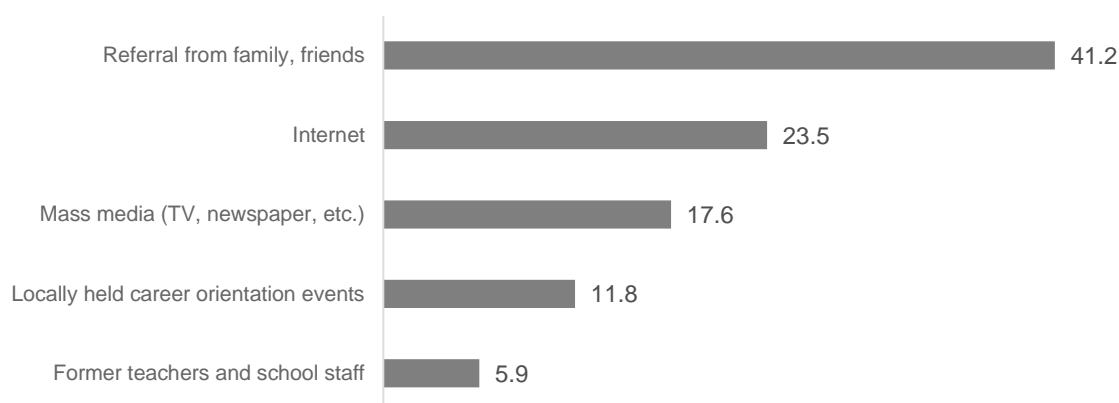
As findings on the participation of PwD students in TVET plainly reflect an enormous demand for TVET of this group, to a large extent, factors influencing the inclusion of PwD in such educational programmes need to be carefully examined to provide a more in-depth understanding of the real situation and help address discouraging factors. Accordingly, the next section tries to look deeper into the context and cover a wide range of aspects that might impact the functioning of TVET institutes as well as the enrolment of PwD students in these schools. Specifically, they include the implementation of admission policy, the diversity of training programmes, the involvement of training staff, the interaction of non-disabled students, the availability of needed infrastructure and equipment, the accessibility of career development and employment service, and the level of knowledge of policies and regulations regarding PwD in TVET.

Based on the results of the general survey with PwD in Bac Ninh and HCMC, PwD students' evaluation of the level of suitability and support for PwD at the TVET institutes they have attended shall be summarized and analysed thoroughly. Meanwhile, the surveys conducted in the two local TVET colleges will be employed to evaluate their own readiness for inclusion of PwD in training. While acting as an interesting case study for the research, the findings deducted from the two colleges' statistical records are expected to strengthen the conclusions drawn from general interviews with local PwD, thereby contributing to the formulation of a more comprehensive view of reality. The assessment is carried out from the viewpoints of both the staff and teachers working at BCI and HVCT, as well as the nondisabled students attending the two colleges.

### 4.1. Admission Policy

In general, formal TVET institutions seem to have been quite active in reaching out to potential students, including PwD, via diverse channels. According to the results of the survey, 7 out of the 12 respondents who are receiving or have received TVET from formal institutions reportedly learned of the TVET institution and their available programmes from family and friends' referral. 4 respondents mentioned the internet, and 3 brought up mass media platforms including television, newspaper, etc. as the sources of enrolment information. Locally organized career orientation events were also cited by 2 respondents when describing how they obtained the information on TVET institutions and programmes. On the other hand, "lack of access to enrolment information" was also one of the challenges to PwD participation in TVET that were less frequently discussed, accounting for only 6.2% of all answers.

Figure 6. Source of information of TVET programmes (Unit: % of choices)



Although the State has been encouraging vocational education and training institutions to enrol people with disabilities for integrated training with nondisabled students, a significant number of PwD still choose to attend institutions specialized for PwD. Among the surveyed respondents who have attended formal TVET institutions, 66.7% have taken special TVET courses exclusively for PwD, and 33.3% have taken integrated training together with people without disabilities.

All respondents who are attending or have attended TVET institutions, either formal or continuing, were asked if they had received counselling from the institutions' staff and/or teachers on programmes/trades suitable to their disabilities upon enrolment. Nearly 60% of the surveyed respondents reported that they had never received any of such admission counselling, while 40% admitted they had been counselled before enrolling to the chosen programmes. Notably, the results suggest that those who are going to or have attended formal TVET institutions are less likely to receive admission counselling than those in informal institutions, with only 16.7% being counselled before enrolment while the figure for those in informal TVET reaching 60%.

## 4.2. Training Programmes

Generally, half of the respondents who are receiving or have received TVET from a formal institution explained that the institution's offering of suitable training programmes was one of the main reasons for their selection of TVET institution. This explanation was particularly prominent among respondents with visual disability and those residing in HCMC. Other common motivations include referral from family members and/or friends who have attended the same institution, affordable tuition fees, and adequate supporting infrastructure for PwD.

Among the 11 discussed challenges to PwD participation in TVET, "lack of suitable training programmes/trades" was also ranked the fourth most common challenge, accounting for 8.8% of all answers, following "poor health conditions", "unable to afford tuition fees", and "inadequate supporting infrastructure for PwD". Noticeably, respondents with visual disability were again those who reported this challenge most frequently, with 45.5% of surveyed respondents with visual disability reckoned that they were concerned about the availability of

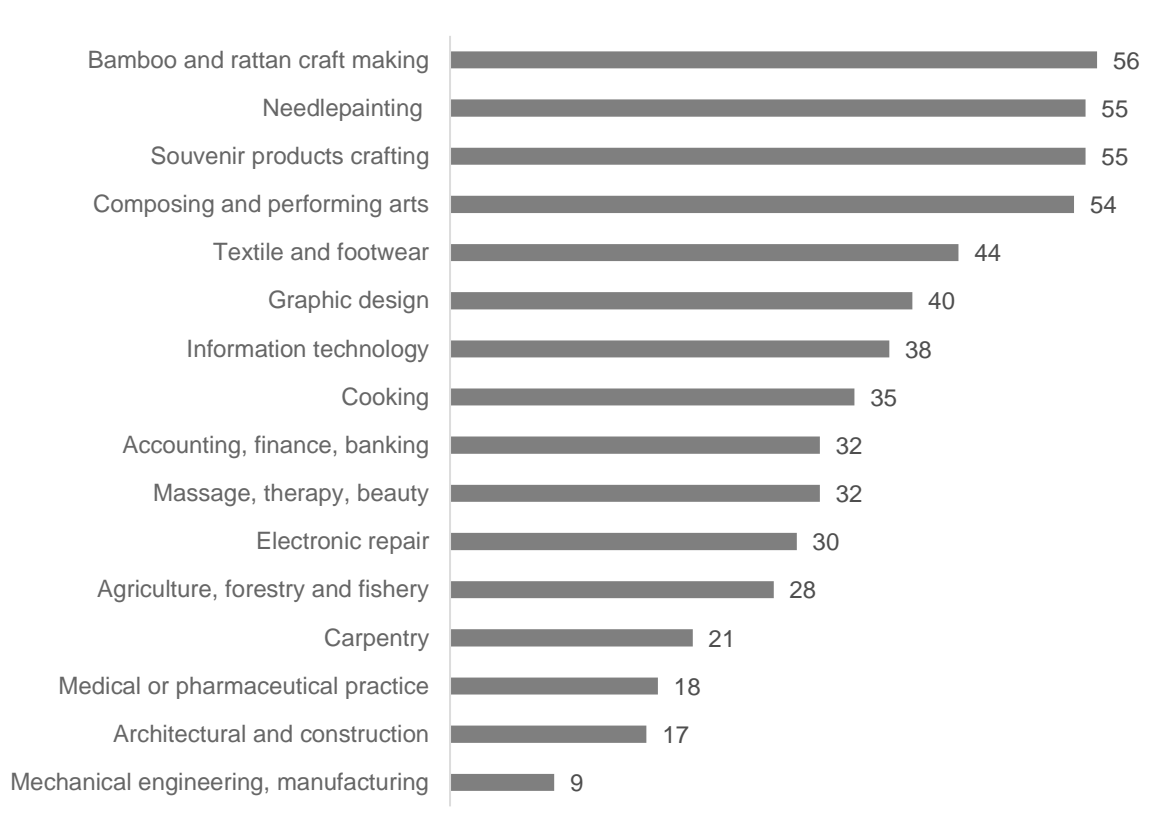
suitable training programmes/trades. Respondents in HCMC were also more attentive to the lack of suitable training programmes/trades than those in Bac Ninh.

This does not necessarily reflect the assumption that formal TVET institutions in Bac Ninh scored higher than those in HCMC in terms of the suitability of offered programmes/trades. It rather suggests that respondents in HCMC might merely be more concerned about the suitability of offered training programmes/trades than those in Bac Ninh, considering the results that respondents in Bac Ninh tend to select institutions where their family members and/or friends have previously attended, or they can easily commute to, regardless of the institution's course offerings. This can be explained by the differences in demographics between respondents in HCMC and those in Bac Ninh: respondents residing in Bac Ninh are typically older (50% of respondents in Bac Ninh are from 31 to 40 years old, while 82.5% of respondents in HCMC are in their 20s) and score lower in educational attainment (72.5% of Bac Ninh respondents have not finished upper secondary school or lower educational level, while 70% of HCMC respondents have graduated upper secondary school and 27.5% have completed university).

*Meanwhile, according to the results of the surveys carried out in the two local TVET colleges, PwD are perceived by non-disabled students to be most capable of learning bamboo and rattan craft making (56 out of 70 respondents), needle painting (55 out of 70 respondents), souvenir product crafting (55 out of 70 respondents) and composing & performing arts (54 out of 70 respondents). Other popular training programmes like mechanical engineering, manufacturing, architectural and construction, or medical and pharmaceutical practice are thought to less likely suit PwD (Figure 7).*

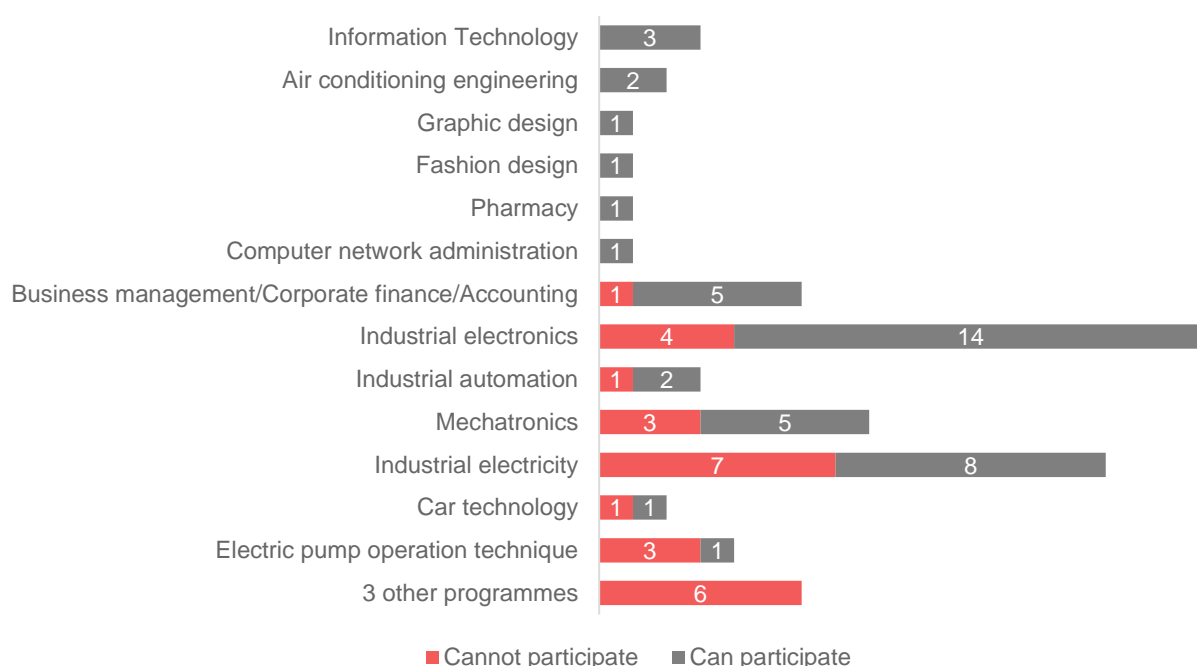


*Figure 7. Programmes that PwD can participate in (acc. to students)*



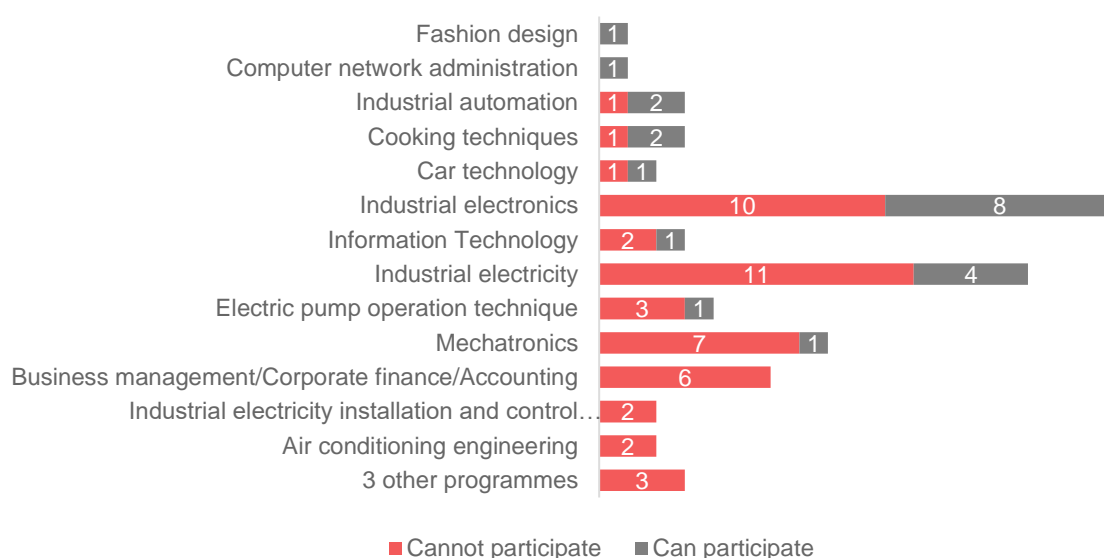
Despite their limited experience in training PwD, school staff and teachers of the two colleges who have participated in Graphic Design, Fashion Design, Pharmacy and Computer Network Administration consistently believed that people with mobility disabilities could undergo training in these programmes. At the same time, Information Technology, Air Conditioning Engineering, Business Management, Corporate Finance, Accounting, Industrial Electronics, Industrial Automation, Mechatronics and Industrial Electricity are programmes where most of the interviewed staff were positive about the participation possibility of people with mobility disabilities. Nevertheless, people with mobility disabilities are perceived to be unlikely to participate in Cooking techniques, Industrial electricity installation and control engineering, and Industrial welding training programmes (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Programmes that people with mobility disability can participate in (acc. to school staffs)



