



