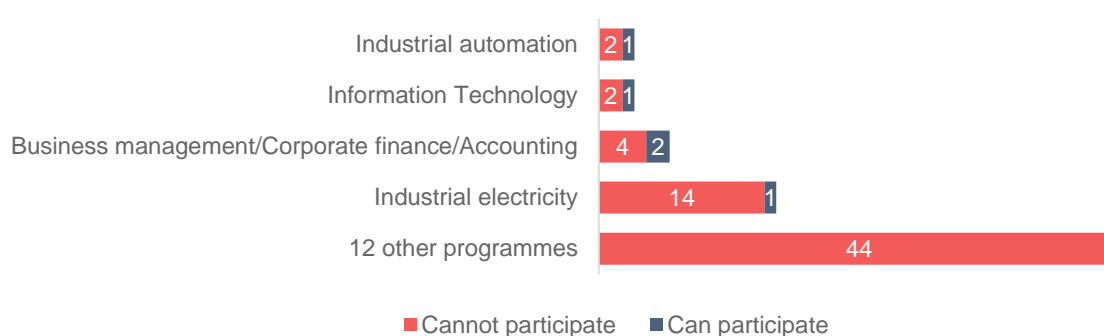
On another note, people with hearing – speech impairment are thought to be most likely to participate in Fashion Design, Computer Network Administration, Industrial Automation, Cooking Techniques, Car Technology and Industrial Electronics. Business Management/Corporate Finance/Accounting, Industrial Electricity Installation and Control Engineering, Air Conditioning Engineering, Pharmacy, Graphic Design, and Industrial Welding are thought to be sectors which students with hearing difficulties and/or speech disorders are not capable of joining (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Programmes which people with Hearing/Speech impairment can participate in (acc. to school staffs)



It is noteworthy that *the interviewed school staff and teachers seem to share the view that the ability to participate in TVET of people with vision impairment, intellectual disability and mental & psychiatric disability was much lower than those of the two types of disability mentioned above*. Very few respondents believed that people with vision impairments could be trained on Industrial Automation, Information Technology, Business Management/Corporate Finance/Accounting or Industrial Electricity, while only one respondent reckoned that people with intellectual disability could participate in TVET (in Industrial Electricity programme) and similarly only one school staff was confident of the possibility that people with mental and psychiatric disability could receive vocational training (also in Industrial Electricity programme) (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Programmes which people with vision impairment can participate in (acc. to school staffs)



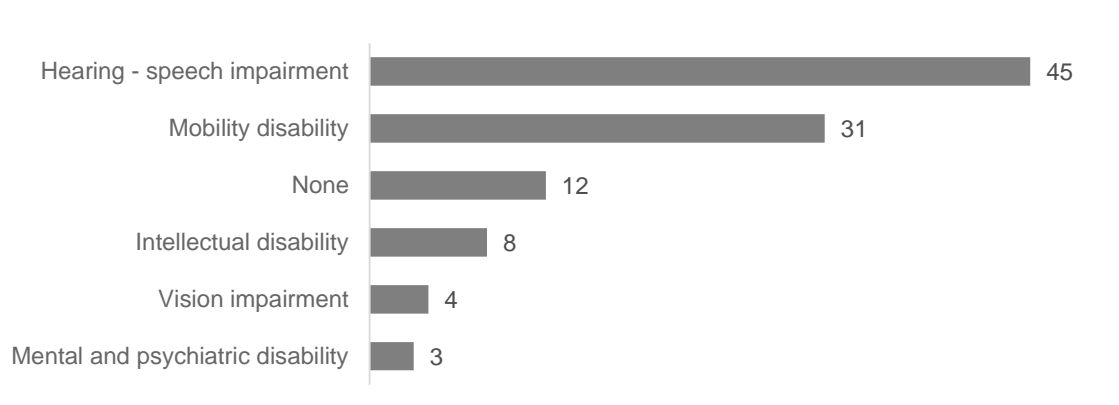
*Programmes where PwD participation was thought to be restricted regardless of their type of disability are Industrial Electricity Installation and Control Engineering, Industrial Welding, and Electric Pump Operation Technique (Table 7).*

Table 7. Programmes that people with any type of disabilities cannot participate in (acc. to school staffs)

	Number of teachers of the corresponding programme	Number of teachers who think that PwD cannot study this programme	% of teachers who think that PwD cannot study this programme
Industrial electricity installation and control engineering	2	2	100%
Industrial welding	1	1	100%
Electric pump operation technique	4	3	75%
Small and medium enterprise management/Corporate finance	2	1	50%
Mechatronics	8	3	38%
Cooking techniques	3	1	33%
Industrial automation	3	1	33%
Industrial electricity	15	3	20%
9 other programmes	33	0	0%

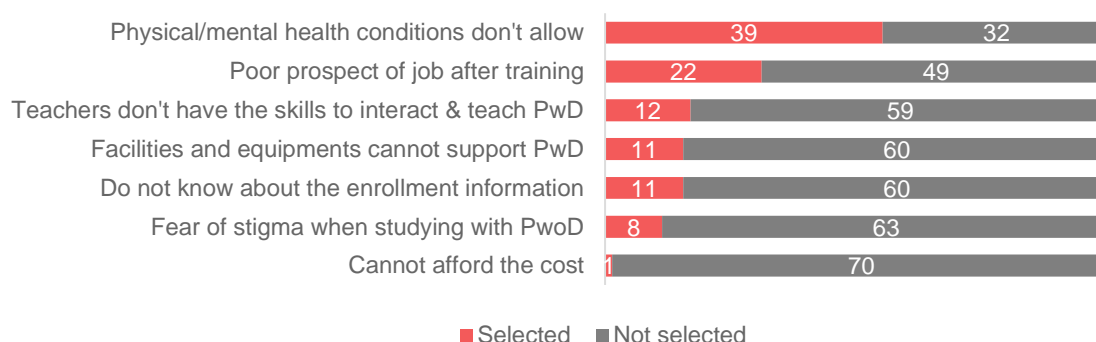
Interviewed students, on the other hand, expressed different opinions from the school staff's. Surprisingly, they were convinced that *people with hearing – speech impairment were more capable of participating in technical programmes than those with mobility disability*. Specifically, out of 70 students, 45 stated that people with hearing – speech impairment could participate in technical training programmes, while only 31 believed the same for people with mobility disability. People with mental and psychiatric disability were perceived as the group with lowest learning capabilities in technical training programmes (only 3 out of 70 respondents said that this group of PwD could participate in this type of programme) (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Forms of disabilities suitable for technical training programmes (acc. to students)



Out of 71 answers collected from teachers on the reasons why not many PwD had participated in the training programme that the respondent was teaching, 39 answers were on the poor physical and mental health conditions of PwD students. The second most chosen reason is "The job prospect after vocational training is poor" (22 out of 71 answers).

Figure 12. Reasons for PwD low participation rate in certain training programmes



In accordance with the data reflected above, a member of BCI's management board revealed that students applying for vocational training at BCI would be required to take a health examination. If the health check results show that the student is not in a good health condition suitable to participate in vocational training (for example the student has disabilities), he/she will not be admitted to the school.

## 4.3. Training Staff

### 4.3.1. Opinions towards Integrated Training for PwD

The respondents at BCI and HVCT were asked to express their agreement with a number of statements regarding inclusion of PwD in integrated TVET. Out of 40 staff and teachers surveyed at two colleges, 17 agreed that PwD cannot be trained together with nondisabled students, among whom 5 strongly believed that PwD and PwD should not be jointly trained. On the other hand, approximately the same number of respondents opposed to the idea, where 18 staff/ teachers reckoned that PwD and PwD could totally be trained together. Notably, the number of staff and teachers arguing in favour of integrated training for PwD in HVCT doubled the number in BCI. Older staff and teachers also tend to show more agreement with the statement that PwD cannot be jointly trained with PwD.

Table 8. Staff and Teachers' Opinions on Integrated Training for PwD (%)

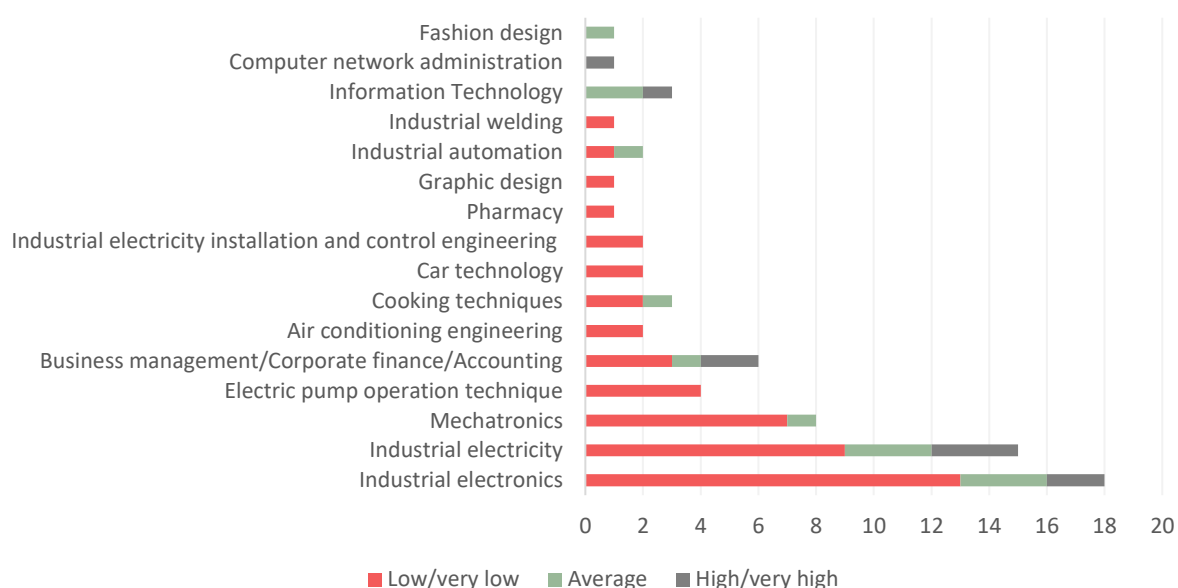
Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Do not agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
PwD students cannot be trained together with nondisabled students.	12.5	30	12.5	32.5	12.5	100
Including PwD in integrated TVET can have negative impacts on the training of nondisabled students.	5	10	7.5	45	32.5	100
Including PwD in integrated TVET will present more difficulties to the training staff.	5	47.5	5	32.5	10	100
Including PwD in TVET is a burden to the TVET institute.	0.0	7.5	10	70	12.5	100

Although nearly half of the surveyed staff and teachers believed that there should be separate training programmes for PwD and PwD, *the majority of them (82.5% of respondents) did not think of PwD's attendance at the TVET college where they were working as a burden to the school.* Only 3 staff/teachers agreed that including PwD in training at the college could create difficulties, and surprisingly all of them are teachers from 20 to 40 years old, the age groups that typically showed more positive opinions about integrated TVET for PwD. Similarly, an overwhelming 77.5% of staff and teachers interviewed (31 out of 40 respondents) expressed their disagreement with the statement "Including PwD in integrated TVET can have negative impacts on the training of nondisabled students". Only 6 out of 40 respondents agreed with this argument, and 5 of them are BCI staff/teachers.

However, when specifically asked about teachers' work and responsibilities, *more than half of the surveyed staff and teachers agreed that inclusion of PwD in integrated TVET would complicate their training*. BCI respondents seem slightly more concerned with this issue than those in HVCT, with 12 out of 20 BCI respondents showing their agreement with the statement "Including PwD in integrated TVET will present more difficulties to the training staff", as compared to 9 out of 20 respondents at HVCT.

#### 4.3.2. Career Prospects of PwD after Graduation

Figure 13. Possibility of PwD landing a job after graduation by training programme



In general, *the teachers' views on employment prospects of disabled students are not optimistic*. Teachers of most training programmes admitted that the chance of disabled students getting a job after completing their TVET program was low to very low, except for Fashion Design, Computer Network Administration, and Information Technology programmes where the interviewed teachers believed that PwD students would highly likely be employed after graduation.

#### 4.3.3. Discrimination

The discrimination situation looks rather positive in both formal and continuing TVET institutions, with 85.2% of respondents who are receiving or have received TVET confirming that they have never experienced being discriminated at their TVET institution. The rest admitted to encountering discrimination, but only at the frequency level of "rarely" to "sometimes". No respondents have reported that they felt discriminated on a regular basis.

*Specifically looking at the case study of the two local TVET institutes*, in order to examine teachers and students' attitude towards PwD students in these colleges, the research team requested the respondents to rate how frequently some discriminatory actions happened at the TVET college where they were working or attending. Out of 40 surveyed staff and

teachers, only 12 reported that they had participated in training for PwD students at BCI or HVCT, of whom 9 were from HVCT, and 3 from BCI. *All of these respondents confirmed that PwD students had never been discriminated*, such as being isolated or not actively approached and supported by staff and teachers at the two colleges.

*Table 9. Frequency of discriminatory actions reported by staff and teachers (%)*

Examples of discrimination	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
PwD students are isolated by staff and teachers	0	0	0	0	100	100
Staff and teachers do not actively approach and support PwD students	0	0	0	0	100	100
PwD students are isolated by nondisabled students	0	0	25	8.3	66.7	100
PwD students are teased or bullied at school	0	0	16.7	0	83.3	100
Nondisabled students do not support PwD students	0	0	8.3	0	91.7	100

Most of the 12 interviewed staff and teachers remained positive when asked about nondisabled students' attitude towards their PwD classmates at the 2 colleges, although not as confident as when they evaluated themselves. Among 12 staff and teachers, 8 believed that PwD students were never alienated by their nondisabled classmates, while 2 staff/teacher respondents from each college reported that this still happened, although only at the frequency level of "rarely" or "sometimes". Similarly, while 10 respondents noted that PwD were never teased or bullied when participating in integrated TVET at the school, 1 staff/teacher from each school believed that this act still sometimes happened.

Among 70 surveyed students, 23 claimed that there were PwD students at the same TVET college that they themselves were attending. 15 of them were certain that discrimination against PwD never happened, while seven revealed that PwD students still sometimes encountered discrimination at school. *No respondents affirmed that discrimination was observed on a regular basis*. Notably, concern of discrimination was not mentioned by any students as one of the reasons why they believed that there should be separate training programmes exclusively for PwD.

#### *4.3.4. Knowledge, Skills, Teaching Methods*

*In the general survey with PwD in two localities*, the 12 respondents who are undergoing training or have been trained at formal TVET institutions were requested to assess the training

methods frequently applied at the institution they are attending or have attended. Out of 12 respondents, 5 informed that the training method that integrates theory and practice was usually employed at the TVET institution that they are attending or have attended, while 6 reported that the theory-focused training approach was sometimes adopted. The practice-focused training approach however was evaluated by up to 7 out of 12 respondents as being only “sometimes” to “never” followed.

*Table 10. PwD Evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching and training methods*

**Frequency of adopted training methods at the attended TVET institution**

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Don't know	Total
Theory-focused training	2	0	6	2	0	2	12
Theory - Practice integrated training	1	5	1	1	1	3	12
Practice-focused training	1	2	2	4	1	2	12

**Evaluation of suitability of training methods**

	Very suitable	Suitable	Not suitable	Absolutely not suitable	Don't know	Total
Theory-focused training	0	1	9	1	1	12
Theory - Practice integrated training	3	7	2	0	0	12
Practice-focused training	5	5	2	0	0	12

When interviewed on preference of training methods, nearly 82% of the respondents of this survey that are attending or have attended formal TVET institutions admitted that the theory-focused training approach was not suitable for them, quoting the main reason as “difficult to apply to actual work practice”. This pattern is particularly visible among younger respondents, with 90% of respondents between 18 and 30 years old considering the theory-focused training approach “not suitable”. On the other hand, 83.3% of the respondents favoured the training method integrating theory and practice, and similarly 83.4% voted the practice-focused training method “suitable” to “very suitable”.

This suggests that the surveyed PwD expect to attend training programmes with high practicability where the time devoted to practice is at least equal to that spent on learning the theories. Formal TVET institutions seem to have somewhat met their students’ expectations in frequently adopting the integrated training method balancing theory and practice. However, the practice-focused training method is reportedly not yet popular in formal TVET institutions.

The 12 respondents who have attended or are attending a formal TVET institution were asked to evaluate the quality of the lecturers at the institution across four aspects: professional knowledge, skills, attitude, and training skills for PwD. Overall, more than 80% of the



respondents assessed that the professional knowledge, skills, and attitude of the lecturers were above average, with more than half of the respondents stating that the professional attitude of the lecturers were very good. The aspect with the lowest quality score was vocational training skills for PwD, where one third of the respondents believed that the lecturers had little to no training skills for working specifically with PwD.

*Table 11. PwD Evaluation of TVET institutions' training staff quality*

	Very good	Good	Average	Low	Very low	Refused to answer
Technical knowledge	3	6	2	1	0	0
Technical skills	3	6	1	0	0	2
Working attitude	6	3	1	1	0	1
Vocational training skills for PwD	3	3	2	1	1	2

Of note, formal TVET lecturers' training skills for PwD students received the lowest assessment score among respondents with visual disability, with half of respondents of this group reporting that lecturers' skills were only average to low.

Given the overall picture of training staff's knowledge and skills above, it is also worthy looking at the particular case of BCI and HVCT so as to examine the consistency of the trends. In particular, while only 12 staff and teachers from BCI and HVCT admitted that they had experience training PwD students, *more than half of the 40 interviewed respondents asserted that they had thorough knowledge of the common types of disabilities*, among whom 5 were absolutely confident of their knowledge. More HVCT respondents expressed their confidence than those at BCI, with 14 out of 20 HVCT staff and teachers claiming that they had a profound understanding of the main disability forms. Staff and teachers in their 20s are admittedly the group with the most limited knowledge of disabilities with three-fourths of them confessing that they were not prepared with such information. This group of young staff and teachers are also those who displayed the most favourable attitude towards integrated training for PwD.

*Table 12. Teachers' self-evaluation of capability to provide training to PwD (count)*

Statement	Absolutely true	True	Neither true nor false	False	Absolutely false	Refused to answer	Total
I have thorough knowledge of the	5	17	6	12	0	0	40

Statement	Absolutely true	True	Neither true nor false	False	Absolutely false	Refused to answer	Total
common types of disabilities.							
I have been well equipped with training skills for all groups of students, including PwD.	4	12	7	13	3	1	40
I have participated in training courses and/or programmes on special education and training for PwD.	0	2	2	16	20	0	40
I can customize my lectures and teaching methods to meet the special needs of PwD.	14	20	3	2	1	0	40

Regarding training skills, *only 5% of all surveyed staff and teachers (2/40 respondents) confirmed that they had participated in training courses or programmes on special education and training for PwD, and both of them are working at HVCT. However, on a self-evaluation basis, 40% of all surveyed staff and teachers reported that they had been well equipped with training skills for all groups of students, including PwD.* Notably, 65% of HVCT respondents were convinced that they had the necessary skills to work with PwD students, while the figure for BCI is only 15%. Despite this rather limited skill preparation, most teachers believed that they could customize their lectures and training methods to meet the special needs of PwD students, especially at HVCT where 19 out of 20 respondents were willing to do so.

*There is a stark difference observed between the two TVET colleges* when the interviewed staff and teachers were asked to evaluate if the school frequently lacked training staff with knowledge and skills to work with PwD. Up to 70% of HVCT respondents were optimistic that the college was never short of skilled human resources to provide training for PwD, and no respondents at HVCT assumed that such shortage occurred at a high level of frequency. On the other hand, BCI respondents were much less confident, with 40% of them admitting that the school usually or always suffered such shortage, reasoning that they had hardly any experience providing training for PwD students. Only 10% of BCI respondents trusted that the school had an adequate number of trainers with good knowledge and skills to train PwD.

Students attending the two colleges were also asked to evaluate the quality of the training staff across four aspects: technical/professional knowledge, skills, attitude, and training skills

for PwD. Overall, more than 90% of surveyed students assessed that the professional knowledge, skills, and attitude of the training staff were good to very good, and no respondents rated their teachers' quality as "under average" for any of the aforementioned 3 dimensions. The aspect with the highest quality score was technical skills, where 100% of the respondents believed that the teachers' technical skills were good to very good. BCI students also seem more positive about the quality of their trainers than those at HVCT, with more BCI students claiming that the trainers' technical knowledge, skills, and attitude were at the highest quality level on the evaluation scale than HVCT respondents.

*Table 13. Students' Evaluation of Training Staff Quality (%)*

	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor	Refused to answer	Total
Technical knowledge	38.6	60	1.4	0	0	0	100
Technical skills	37.1	60	0	0	0	2.9	100
Professional attitude	51.4	40	7.1	0	0	1.4	100
Training skills for PwD	2.9	24.3	8.6	1.4	1.4	61.4	100

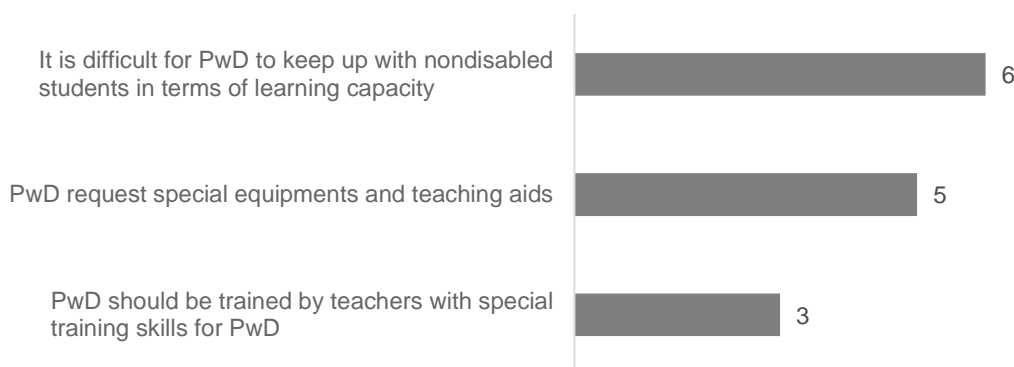
However, when it comes to the quality of teachers' training skills specifically for PwD students, 61.4% of all student respondents could not make their evaluation mostly because they have never participated in integrated TVET with PwD. Among the 27 respondents who answered to this question, around 70% believed that the teachers' training skills for PwD were good, 22.2% rated such skills at an average level, and only 7.4% admitted that they were under average. Although this evaluation seems to be consistent with the self-assessment of the surveyed staff and teachers, it might not be very insightful given that a majority of all respondents revealed that no PwD students were attending the TVET colleges.

## 4.4. Nondisabled Students

### 4.4.1. Opinions towards Integrated Training for PwD

Students in the two colleges, on the other hand, seem more positive towards integrated TVET for PwD. 90% of surveyed students believed that PwD could be trained together with PwD. Only 7 out of 70 student respondents reckoned that there should be separate training classes exclusively for PwD, and 6 of them are attending BCI. Among these 7 students, 6 reasoned that it would be a challenge for PwD students to keep up with nondisabled students mostly in terms of learning capacity if they were trained together, 5 believed that PwD would request special equipment and teaching aids not available in training classes for nondisabled students, and 3 supposed that PwD should be trained by teachers with special training skills for PwD.

Figure 14. Reasons why PwD should participate in special training (reported by nondisabled students) (unit: count)



In addition, it is highly likely that no surveyed students would feel uncomfortable if they undergo integrated training with PwD students. A vast majority of 80% of respondents (56/70 students) said that they were not concerned about the possibility of being jointly trained with PwD, of whom 44 confirmed they did not mind being trained together with PwD at all. The remaining 20% of respondents reportedly held a neutral position on this. Female students and those in HVCT showed a somewhat more positive attitude than other respondents, although the general sentiment was friendly towards PwD in integrated TVET.

#### 4.4.2. Discrimination

Results of the general survey with local PwD in Bac Ninh and HCMC show that discrimination against PwD remains one of the respondents' concern when they participate in TVET. 18.6% of respondents who believed that PwD participation in TVET was "challenging" to "very challenging" also mentioned "discrimination against PwD" as one of the obstacles preventing them from attending TVET institutions. The results also showed that female respondents were more worried about discrimination, with more than 40% of female respondents admitting their concern while the figure for male respondents was only 7.1%. On another note, PwD's feeling of inferiority was also quoted by some respondents as one of the challenges that shied them away from integrated TVET with nondisabled students.

Afterward, in order to examine teachers and students' attitude towards PwD students in the two colleges, the research team requested respondents to rate how frequently some discriminatory actions happened at the TVET college where they were working or attending. Out of 40 surveyed staff and teachers, only 12 reported that they had participated in training for PwD students at BCI or HVCT, of whom 9 were from HVCT, and 3 from BCI. All of these respondents confirmed that PwD students had never been discriminated, such as being isolated or not actively approached and supported by staff and teachers at the two colleges.

Figure 15. Frequency of discriminatory actions reported by staff and teachers (%)

Examples of discrimination	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
PwD students are isolated by staff and teachers	0	0	0	0	100	100
Staff and teachers do not actively approach and support PwD students	0	0	0	0	100	100
PwD students are isolated by nondisabled students	0	0	25	8.3	66.7	100
PwD students are teased or bullied at school	0	0	16.7	0	83.3	100
Nondisabled students do not support PwD students	0	0	8.3	0	91.7	100

Most of the 12 interviewed staff and teachers remained positive when asked about nondisabled students' attitude towards their PwD classmates at the 2 colleges, although not as confident as when they evaluated themselves. Among 12 staff and teachers, 8 believed that PwD students were never alienated by their nondisabled classmates, while 2 staff/teacher respondents from each college reported that this still happened, although only at the frequency level of "rarely" or "sometimes". Similarly, while 10 respondents noted that PwD were never teased or bullied when participating in integrated TVET at the school, 1 staff/teacher from each school believed that this act still sometimes happened.

Among 70 surveyed students, 23 claimed that there were PwD students at the same TVET college that they themselves were attending. 15 of them were certain that discrimination against PwD never happened, while seven revealed that PwD students still sometimes encountered discrimination at school. *No respondents affirmed that discrimination was observed on a regular basis.* Notably, concern of discrimination was not mentioned by any students as one of the reasons why they believed that there should be separate training programmes exclusively for PwD.

## 4.5. Infrastructure and Equipment

*According to the general survey with local PwD, when asked to evaluate the level of support of TVET institution's infrastructure, very few respondents confirmed that the infrastructure could support PwD adequately.*

Table 14. Level of support to PwD of TVET infrastructure and equipment

	Good	Average	Low	Don't know/ Not available	Total
Lecture/Theoretical classroom (including equipment)	2	5	2	3	12
Practice/Laboratory classroom (including equipment)	4	3	3	2	12
Textbook and teaching materials	4	3	1	4	12
Supporting infrastructure for PwD (wheelchair ramps, restrooms for PwD)	1	5	3	3	12

70% of the respondents stated that the level of support in theoretical classrooms to PwD were average or low. 60% assumed that laboratory classrooms only provided average or low level of support to PwD. Most remarkably, 3 out of 12 respondents stated that there was no special infrastructure, such as wheelchair ramps, restrooms accessible for PwD, parking space for PwD, etc. to facilitate PwD, 5 stated that the level of support to PwD from the infrastructure was average, and 3 stated that the level of support was only low. The same pattern was recorded with textbooks and teaching materials, where 20% of the respondents reported that there were no textbooks and teaching materials specially designed for PwD, and 40% evaluated that the level of support of textbooks and teaching materials to PwD remained average to low.

“Lack of supporting infrastructure for PwD” is also the third most common answer brought up by nearly 28% of respondents to explain their perceived difficulties in TVET participation. This difficulty seems more common among students with vision impairments, with more than 60% of them being concerned over the lack of supporting infrastructure at TVET providers. Respondents with extremely severe disability conditions and those residing in HCMC are also observably more worried about inadequate support from infrastructure than other respondents.

So as to gain more concrete and visualized ideas of the setting of infrastructure in TVET colleges in practice, the surveys conducted in the two institutions incorporated specific questions to collect as much information in this regard as possible. *In brief, both BCI and HVCT are found to lack essential infrastructure and equipment to support the study of PwD at school.*



#### *4.5.1. BCI*

*Most infrastructure for PwD was not available at BCI.* According to the answers of the surveyed staff and teachers, restrooms for PwD with accessible toilets and tactile paving surfaces for visually impaired students are the two types of supporting infrastructure that BCI lacks the most, with 100% of BCI respondents confirming that the school had not equipped itself with such facilities. 19 out of 20 BCI staff/teachers also believed that the school had no teaching equipment for PwD such as assistive hearing devices, Braille books, wheelchair accessible study desks, etc. nor priority parking space for PwD. Only 2 interviewed staff/teachers reported that wheelchair ramps were available at BCI.

Student respondents were also asked to evaluate the availability and quality of the supporting facilities and equipment for PwD at the college, and their answers seem to align with the responses of staff and teachers. Almost all surveyed students at BCI admitted that there were not any wheelchair ramps, restrooms for PwD, or tactile paving surfaces in the school. 3 respondents reported that priority parking space for PwD was available, while 5 claimed that the school had prepared special teaching equipment for PwD students, although 4 out of those 5 respondents evaluated the level of support of such teaching equipment as only “average” to “poor”.



*Lobby Area of the Main Building at BCI*





*The Entrance Area of the Cafeteria at BCI*



*No priority parking space for PwD was spotted at BCI*

It is important to note that some infrastructure might have been designed and equipped not in the intention of directly supporting PwD. While some staff/teachers and students mentioned that they had seen wheelchair ramps at BCI, those areas accessible to wheelchair are constrained to the lobby of the main building and the entrance to the cafeteria. These areas seem to serve the access of vehicles to the main building lobby and transportation of food and materials to/from the kitchen rather than to purposely support PwD.



#### 4.5.2. HVCT

Similar to BCI, HVCT is reportedly not equipped with the necessary infrastructure to support PwD participation in TVET. 19 out of 20 HVCT staff and teachers agreed that the school lacked accessible toilets, tactile paving walkway, and priority parking space for PwD. However, 5 respondents confirmed that wheelchair ramps were in place, and 4 claimed that HVCT had provided special teaching equipment to facilitate training for PwD.



*Wheelchair-accessible Areas at HVCT*



*Wheelchair-accessible Areas at HVCT*

HVCT student respondents seem more positive in assessing the availability of the supporting infrastructure and equipment for PwD at their college. Among 35 surveyed students, 12 shared that wheelchair ramps were available at HVCT, of whom 10 rated the level of support as “average”. 10 students believed that the school had special teaching equipment for PwD students, although 7 of them reckoned that the quality of such equipment was only average to

poor. Other facilities such as restrooms for PwD, tactile paving surfaces, and priority parking space were also discussed by around 20% of HVCT student respondents, and the majority of them were convinced that the level of support of such infrastructure was only average.



*Elevators at HVCT*

Notably, 14 out of 20 surveyed staff and teachers and 10 out of 35 student respondents in HVCT confirmed that there were elevators at the school, which was totally absent at BCI. However, 7 in these 10 students noticed that the support level of these elevators were only average to poor, claiming that the elevators were old and not very well functioning. On the other hand, HVCT staff and teachers seem much more optimistic about the quality of the elevators, where 10 out of 14 respondents believed that the elevators provided good support to PwD students, and no staff/teachers rated them at a low support level. HVCT staff and teachers explained that the college used to provide training exclusively to PwD, hence the presence of such elevators.

#### 4.6. Career Development and Employment Service

The survey results imply that labour market demand-oriented training has yet to be a priority to both TVET institutes and their students.

*Respondents of the general PwD survey have reported quite limited efforts by TVET institutions in connecting their students with the labour market.* 50% of the respondents who have been trained at either formal or informal TVET institutes revealed that no career orientation event such as career counselling seminar, job fair, etc. had been organized when they were attending the institutes. 10.7% of those who were interviewed however claimed that there had been such events held by the TVET providers, but they had never attended any. 32.1% of the respondents reported that they had participated in around 1 to 2 of such events. TVET institutes in Bac Ninh show reportedly more efforts in connecting their students with potential job opportunities and employers than those in HCMC, with more than 60% of HCMC

respondents confirming that no career orientation events were held at the TVET institutes they went to, while the figure in Bac Ninh was lower at 40%.

*Table 15. Number of career orientation events held at the attended TVET institution*

	Frequency	Percent
No events have ever been held	14	50.00
There were some events but I have never participated in any	3	10.71
I have participated in 1 to 2 events	9	32.14
I have participated in 3 to 4 events	0	0
I have participated from 5 events	0	0
I don't remember	2	7.15

On the students' side, Massage Therapy, Office Computing/Computer Literacy, Graphic Design, and Electric/Electronics are the most popular fields that PwD have attended or are attending at formal TVET institutions. The choice of training fields and programmes are usually made under recommendations from family members, friends, or relatives (7 out of 22 answers), after considering that the chosen programmes were the most suitable to the respondents (5 answers), in the respondent's personal interest (4 answers), or in the expectation of a decent income after graduation (4 answers). These figures suggest that *PwD students' selection of TVET trades to pursue are more likely influenced by the information and suggestions from people around them, rather than in thorough consideration and analysis of the labour market demand.*

*Despite the schools' unimpressive career service, more than half of the respondents do not regret their vocational training decision.* Among those who have participated in TVET, either formal or continuing, 55.6% would still choose to attend the same programme at the same institute if they could have a second chance to make the decision again. 14.8% of the respondents however would like to study a different programme at a different institute, while another 14.8% wish they had never pursued TVET at all.

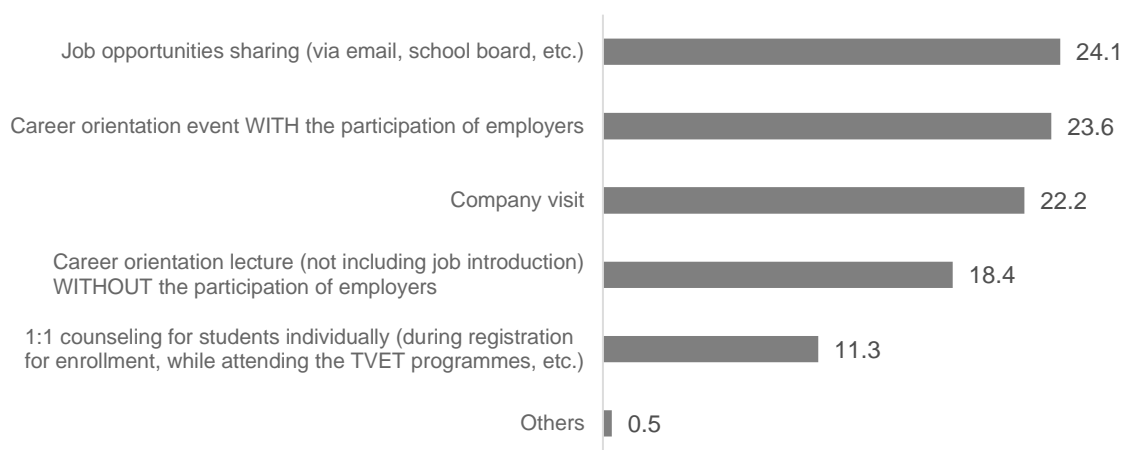
*Meanwhile, 100% of the surveyed students at BCI and 94.2% of those at HVCT confirmed that the college they were attending did provide them with career counselling.* The majority of nearly 87% of interviewed students from both schools shared that career counselling and orientation activities were held both before they entered the school (when the students were registering for enrolment, or choosing TVET programmes, etc.) and during their training at the school.

Employment and internship opportunities sharing (via email and school board, etc.) and career orientation event with the participation of employers are reportedly the two most popular career development activities as mentioned by 51 and 50 respondents respectively, followed by company visit (47 respondents). One-on-one (1:1) counselling was the least frequently organized activity, accounting for only 11.3% of all answers. This pattern is also observed in HVCT, where job opportunities sharing was the answer discussed the most, closely followed



by career events with employer participation. At BCI, however, the number of respondents reporting that the college organized company visit and career orientation lecture **without** employer participation was the highest. 1:1 counselling seems more popular in HVCT than in BCI, with 16 HVCT students mentioning this compared to only 8 answers in BCI.

Figure 16. Career Orientation and Development Activities (%)



More than half of the surveyed students revealed that they had participated in only 1 to 2 career events organized by the college that they were attending, and around 30% responded that they had attended from 3 to 4 events. A majority of 88.2% of all interviewed students were satisfied with the school's career development and employment services, evaluating their quality as good to very good. Only 6 respondents assessed the quality of the college's career orientation activities as average, 5 of whom are attending HVCT.

Among the 6 students who rated the quality of the college's career service at average level, 4 proposed that improvement could be made in assessing students' capacity, such as their strengths and weaknesses, compatibility with job requirements, recommendations to enhance the employability of students. *This indicates that TVET institutes have focused on providing general career development services on a large scale rather than catering to students on an individual level.* The yet limited 1:1 counselling service provided by the two colleges and the respondents' expectations to receive more capability analysis and recommendations to improve their employability both reflect the need to promote efforts to provide career development and employment services to students individually.

#### 4.7. Knowledge of Policies and Regulations Regarding PwD in TVET

During the last decade, the Vietnamese Government has strengthened its efforts to promote the participation of PwD in TVET as well as encourage TVET institutions to grant PwD admission to study in training programmes. In terms of efforts on building legislation, the Government enacted the National Law on Disabilities 51/2010/QH12 and the 2014 Law No. 74/2014/QH13 on Vocational Education. The two laws are core legal documents that set out

the policy framework regulating the relationship between PwD, TVET institutions, and the Vietnamese Government.

These laws and its related legal documents (decrees and circulars) stipulate various incentives for PwD, especially benefits of tuition exemption/reduction, vocational training subsidy, and free occupational consulting services. Similarly, TVET institutions training PwD are eligible to receive several kinds of support, including preferential allowances for teachers working with PwD and financial assistance to invest in infrastructure and equipment suitable with PwD. In this three-party relationship, the Government ensures law enforcement and provides financial resources to beneficiaries.

In that context, the understanding of TVET college staff and students about those policies and regulations will play a key role in facilitating the development of inclusive training programmes, in which person with disability is the main subject.

To measure the level of dissemination of these legislation in reality, this sub-section specifically presents the survey's results regarding awareness of staff and students in BCI and HVCT about current policies and regulations for PwD's participation in TVET.

#### *4.7.1. Legal Awareness of TVET College Staff and Teachers*

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All college staff and teachers were asked 5 questions to collect their opinions on whether each of the 5 given statements was true or false to their legal knowledge. Each statement focuses on a type of assistance for PwD and/or TVET institution granting admission to PwD.

Among the 5 statements provided in the survey's questionnaire, the statement C1, C2, C3 and C5 are true according to the National Law on Disabilities and the 2014 Law on Vocational Education. Meanwhile, C4 is a false statement.

*In general, the college staff has good knowledge about policies and regulations with regards to PwD in TVET.* Among 40 respondents, only one staff reported that they completely did not know if each of the 5 given statements was true or false. 12 out of 40 respondents (30%) answered correctly when choosing "True" for statements C1, C2, C3, C5 and "False" for the statement C4.

The majority of respondents understood that PwD could access vocational counselling services without any fee (chosen by 80% of respondents), and they also knew that a tuition reduction or an exemption was a kind of financial incentive for PwD (chosen by 90% of respondents). In addition, 77.5% of respondents perceived that, besides tuition exemption, the PwD were also considered for scholarships, travel and accommodation support (Table 12).

*Meanwhile, the percentage of college staff who are well informed about incentives for TVET institutions and teachers teaching PwD is not that high.* About 62.5% of the college staff correctly point out the statement C4 is false, but only 52.5% of respondents clearly understand the benefits of financial support from the Government for investment in infrastructure, equipment and land use which TVET institutions can apply for once they train PwD.

Table 16. Colleges' staff knowledge about policies toward the participation of PwD in TVET, and incentives for TVET institutions and teachers

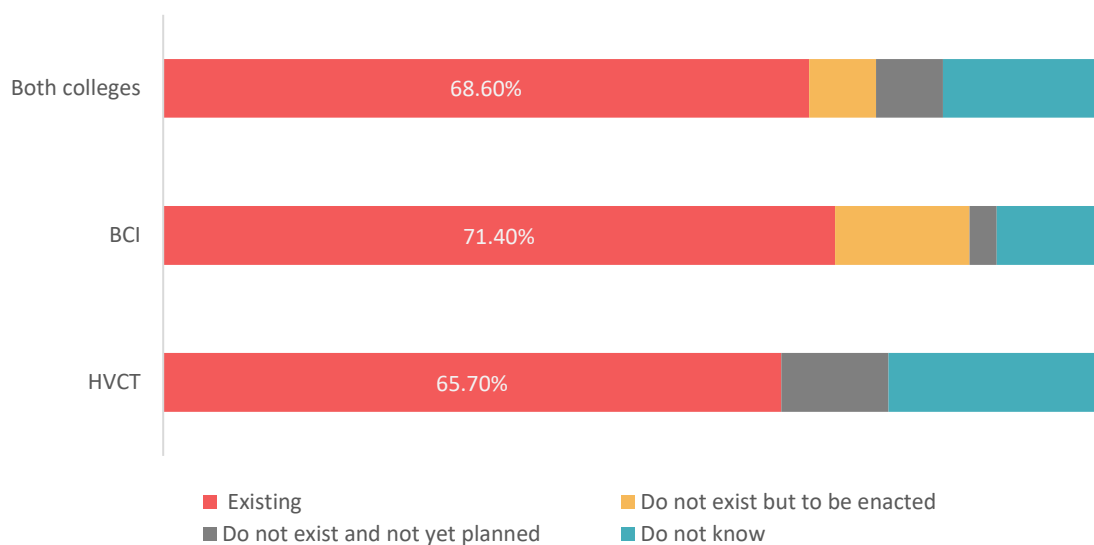
Statement	College staff's opinion about if each statement is TRUE of FALSE							
	True		False		Do not know		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>The Vietnamese Government ensures that PwD are provided with free vocational counselling</i>	32	80	0	0	8	20	40	100
<i>PwD are eligible for tuition reduction or exemption</i>	36	90	0	0	4	10	40	100
<i>PwD who are from poor families are eligible for tuition exemption and are considered for scholarships, travel and accommodation support</i>	31	77.5	2	5	7	17.5	40	100
<i>Teachers of vocational training for PwD are not eligible for any specific allowances.</i>	5	12.5	25	62.5	10	25	40	100
<i>Specialized vocational training institutions for PwD shall receive financial supports from the State for investment in infrastructure and vocational training equipment; Specialized vocational institutions are given land use right or are able to rent land in places convenient for vocational training of PwD.</i>	21	52.5	1	2.5	18	45	40	100

In addition, management staff seems to be more aware of incentives for TVET institutions and teachers than training staff. While 90.9% of management staff correctly answered that statement C4 was incorrect, only 51.7% of teaching staff provided similar responses. Similarly, the percentage of management staff well aware of incentives for specialized vocational training institutions is 72.7%, which is 1.6 times as high as that of teaching staff (44.8%).

#### 4.7.2. Legal Awareness of Nondisabled Students

All students participating in the survey were asked a common question: *“Do you think regulations regarding TVET and employment for PwD currently exist in Vietnam?”*. This question's purpose is to examine whether students are informed of the legal aspects once they have the chance to study with PwD students. The result shows that 68.6% of students believed that such regulations were already in place, while about 31.4% of them did not know that these regulations had been adopted in Vietnam (Figure 17).

*Figure 17. Student's awareness of the existence of legal framework regarding TVET and employment for PwD*



Slightly more BCI interviewed students (25 people, 71.4%) were aware of the existence of regulations regarding TVET and employment for PwD than those at HVTC (23 people, 65.7%). However, this gap does not reflect a significant difference between students of two colleges

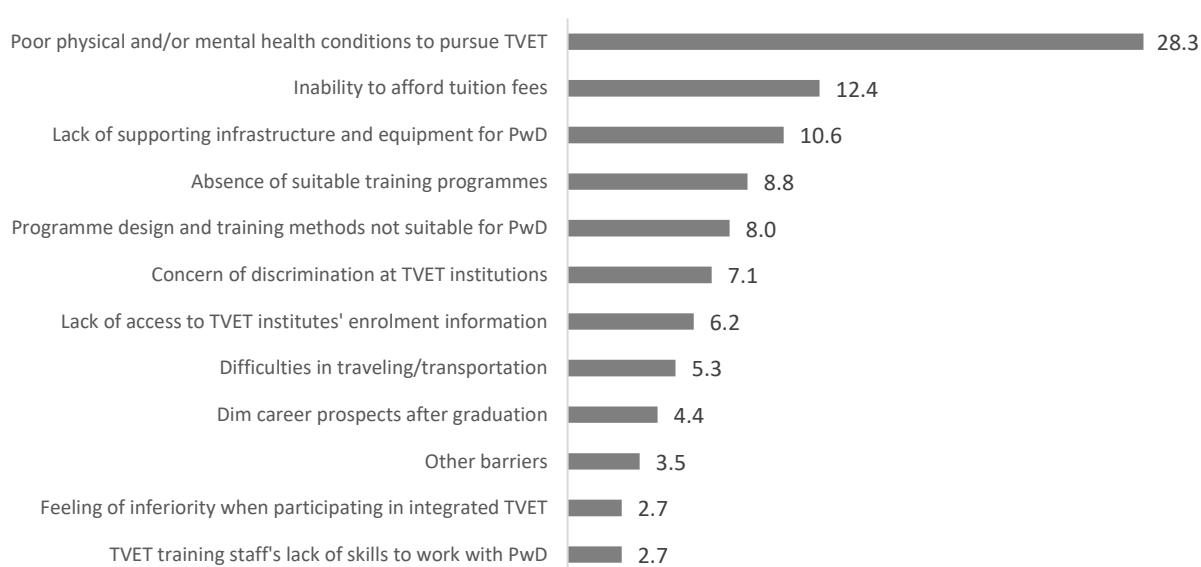
## 5. BARRIERS TO PWD PARTICIPATION IN TVET

By enlightening some of the common issues, the assessment on the participation of PwD in TVET and the labour market has exposed a number of obstacles to PwD engagement in TVET as well as their presence in the labour market. With the contribution of opinions from relevant subjects and PwD themselves, a couple of barriers causing major difficulties to PwD will be listed out for further analysis.

### 5.1. Barriers to PwD (perceived by PwD, teachers, nondisabled students)

All of the 80 PwD surveyed in Bac Ninh and HCMC were asked to evaluate how favourable or challenging it is for PwD to participate in TVET, on a scale of 5 from “very favourable” to “very challenging”. Noticeably, nearly 60% of all respondents believed that PwD participation in TVET was “challenging” to “very challenging”, and no respondent reckoned that the participation was “very favourable”. Respondents with visual disabilities seem to be the group facing the most barriers, with 84.6% of visually impaired respondents assessed PwD participation in TVET as “challenging” to “very challenging”, followed by respondents with mental & psychiatric disabilities and those with intellectual disabilities. Respondents with hearing losses and/or speech disorders are perhaps those with the most favourable TVET experience, with 55.6% of them evaluating PwD participation in TVET as “favourable”. PwD participation in TVET also faces more difficulties as PwD get older: 84.6% of respondents between 30 and 40 years old considered TVET participation as “challenging” to “very challenging”, and no respondent in this age group reckoned that the process was “favourable”.

Figure 18. Barriers to PwD participation in TVET (Unit: % of choices)





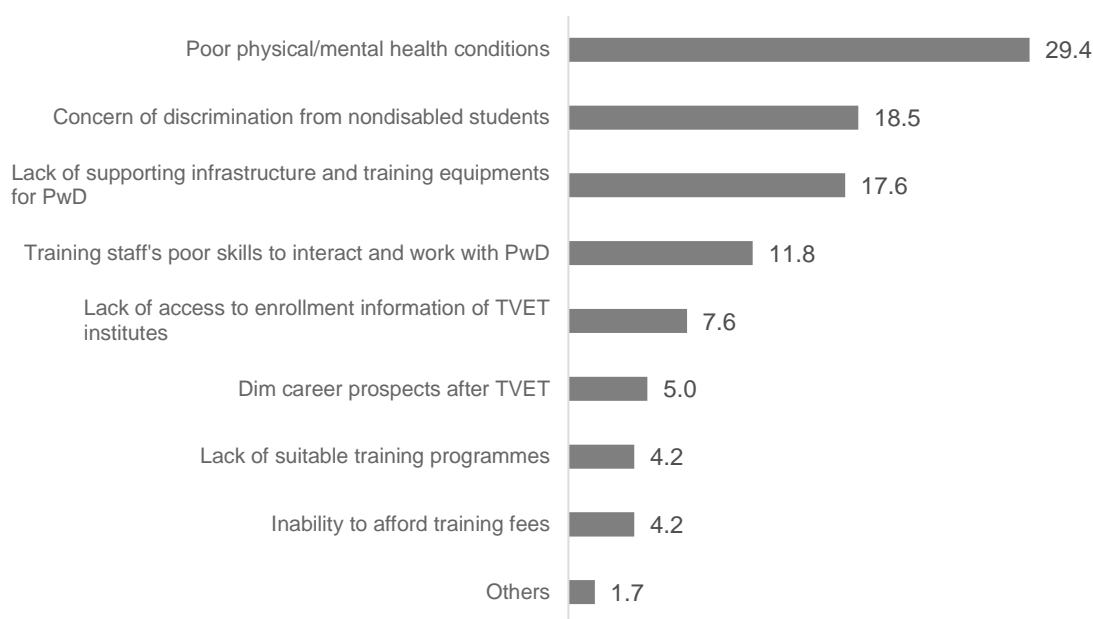
Poor health condition is reportedly the most common challenge to PwD participation in TVET as mentioned by 32 out of 43 respondents (28.3% of all answers), followed by unaffordable tuition fees (12.4%), and inadequate infrastructure to support PwD participation in TVET (10.6%). *Perceived challenges also differ by respondents' types of disability: respondents with mobility disabilities and those with mental and psychiatric disabilities are most concerned about their health conditions, while respondents with vision impairments are more worried about the lack of supporting facilities for PwD.* Respondents from 26 to 30 years old seem significantly more attentive to issues such as unaffordable tuition fees, unavailability of suitable training programmes/trades, lack of supporting infrastructure for PwD than those of other age groups, although respondents of all ages are discouraged about their health conditions.

12 respondents who have participated or are participating in formal TVET were also asked to evaluate how popular PwD participation in TVET in technical areas was. Out of 12 respondents, seven believed that the participation was at an average level, while two answered "not popular" to "absolutely not popular". These two respondents both agreed that *poor health conditions mainly hindered PwD from being trained in technical trades, along with other commonly discussed barriers including lack of supporting infrastructure, lecturers' poor training skills, dim career prospects, and concern over discrimination.*

*Meanwhile, in the surveys carried out at their colleges, the teachers of BCI and HVCT were also asked to explain the limited participation of PwD specifically in the training programmes that they were teaching.* In response, 36.1% of all answers pinpointed the PwD students' poor health conditions and 20.4% attributed the low participation rate to dim career prospects after graduation. Barriers directly related to the TVET college such as teachers' poor training skills, lack of supporting infrastructure and equipment for PwD, and ineffective student recruitment were also mentioned but not as dominant as the students' subjective reasons including their health conditions and employability.

*At the same time, the surveyed students of the two colleges were also asked a similar question, but not in the specific context of the TVET college they are attending, rather if they thought PwD participation in TVET in general was favourable or challenging.* More than 60% of all student respondents believed that PwD participation in TVET was challenging to very challenging, while only 5.7% perceived that it would be favourable. The most discussed challenges that discouraged PwD from receiving TVET include: poor physical and/or mental health conditions (mentioned by 35/45 respondents), followed by concern over discrimination (22/45), lack of supporting infrastructure and equipment for PwD (21/45), and training staff's poor training skills for PwD (14/45). These barriers happen to be similar to PwD's concern presented in WP-2 report, where bad health and infrastructure were also among the most important obstacles inhibiting PwD participation in TVET. However, while discrimination and staff's poor training skills for PwD are 2 of the greatest barriers to PwD as perceived by nondisabled students, PwD themselves did not seem as bothered about these issues. Rather, PwD were reportedly more worried about the affordability of tuition fees, and the suitability of offered training programmes and teaching methods.

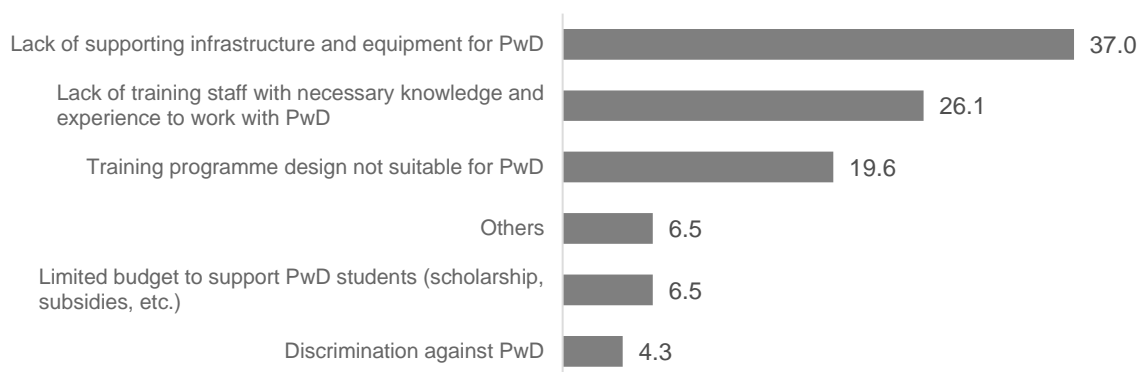
Figure 19. Barriers to inclusion of PwD in TVET perceived by students (%)



## 5.2. Barriers to TVET Institutions

In order to learn about the difficulties normally faced by a TVET institute, the research team chose to rely on the surveys conducted at the two local TVET colleges in Bac Ninh and HCMC to acquire most realistic information. Hence, we requested all surveyed staff and teachers at BCI and HVCT to evaluate how favourable or challenging integrated training for PwD was at the TVET college where they were working. *Apparently, the interviewed staff and teachers from two colleges held opposing opinions.* HVCT respondents were generally confident that including PwD in TVET at their college would not encounter enormous difficulties, with 55% of them saying that it would be “favourable” to “very favourable” to provide integrated TVET to PwD at HVCT. On the contrary, 70% of BCI respondents believed that the inclusion would be “challenging” to “very challenging”, and no surveyed staff/teachers at BCI regarded the task as “very favourable”. Staff/teacher respondents in their 40s are those who were more doubtful of the feasibility of integrated training for PwD than other age groups, while no respondents over 50 years old supposed that including PwD in TVET at the college where they were working would be challenging.

*Figure 20. Barriers to inclusion of PwD in TVET at the surveyed TVET College reported by staff and teachers (%)*



The respondents who believed that it would be difficult to engage PwD in integrated TVET at their college were mostly concerned over the poor supporting infrastructure for PwD (mentioned by 17/20 respondents) and training staff's lack of necessary knowledge and experience to work with PwD (12/20 respondents) at the college. Worry about the design of training programmes and its suitability with PwD students was also discussed by 9 respondents. Noticeably, the TVET institute's limited budget and discrimination did not seem to be important barriers. In HVCT, these 2 concerns were not even brought up by any respondent.

## 6. PARTICIPATION OF PwD IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Provided that PwD have encountered a lot of difficulties while pursuing TVET programmes, there should be rational concern over the theoretically worthwhile benefits of these programmes, or in other words, the opportunities for PwD to participate in the labour market. However, while many PwD in the general survey have expressed their hope to work for their income and independent livelihood, only approximately half of respondents are reportedly working (53.75%). This figure is much lower than the percentage of Vietnamese people without disabilities (PwD) having a job, which is about 82.4% nationally (Vietnam's General Statistics Office, 2018). 13.8% of respondents find it difficult to seek employment even though they used to participate in the labour market and are actively looking for a job. Meanwhile, 7.5% of PwD reported that they were not motivated to find a job, and 25% of respondents admitted that they had never worked before (Table 16).

*Table 17. Employment status of respondents*

	Count	Col %	Cum %
Have never worked	20	25.0	25.0
Used to work but is not working now, and is not willing to work	6	7.5	32.5
Used to work but is not work now, and is actively seeking employment	11	13.8	46.3
Currently self-employed in non-agriculture business	13	16.3	62.5
Currently self-employed in agriculture business	4	5.0	67.5
Currently working as paid employee/ salary worker for household businesses or cooperatives	3	3.8	71.3
Currently working as paid employee/ salary worker in enterprises or for-profit organizations	20	25.0	96.3
Currently working as paid employee/ salary worker in Government agencies	0	0.0	0.0
Currently working for non-profit and/or non-government organizations	3	3.8	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

43 PwD (53.7% of respondents) reported that they were working at the time of the survey. The total number of PwD who are working or have worked on at least a job in the past thus totals 60 people, accounting for 75% of the sample size. A majority of them (15/60 or 25%) are working/ used to work in the trade sector such as food salespersons and small shop owners. The second most popular occupation is teaching (11.67%), which is particularly common among people with vision impairment, with nearly one-third of them being teachers in special schools or centres for PwD. However, there are also 10% of the respondents who are unable to work on jobs with more complicated tasks, but elementary occupations such as hand packers and odd-job persons. Other occupations reported by respondents include electrical and electronic equipment assembler, restaurant waiter/waitress, crop farmer, massage

therapist, computer and software related technician, foreign language jobs, craftsman, and accountant.

Furthermore, the survey results reveal some characteristics of PwD's employment. Working as an employee in enterprises or for-profit organizations is the main form of PwD's employment according to the choices of 25% of all respondents. In addition, it is worth mentioning *that a significant number of PwD who are currently working are self-employed* (39.5%), many of them are working in non-agriculture business and some others are doing agriculture activities. People with moderate disabilities tend to be self-employed in non-agriculture business more than people with severe and extremely severe disabilities. In terms of working age, PwD are more likely to be self-employed after they reach the age of 30. Some younger respondents, who are between 15 and 30 years old, are self-employers too, but in these age groups, people working as paid employees remain the majority. These results are generally similar to previous studies conducted in Vietnam with PwD being their main subject, such as World Health Organization (2018), Palmer et. al (2015), Vietnam's General Statistics Office (2018).

*Table 18. Employment status breakdown by severity level of disability and age group*

	Employment Status (PwD currently working)					Total
	Currently self-employed in non-agriculture business	Currently self-employed in agriculture business	Currently working as paid employee for household businesses or cooperatives	Currently working as paid employee in enterprises or for-profit organizations	Currently working for non-profit and/or non-government organizations	
Severity levels						
Extremely severe	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	33.3%	100%
Severe	22.2%	14.8%	11.1%	48.1%	3.7%	100%
Moderate	55.6%	0.0%	0.0%	44.4%	0.0%	100%
Unidentified	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
All levels	30.2%	9.3%	7.0%	46.5%	7.0%	100%
Age groups						
15 - 20	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100%
21 - 25	43.8%	0.0%	6.3%	43.8%	6.3%	100%
26 - 30	14.3%	0.0%	7.1%	64.3%	14.3%	100%
31 – 40	36.4%	36.4%	0.0%	27.3%	0.0%	100%
Total	30.2%	9.3%	7.0%	46.5%	7.0%	100%

In order to provide the most comprehensive overview of the current situation and history of PwD employment, it is necessary to research the topic from the perspectives of employers. Thus, the team strived to collect and analyse the recruitment information of 20 employers in HCMC/Dong Nai Province and Bac Ninh Province/Hanoi.

Among 20 interviewed employers, 5 reported that one PwD was currently being employed at their company, and 1 respondent shared that they used to hire one employee with disabilities. These 6 employers are working in the fields of electronics (2 employers), electrical engineering (2 employers), mechanics (1 employer), and industrial clothing and garment (1 employer). 4 out of these 6 interviewed firms are located in HCMC or Dong Nai Province, while the other 2 are both in Hanoi. Most of them are private companies.

*Table 19. Current situation and history of employing PwD at the surveyed employers*

No.	Location	Starting year of operation	Ownership	Detailed description of field(s) of business	Total no. of regular employees	Total no. of PwD employees		Type of disability
						Currently employed	Previously employed	
1	HCMC	2010	Private	Produce, assemble electronics products per client's order	30	1	-	Mobility
2	HCMC	2004	Private	Produce, assemble distribution board	350	1	-	Mobility
3	Dong Nai	2005	State-owned	Produce winter clothes	200	1	-	Mobility
4	Hanoi	2004	Private	Produce medical equipment and instruments used in hospitals (bed, first-aid stretcher, etc.)	50	-	1	Hearing - speech
5	HCMC	2003	Private	Install medium-voltage power lines and transformers	30	1	-	Vision
6	Hanoi	2012	Private	Retail, wholesale of mobile products and accessories, provide repair services	200	1	-	Mobility

4 out of 6 PwD currently working/having worked at these 6 employers are those with mobility disabilities, while 1 worker is visually impaired, and the other employee suffered from hearing - speech difficulties.

The 4 workers with mobility disability are reportedly working at companies in electronics (2 workers), electrical engineering (1 worker), and garment (1 worker). They are usually involved in production-related tasks, such as assembling and repairing product parts and components, device testing, etc.

On the other hand, despite his/her vision impairment, the PwD employee working for an employer who provides installation of medium-voltage power lines and transformers was revealed to be in charge of technical design and drawing of electric lines. It was confirmed that

he/she was colour-blind and used AutoCAD (i.e. a computer-aided design and drafting software application) to accommodate his/her work. The PwD was also assisted by a nondisabled employee to complete her work, particularly in terms of colouring.

Lastly, according to the former employer of the worker with hearing losses and speech difficulties, because the PwD encountered obstacles to his/her communication with colleagues, he/she was assigned only product finishing steps, such as manually polishing finished products. The employee however is no longer working at the company due to his/her limited communication ability as reported by the interviewed employer.

## 7. EMPLOYMENT OF PwD

The participation of PwD in the labour market shall only be improved if the employability of PwD is optimized to a large extent. This condition, however, depends largely on employers' perceptions about the recruitment of PwD, their evaluation of PwD's work performance and motivations to hire PwD employees. Thus, to strengthen employers' motivations to recruit PwD workers, it is of great importance to help them understand relevant policies and regulations regarding the employment of PwD. Better awareness of potential barriers to the hiring of PwD employees is also crucial as it helps policy-makers design more appropriate solutions to the shortcomings. By employing the dataset drawn from a survey with 20 enterprises in Hanoi, Bac Ninh and HCMC, this section will sketch out a general picture of the potentials and difficulties for PwD to land a job in the labour market.

### 7.1. Employers' Opinions on the Employment of PwD

#### 7.1.1. Employer's Opinion on Recruiting PwD

Most interviewed businesses hold the prejudice that people with disabilities are only suitable for occupations that require little skills such as making handicrafts. According to the opinions shared by interviewed enterprises on the suitable position for each group of PwD, people with intellectual and mental & psychiatric disabilities are perceived as the groups least likely to take on high position jobs. When choosing suitable occupations for people with mobility disability, 14 out of 20 interviewees chose "Crafts and related trades workers" and 13 out of 20 interviewees chose "Elementary occupations" as a suitable occupation for this type of disability. Only 3 out of 20 interviewees believe that people with mobility disability can become managers and 2 out of 20 interviewees think that they can be professionals at their jobs (Figure 21).

Figure 21. Suitable occupations for people with mobility disability



The interviewees also share the same views on suitable occupations for people with vision impairment and hearing – speech impairment, with "Crafts and related trades workers" and "Elementary occupations" being the most chosen occupations suitable for people with these types of disability according to the interviewed businesses. Only 1 business thinks that people



with vision impairment or hearing and speech impairment can handle the duties of a manager (Figure 22 & 23).

*Figure 22. Suitable occupations for people with vision impairment*



*Figure 23. Suitable occupations for people with hearing - speech impairment*



The majority of respondents are not optimistic about the ability to work of people with intellectual disability or mental & psychiatric disability. 11 out of 20 respondents answered that there was no suitable job position for people with intellectual disability and 13 out of 20 respondents said the same for people with mental & psychiatric disability. None of the interviewed businesses believe that people with intellectual disability can be in charge of medium to high skilled positions such as managers, associate professionals or skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers. The number of businesses who expect that such positions could suit people with mental & psychiatric disability is only 1. Following this view, it is possible for a person with mental & psychiatric disability to take on the position of a manager, a professional, a technician or an associate professional (Figure 24 & 25).

*Figure 24. Suitable occupations for people with intellectual disability*

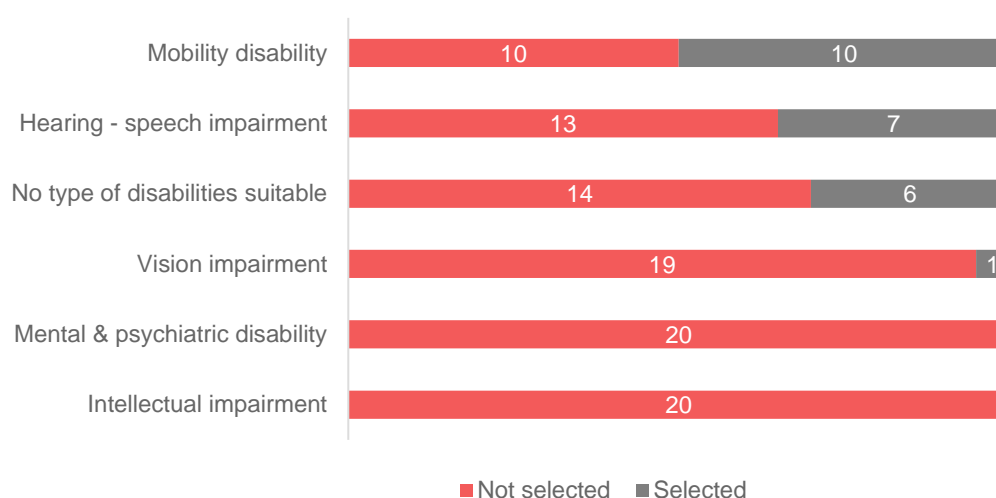


*Figure 25. Suitable occupations for people with mental & psychiatric disability*



When asked to evaluate the possibility of people with different types of disability to be accepted to work for their businesses, all interviewed enterprises responded that people with intellectual disability or mental & psychiatric disability would not have the required capability to work for them. Mobility disability is the most chosen type of disability which have the potential to work for interviewed businesses (10 out of 20 businesses), followed by hearing – speech impairment (7 out of 20 businesses), and vision impairment (1 out of 20 businesses). Among 20 interviewed businesses, 6 believed that people with any type of disability would not be qualified to work for them (Figure 26).

Figure 26. People with which type of disabilities can work for your business?



The research team have collected more detailed information from 14 businesses, which confirmed that they can recruit PwD on some particular jobs that PwD could undertake. Specifically, the potential jobs for people with mobile disability are mostly sedentary work with low to medium skill levels, including tester, logistic staff (preparing components for assembly, preparing documents), patternmaker, product packager (simple packaging), electronic circuit welding, system integration engineer, etc. The potential jobs for people with hearing – speech impairment are often jobs which do not require a lot of direct interaction, for example machine operator, packager (people with hearing impairment), auxiliary worker (people with speech impairment), product assembler, equipment installer, janitor, office staff (accountant), customer care officer (via computer: email, chat apps, etc.). One business which had an employee with colour blindness mentioned electric line designer, substation installer and construction supervisor as possible positions for people with mild vision impairment.

### 7.1.2. Employer's Evaluation of PwD Work Performance

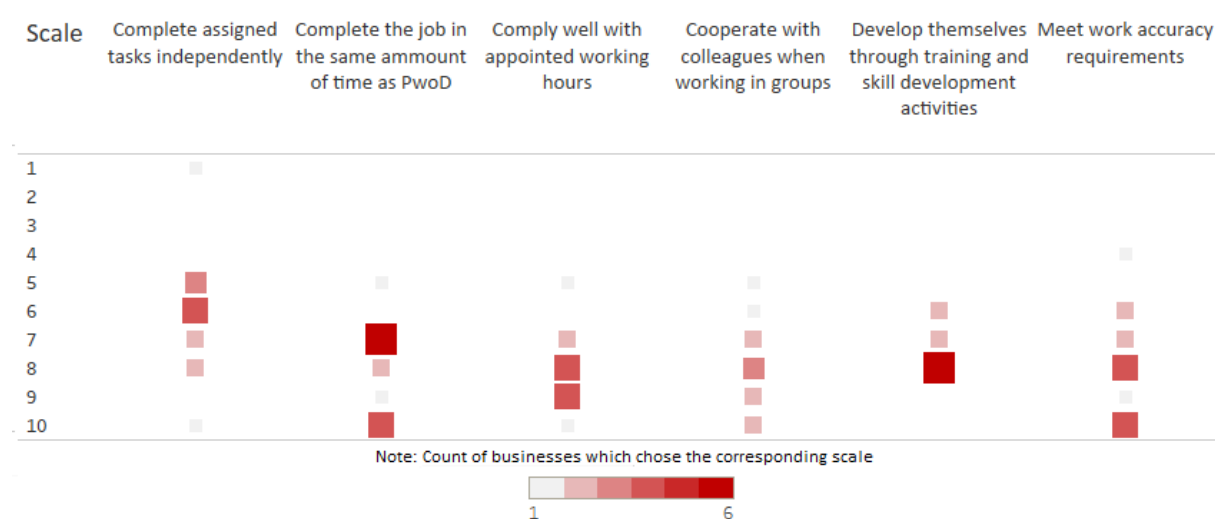
*When assessing the work performance of PwD who used to work/have been working for their businesses, respondents' general impression is positive.* Specifically, among 6 businesses which employed/are employing PwD, 1 has very positive feedback, 4 have a positive impression and 1 has an average impression on their disabled employees' work performance. No cases of bad or very bad impression on PwD's ability to work have been recorded.

*The majority of businesses who think that PwD could work for them rated the ability of PwD to perform tasks at their businesses quite positively.* These 14 businesses were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being "Certainly cannot" gradually increasing to 10 being "Certainly can" for each working ability. Regarding the ability of PwD to complete assigned task independently, 7 out of 14 respondents rated a score of 5 or 6, only a few respondents gave a higher score. The ability of PwD to complete the job in the same amount of time as PwD is rated higher, 6 out of 14 respondents gave a 7 and 3 out of 14 respondents gave a 10, no respondent gave a score lower than 5. PwD's ability to comply well with the businesses'

appointed working hours (ensuring a minimum of total weekly working hours) is mostly rated 8 or 9 (8 out of 14 respondents), with no score lower than 5. The scores for PwD's ability to cooperate with colleagues when working in groups are equally distributed from 7 to 10 (with 2 to 3 respondents rated for each score). 6 out of 14 respondents gave a score of 8 for PwD's ability to develop themselves through training and skill development activities at the enterprises. Finally, 9 out of 14 respondents rated above 7 for PwD's ability to meet work accuracy requirements (Figure 27).

*Figure 27. Businesses' assessment on PwD's ability to work*

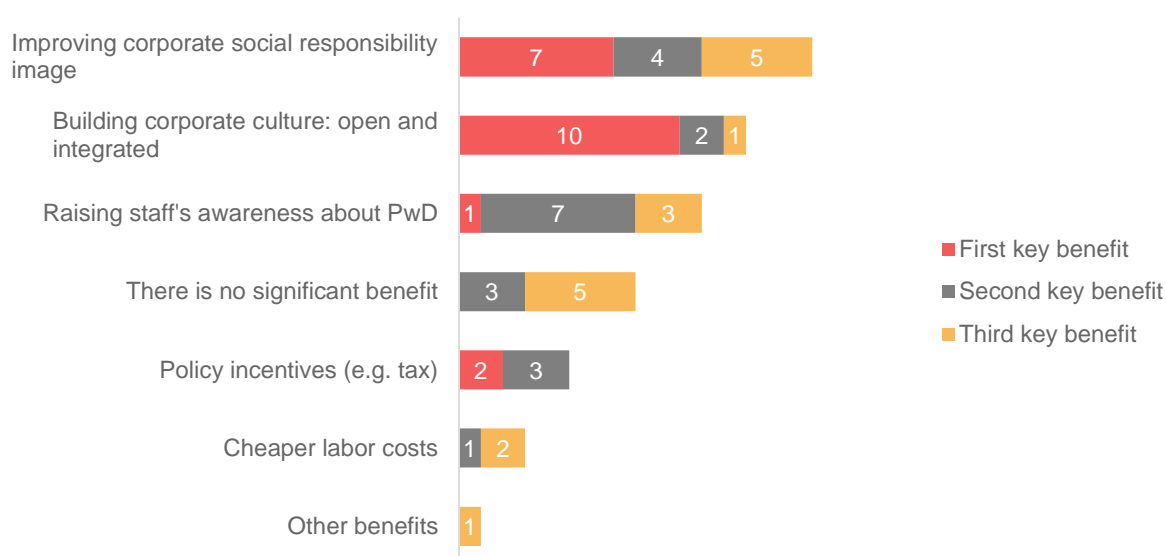
(on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 - "Certainly cannot" gradually increasing to 10 - "Certainly can")



### 7.1.3. Motivation to Employ PwD

Employers in general associate PwD recruitment's benefit with non-monetary value such as company branding as a socially responsible business or open and integrated corporate culture rather than monetary value. When asked about the top 3 potential benefits of employing PwD, improving corporate social responsibility image comes up as the most common answer with 16 responses out of 20 employers. Other popular responses are open and integrated corporate culture with 13 responses and staff's awareness about PwD with 11 responses. On the opposite side, monetary benefits such as labor costs saving, and policy incentives do not receive much attention. Only 5 employers respond to policy incentives such as tax reduction and very few employers do think of PwD employment as a way to access cheap labor. It raises the question whether enterprises are aware of any legal regulation on PwD, especially incentives for business with PwD.

Figure 28. Potential benefits that employers associate with PwD recruitment



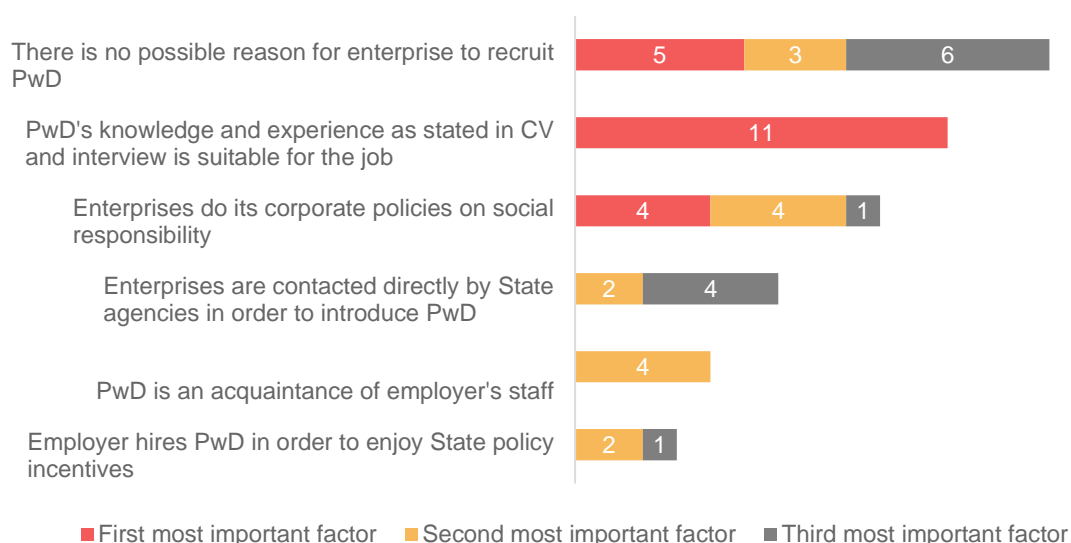
On a positive note, each employer was able to mention at least two benefits for PwD recruitment with building open and integrated corporate culture as the most cited key benefit. This benefit was not chosen as second or third key benefit though. The majority of remaining 50% of employers, who did not respond with the above-mentioned benefit as first key benefit, chose corporate social responsibility image instead. This benefit is repeatedly mentioned as second key benefit by 4 employers and third key benefit by 5 employers.

It is, however, worth to mention that these responses were given to employers to choose from, rather than being suggested by employers themselves. Therefore, any recommendations drawn from the above interpretation should be taken with careful consideration.

*Indeed, when asked which factor might make businesses consider hiring PwD, the big picture seems different.* Only 4 out of 20 employers stated corporate policy of social responsibility as the utmost important factor despite their overwhelming positive attitude towards its benefits. On the other hand, more than half of employers shared that PwD's own knowledge and experience is the most imperative factor for them to recruit PwD (11 out of 20) and this is also the most frequent answer of employers. The remaining 5 employers found no possible reason for them to recruit PwD at all despite the benefits they mentioned in the previous question.

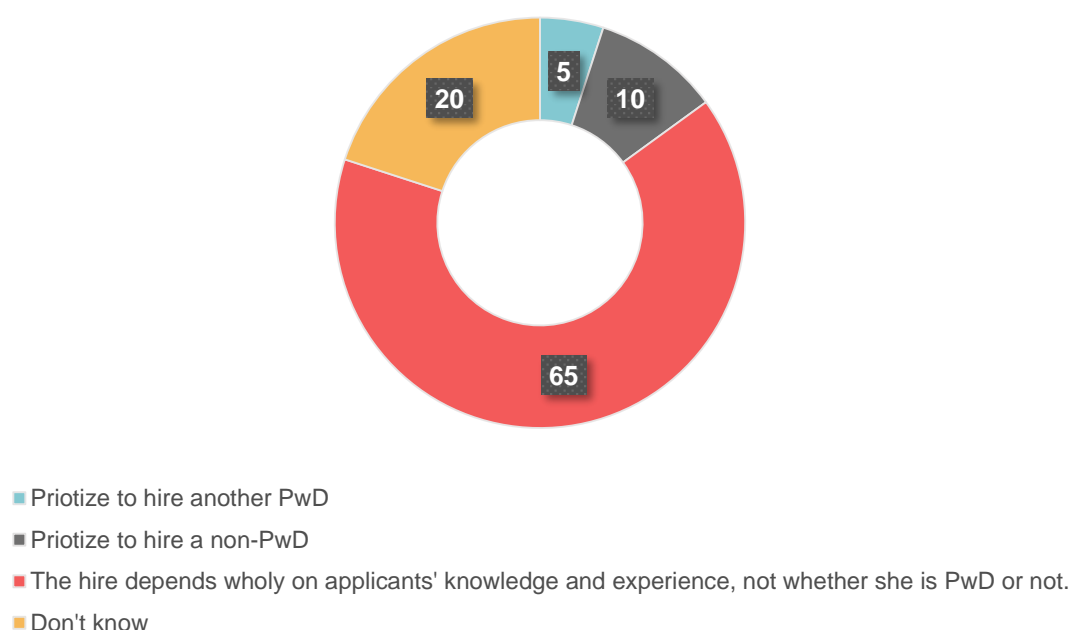
In short, *PwD's knowledge and experience appear as the most potential factor that employers would consider when hiring.* Other possible causes such as introduction by either state agencies or staff's acquaintance is less significant. PwD is likely to be recruited, should they meet the firm's criteria and have some acquaintance who can introduce them to the company. Nonetheless, nine respondents chose corporate policy on social responsibility as one among top three factors that might make them recruit PwD. Policy incentives, again, do not appear to be attractive enough for companies as it is the least chosen factor with only three responses as second and third most important factor.

Figure 29. Factors that employers put in consideration before recruiting PwD



In order to explore employers' thought on PwD recruitment, they are asked if they would prefer to hire a PwD in case a worker with disability at their facility quits. The responses show a non-discriminatory attitude. Only 2 employers would prioritize the recruitment of non-PwD. At the same time, the attitude seems impartial, rather than totally inclined to PwD, as only 1 employer would actually decide to replace a PwD with a PwD. A large majority of respondents chose an answer that was not given by the questionnaire, saying that they would assess potential workers based on their knowledge, skills and experience no matter she is PwD or non-PwD. This reaffirms the above finding that to the majority of employers, there is no factor which is more important than PwD's own knowledge and experience. PwD recruitment should bring benefits to both the morale of the organization and the business's operation.

Figure 30. What would employers do if a worker with disability quitted? (%)



#### *7.1.4. Understanding of Policies and Regulations Regarding the Employment of PwD*

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It is undeniable that the Vietnamese Government has been striving to improve the legal system and tailor supportive policies to promote the participation of PwD in the labour market as well as encourage enterprises to recruit PwD as their employees. The two laws that are widely considered core components of the policy framework regulating the relationships between PwD, enterprises, and the Vietnamese Government are the National Law on Disabilities 51/2010/QH12 and the Labour Code 10/2012/QH13.

These laws and its related legal documents (decrees and circulars) specify various incentives for businesses with employees on disability occupying 30% or more of their size, particularly benefits in terms of tax exemption, low-interest loans, priorities in land, ground and water surface lease, and support for better working conditions. Given their entitlement to such benefits, employers thus need to comply with the laws and ensure the statutory rights and benefits supposedly granted to PwD when employing them. In this sense, it is crucial for employers to learn and follow those policies and regulations as an effective way to keep them updated with potential incentives for PwD recruitment. To some extent, stronger motivation for businesses to hire PwD would equal bigger employment opportunities for PwD.

Accordingly, below are the survey's results regarding awareness of the 20 selected businesses in Ha Noi, Bac Ninh and HCMC concerning current policies and regulations for PwD's participation in the labour market.

#### *7.1.5. Legal Awareness of businesses*

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All businesses were asked 4 questions to collect their opinions on whether each of the 4 given statements was true or false to their legal knowledge. Each statement focuses on a type of benefits which employers of PwD may receive.

Among the 4 statements provided in the survey's questionnaire, the statement C1, C2, and C3 are true according to the National Law on Disabilities and the 2012 Labour Code. Meanwhile, C4 is a false statement.

*In general, the businesses have little to none awareness on the policies and regulations with regards to the benefits that they could receive if they employ PwD.* Half of 20 interviewed businesses did not know if any of the 4 statements were true or false, only 2 respondents gave their thought on the correctness of all 4 statements but none evaluated all 4 statements correctly. Specifically, for statement C1, all 3 businesses who gave their answers answered correctly by choosing "True". The same applies to statement C2 where all 7 respondents of this question answered correctly by choosing "True". For statement C3, out of 8 people who gave their evaluation, 7 people evaluated correctly while 1 evaluated incorrectly. And finally, out of 5 people who gave their evaluation on statement C4, only 1 person evaluated correctly by choosing "False".

Table 20. Businesses' knowledge about the benefits which employers of PwD may receive

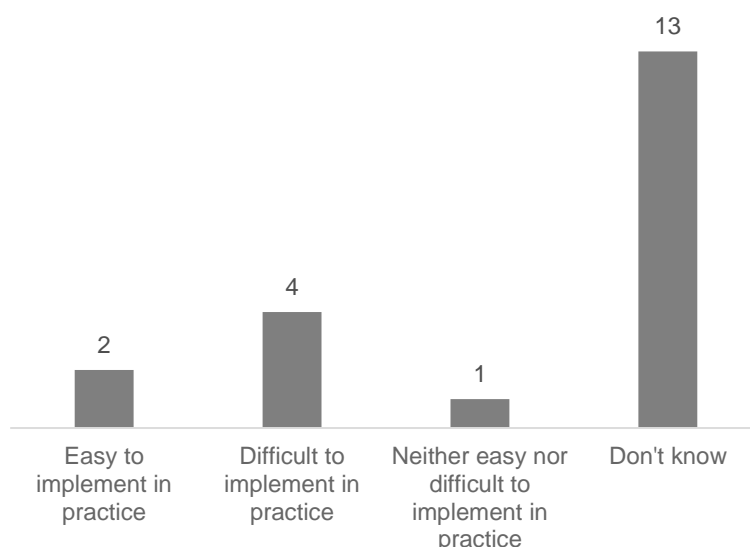
Statement	Businesses' opinion if each statement is TRUE of FALSE							
	True		False		Do not know		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
C1. Enterprises whose disabled employees accounts for 30% or more of its average number of employees in a year, shall be exempt from corporate income tax.	3	15	0	0	17	85	20	100
C2. Enterprises are funded by the State to improve working conditions and environment to be suitable for PwD. The support level is based on the ratio of PwD working permanently for the enterprise, the level of disability of the workers and the scale of the enterprise.	7	35	0	0	13	65	20	100
C3. Enterprises whose disabled employees accounts for 30% or more of its average number of employees in a year, shall be entitled to preferential loans from the Social Policy Bank according to production and business development projects.	7	35	1	5	12	60	20	100
C4. Enterprises whose disabled employees accounts for 30% or more of its average number of employees in a year, shall be exempted from land, ground and water surface lease for production and business activities.	4	20	1	5	15	75	20	100

#### 7.1.6. Ability to carry out administrative procedures to approve incentives for businesses employing PwD

All businesses participating in the survey were asked a common question: "How do you assess the administrative procedures to approve preferential treatments for enterprises employing PwD?" This question's purpose is to examine whether businesses are informed of the legal procedures to receive preferential treatments when hiring PwD, and if so, whether they think that those procedures are easy to follow or not. The result shows that 14 out of 20 interviewed businesses did not know about said procedures. Notably, out of 7 businesses who did, 4 confirmed that those procedures were difficult to follow in practice, only 2 assesses that they were easy to implement (Figure 31).



Figure 31. Ability to carry out administrative procedures to approve incentives for businesses employing PwD



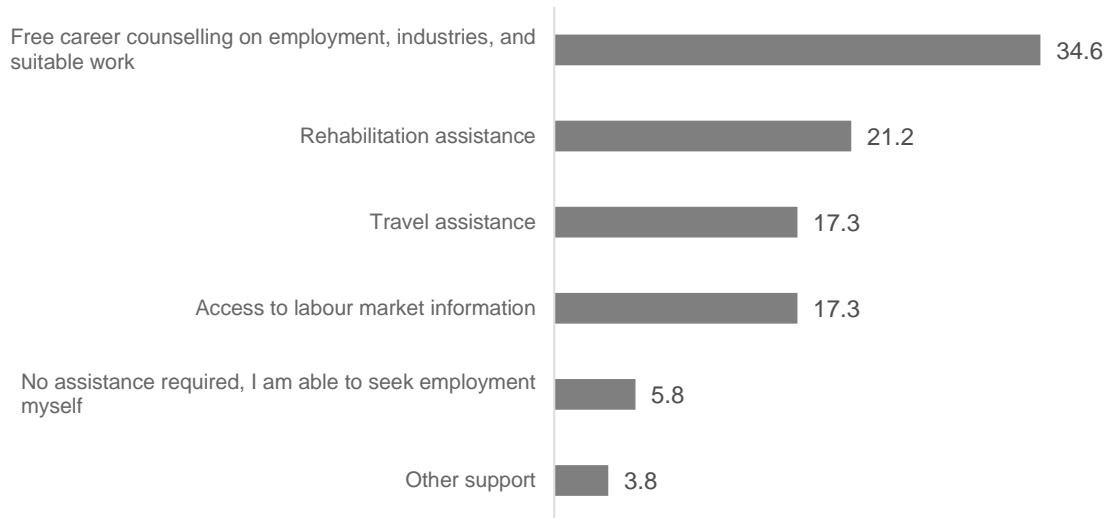
## 7.2. Barriers to PwD Participation in the Labour Market (perceived by PwD, employers)

### 7.2.1. Barriers to PwD

Among the 37 PwD who are currently not working, 11 people are unemployed and their situations are due to various reasons. The top three reasons are (i) “My health conditions are not good and not ready to get a new job”, (ii) “I am busy studying at school”, and (iii) “I am unable to find suitable jobs that meet my personal preferences”. *The reasons for not working seem to arise from personal matters instead of external factors like the discrimination towards PwD or the mismatch between the labour market demands and PwD’s skills.*

However, the *lack of access to employment services may be a significant obstacle for PwD*. When respondents were asked which kinds of assistance they need to seek a new job, more than a third of respondents (34.6%) told interviewers that they needed free and specialized career counselling that seriously take their health conditions into account. The next commonly mentioned support is rehabilitation assistance (making up 21.2% of choices). Travel assistance and access to labour market information account for the same share of choices (17.3%). Only 5.8% of PwD stated that they did not need any support to seek employment. These results may suggest new approaches in designing programmes to enhance PwD’s involvement in the labour market.

Figure 32. Main types of assistance that Pwd require to seek a new job (Unit: %)

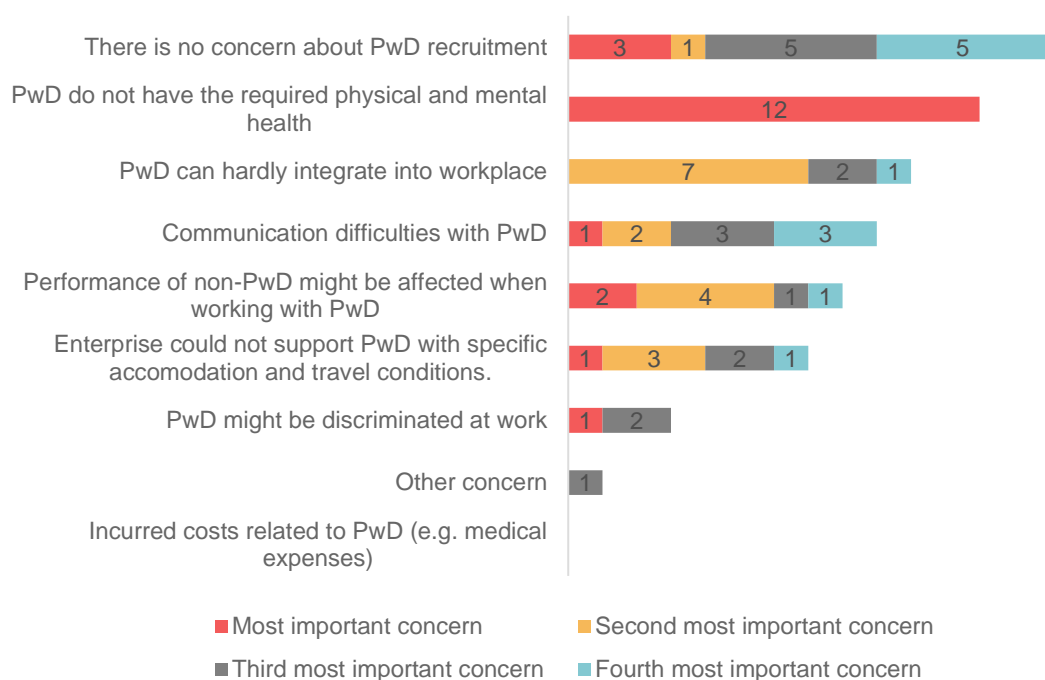


### 7.2.2. Barriers to Employers

*In general, employers are concerned about PwD's ability to work given their impairment. They tend to suspect that PwD might not have the required physical and mental health for the job. The majority of employers share this view. Once this is considered as major hindrance to PwD recruitment, it is deemed as the most important hindrance for PwD (12 responses out of 20) when the questionnaire asks employers to name four most important concerns. This response dominates other categories such as concerns about communication difficulties, negatively affected non-disabled workers' performance, required support for PwD accommodation and travel, and discriminate at workplace. Very few employers name those as the utmost important concern. On another note, 3 employers do not see any barriers to employing PwD.*

Second most popular concern among employers is the worry that PwD can hardly integrate into workplace, even though no employers deem it as the most important, a relatively large proportion express it as second most important concern. Other than that, it is noteworthy that none of 20 employers worries about possible incurred costs such as medical expenses from PwD hire.

Figure 33. Concerns that might hinder employer's decision towards PwD recruitment



### 7.3. Required Further Training and Support

The survey results indicate that labour market demand-oriented training has yet to be a priority to both TVET institutes and their students. This finding, hence, highlights the need of further training and support initiatives to promote deeper engagement of PwD in TVET and the labour market, especially in the context where PwD's connection with the labour market and their expectation for future employment, whether established through vocational institutions or training courses, have been disappointingly unsatisfactory.

To evaluate the scale of PwD's demand for further training and support, we asked PwD students who had graduated from TVET institutes and have entered the labour market how much they have spent on further courses and programmes after graduation to support their most recent job. A majority of 70.6% of the respondents confirmed that they had not undertaken any further study after graduating from TVET institutes, or that they had participated in further training specifically organized for their job but at no additional costs (eg. on-the-job training at workplace). 5 out of 17 respondents however answered that they had spent a certain amount of money, ranging from VND 500,000 to as much as VND 70 million, to improve their knowledge and skills.

Given the modest interest of many PwD in undertaking more market demand-oriented TVET, we attempted to explore their post-graduation plans and analyse their needs for further training. Out of 8 respondents who are attending formal or continuing TVET institutions, half expressed their intention to immediately enter the labour market, among whom 3 wished to work as salary workers and 1 planned to start their own business. The other half shared that

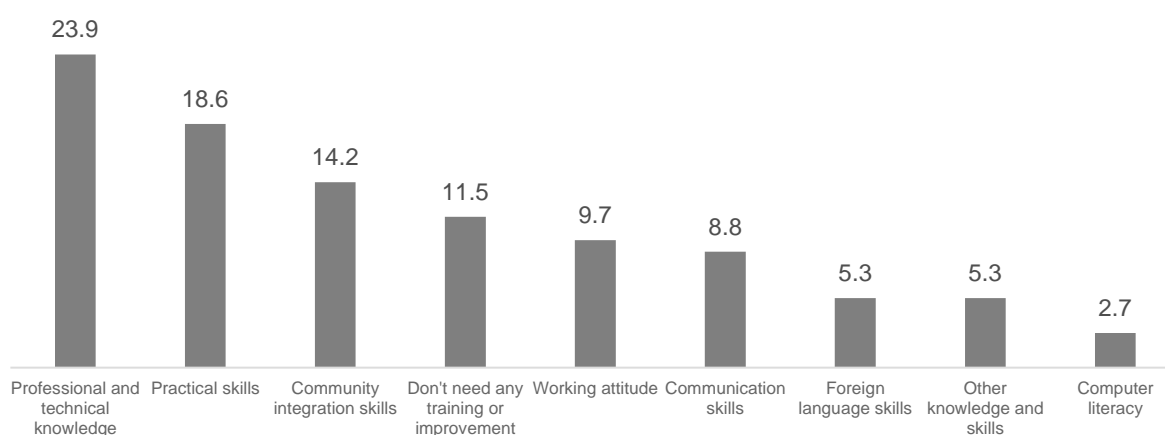
they would either pursue another TVET programme (3 respondents) or had no clear plans after graduation (1 respondents).

*Table 21. PwD's plans after graduating from TVET institution*

	Count	Percent
Self-employed, start their own business	1	12.5
Work as a paid employee for private sector	3	37.5
Pursue another TVET programme	3	37.5
No plans yet	1	12.5
Total	8	100.0

Respondents who have never been employed or used to work but are currently unemployed despite actively seeking jobs were asked if they required assistance to help land a job. Out of 30 people who participated in the surveys, 18 respondents mentioned “free career counselling, job introduction” as the kind of support they required; 11 PwD reported that they needed help on health improvement or labour rehabilitation, 9 respondents reportedly hoped to receive assistance in terms of transportation, and 9 confirmed that they would appreciate being provided with information on the labour market.

*Figure 34. Knowledge acquirement and skill improvement for better job performance (Unit: % of choices)*



Respondents who are currently working or used to work in the past were asked if they thought they needed to acquire and/or improve any knowledge and skills to better perform at their most recent job. Out of 113 answers, 23.9% was about improving professional and technical knowledge, followed by practical skills (18.6%), and community integration skills (14.2%). On the other hand, 11.5% of the respondents who are working or have been employed deemed further knowledge and skill improvement unnecessary, all of whom are notably residing in Bac Ninh Province.

## 8. LIMITATIONS

*This section presents limitations in implementing the study. The analysis of this study findings should be read in consideration of these limitations.*

This study is not free of flaws. In conducting the surveys and analysing their results, the limitations that concern the research team are: (1) small sample size, (2) timing of TVET participation of some PwD, (3) inexhaustive classification of disabilities, and (4) the limited comprehensiveness in employers' responses due to the restricted number of respondents from each interviewed employer.

In the first survey, 80 PwD from HCMC and Bac Ninh Province were invited to participate. *This sample size is relatively small*, particularly when only 12 out of 80 respondents have attended a formal TVET institute. The evaluation of formal TVET institutes across various dimensions including training programmes, quality of staff and supporting infrastructure, etc. based on these 12 PwD's answers might thus not be representative and particularly meaningful. Furthermore, although the number of interviewed PwD in the first survey in each city/province are the same at 40, the characteristics of the sampling frames are very different because they were provided by different agencies. The sampling frame for HCMC includes mostly people with mobility disabilities, vision impairments, and hearing losses and/or speech disorders. On the other hand, the sampling frame for Bac Ninh consists of people with mental and psychiatric disabilities and intellectual disabilities besides those with mobility disabilities. HCMC respondents are also typically younger with higher educational level than those in Bac Ninh. The analysis extracted from the first survey findings therefore might sometimes reflect these demographic differences between two research areas rather than the differences in quality of TVET institutes in HCMC and Bac Ninh Province.

Similarly, 20 employers in Bac Ninh Province, Hanoi, HCMC, and Dong Nai Province were invited to respond to the third survey of the study. *This sample size is rather small*, especially for the results to carry meaningful and inclusive implications regarding PwD participation in the labour market in the entire regions of Bac Ninh Province and HCMC. However, given the existing partnership between more than half of the interviewed employers and some TVET institutes, including BCI and HVCT, the findings of this survey are still relevant to the purpose of this study, which is to sketch a general picture of PwD participation in TVET and in the labour market in Bac Ninh Province and HCMC for the implementation of capacity development activities for key related stakeholders, such as BCI and HVCT, in the next phases. The results of the third survey are thus worth studying, with the connections between PwD, TVET institutes, and employers being highlighted to focus on the shared patterns among these key stakeholders regarding a number of important dimensions of the PwD inclusion action agenda.

The second limitation concerns *the timing of TVET participation of some PwD, mostly those in Bac Ninh in the first survey of 80 PwD*. Although one of the research questions of this survey is to find out if TVET institutes have been adequately prepared to meet PwD expectations and accommodate their participation in TVET, *some respondents reported that they had actually completed their TVET before they became disabled*, and their disabilities were admittedly one of the barriers to their participation in further training and/or in the labour market. It was thus not easy for these respondents to evaluate the level of support offered to PwD at the institute they attended or the discrimination situation at the school, simply because they were nondisabled students when they were attending TVET institutes.

Thirdly, *while the study adopted a classification of disability as laid out in the 2010 Law on Persons with Disabilities throughout all disability type-related questions in all surveys, there is still room for improvement as a more detailed classification seems desirable*. Through discussions with PwD respondents, it was reported that people in the same group as classified by form of disabilities in this survey might still face different challenges in life in general, and in their educational and training experience in particular. TVET trainers and employers also shared this opinion, claiming that people classified into the same type of disability might encounter different obstacles at TVET institutes or at their workplace. People with mobility disabilities for instance could be further classified into those with upper mobility issues, and those with lower mobility issues since the latter typically encounter more difficulties in travelling and require more assistance in transportation. In addition, the classification of disability should have considered respondents with multiple disabilities, whose experience might not be similar to those classified to only one group of disability.

Finally, in the third survey, only one respondent was interviewed at each surveyed employer. Although the respondent is usually someone that is responsible for either the general management of the company or human resources related policies including recruitment, compensation and benefits, performance appraisal, etc., *it is difficult to ensure that the respondent's answers are fully representative of the company's point of view*, and his/her opinions might not necessarily reflect the company's. The analysis of this survey findings should thus be read with these limitations in mind.

## 9. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

*This section highlights important conclusions and puts forward recommendations to the following phases of the action agenda on PwD inclusion.*

Although the PwD's demand for TVET has been observable with 63.5% of the respondents who have never participated in TVET wishing to be trained, and 75.0% of those who have already received TVET expressing their hope to continue their TVET, *the participation of PwD in TVET, especially in integrated training programmes at formal TVET institutes in Bac Ninh Province and HCMC has not been very significant.* 65% of the 80 interviewed PwD in Bac Ninh Province and HCMC has admittedly never received TVET, either formal or continuing. Among the PwD respondents who are attending/have attended a formal TVET institute, two-thirds are reportedly going to special TVET schools exclusively for PwD, and only a third of them confirmed that they were attending/attended integrated TVET together with nondisabled students. PwD participation rate is reported to be even lower at the Bac Ninh College of Industry (BCI) and the Ho Chi Minh Vocational College of Technology (HVCT) – the two partner TVET colleges of the GIZ's Programme "Reform of TVET in Vietnam" – where most of the interviewed management staff and teachers agreed that the schools were not hosting any PwD students.

*This limited participation of PwD in TVET, particularly in integrated training programmes, can be attributable to their poor physical and/or mental health conditions* as compared to the nondisabled peers. "Poor health conditions" is the difficulty discussed the most among all groups of respondents, including PwD, TVET teachers and nondisabled students, when they were asked to elaborate on the perceived barriers to PwD participation in TVET. Other obstacles that PwD and TVET teachers, nondisabled students agreed on include: *lack of supporting infrastructure and equipment for PwD, and teachers' poor training skills to work with PwD.* In addition, PwD themselves also admitted that they were worried about the affordability of the TVET tuition fees, the availability of suitable training programmes and training methods for PwD, etc. From the TVET teachers' points of view, they were also concerned about PwD's dim career prospects even after they have completed the training programmes.

In order to help alleviate the low participation rate of PwD in integrated TVET, the following recommendations can be taken into consideration:

- While PwD poor health conditions seem to be the greatest barrier dictating most of their life decisions, providing financial support for PwD health improvement might not be in the scope of this TVET-focused agenda. However, understanding the importance of good physical and mental health, GIZ can consider working with Disabled Persons' Organizations (DPO) to design programmes and activities that support PwD health improvement and rehabilitation so that they are in a better shape for education and training.
- Lack of supporting infrastructure and equipment to facilitate the training of PwD is also an apparent issue at TVET institutes, especially those attended mostly by nondisabled students. Basic infrastructure such as wheelchair ramps, accessible toilets, priority parking space is still not available at BCI and HVCT, which greatly inhibits the visit of PwD, not to mention their participation in training. Such infrastructure should be made available to encourage PwD to attend these institutions, knowing that they could at least get to the classrooms.



- Similarly, the lack of teachers with skills and experience to train PwD in integrated programmes is also discouraging PwD from attending TVET at school together with PwD. Although most interviewed PwD and nondisabled students rated TVET teachers' professional knowledge, technical experience, and attitude as good to very good, their skills to work specifically with PwD was not that impressive. Although 40% of the surveyed staff and teachers at BCI and HVCT were confident of their training skills, most students (including PwD) believed that their training skills for PwD were rather weak. Only 2 out of 40 interviewed teachers shared that they had participated in training courses and/or programmes on special education and training for PwD. It is recommendable that BCI and HVCT teachers be provided with more of these training programmes on special education and training for PwD to improve their skills.
- The affordability of TVET tuition fees is the second greatest concern shared among the PwD respondents. To this end, GIZ might consider providing scholarships and financial assistance to PwD students via TVET institutions.
- The interviewed TVET teachers at BCI and HVCT believed that PwD's dim career prospects after TVET graduation was one of the reasons why not many PwD enrolled in the training programmes at the two TVET colleges. The career development and employment services at these two colleges, however, is assessed by the majority of nondisabled students as satisfactory to very good. Providing job placement at the partner employers is also reportedly one of the most common types of partnership between employers and TVET institutes, including BCI and HVCT. The two colleges should extend these services and strengthen their partnership with employers to better include PwD students, if any, in the employment benefits that such partnership creates.

*These recommendations, however, are meaningful and realisable only if TVET institutions, particularly BCI and HVCT, are open to providing integrated training to PwD and willing to admit PwD students.* At BCI and HVCT, more than 40% of the surveyed staff and teachers believed that PwD and PwD could not be trained together, and that there should be separate training classes for PwD and PwD. One of the interviewed management staff at BCI even revealed that students had to undergo health examination before being admitted to the school, and those who failed to meet the school's requirements on health conditions (such as PwD) would not be admitted to the college. However, the reasons behind this practice might not be the college's perception of integrated training as a burden (up to 82.5% of the interviewed staff and teachers at BCI and HVCT did not think of PwD's attendance at the TVET college where they were working as a burden to the school, if the college was to admit PwD), or discrimination (discriminatory actions were reported to almost never happen at these two colleges, and the surveyed PwD themselves confirmed that they did not experience discrimination on a regular basis during their training at TVET schools). Rather, the interviewed teachers shared the concern that including PwD in TVET would complicate their training. *These results seem to suggest that BCI and HVCT are not ready and open to integrated training for PwD because they believed that their teachers lacked training skills and experience to provide training to PwD, particularly in an integrated training environment where PwD and PwD jointly participate. Other concerns include the schools' not being equipped for the purpose of PwD training, and the questionable availability of suitable training programmes designed for both PwD and PwD.* It is important to note that limited budget is reportedly not one of the biggest challenges to the inclusion of PwD at BCI and HVCT.

In light of this analysis, it is recommended that in parallel with supporting the TVET institutions with infrastructure and equipment to accommodate PwD, and providing TVET teachers with capacity building activities to improve their training skills for PwD, *it is important to change the schools' mindset of integrated training and enhance their can-do attitude*. Besides equipping BCI and HVCT with the necessary facilities, *basic training on integrated training should be provided to all teachers at the two colleges before the teachers receive training on specific skills to train PwD on a selective basis*. To further elaborate, because it might be difficult for the TVET colleges to immediately accept PwD and expect all of their training staff to be well-trained on skills to work with PwD, an initial pilot programme can better serve the purpose. After providing the two colleges with basic training on integrated training for PwD, *GIZ can consider supporting the two colleges to design and initiate a pilot programme where suitable PwD students are selected and provided support to pursue a number of TVET programmes at BCI and HVCT*. According to the PwD's answers in one of the surveys in this study, massage therapy, office computing/computer literacy, graphic design, and electric/electronics are the three most popular TVET trades among the respondents. Considering that IT, graphic design, and electric/electronics programmes are offered at both BCI and HVCT, and IT and graphic design were also evaluated by BCI and HVCT teachers as trades with attractive career prospects for PwD after graduation, *the pilot programme should be designed to provide training on these programmes (IT, graphic design, electrical engineering, and electronics) in the first stage*. The training of teachers and preparation of infrastructure and equipment should also be carried out in these programmes within the scope of the pilot programme first. The pilot programme should also begin with a reasonable number of PwD students to ensure it does not disrupt the training experience of nondisabled students and teachers. If successful cases are recorded in the pilot programme, GIZ and the two TVET colleges can consider scaling up the inclusion model and accepting more PwD students to the integrated training programmes in the aforementioned TVET trades.

Regarding PwD participation in the labour market, both the interviewed PwD and employers agreed that the PwD physical and/or mental impairments were the greatest barrier to their employability. In addition, *the lack of access to employment services is also a significant obstacle for PwD*. When respondents were asked which kinds of assistance they need to seek a new job, more than a third of respondents told interviewers that they needed free and specialized career counselling that seriously take their health conditions into account. *It is thus noteworthy that career services should be included in the pilot inclusion programme at BCI and HVCT to ensure the comprehensiveness of TVET*. *A strengthened tie between the TVET colleges and their partner employers, with special focus on job placement for PwD students graduating the pilot programme should also be established to facilitate the transition from TVET to the labour market of PwD students*. Employment, after all, is among the important goals of education and training for students in general, and for PwD in particular.

INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH  
DISABILITIES IN TECHNICAL  
AND VOCATIONAL  
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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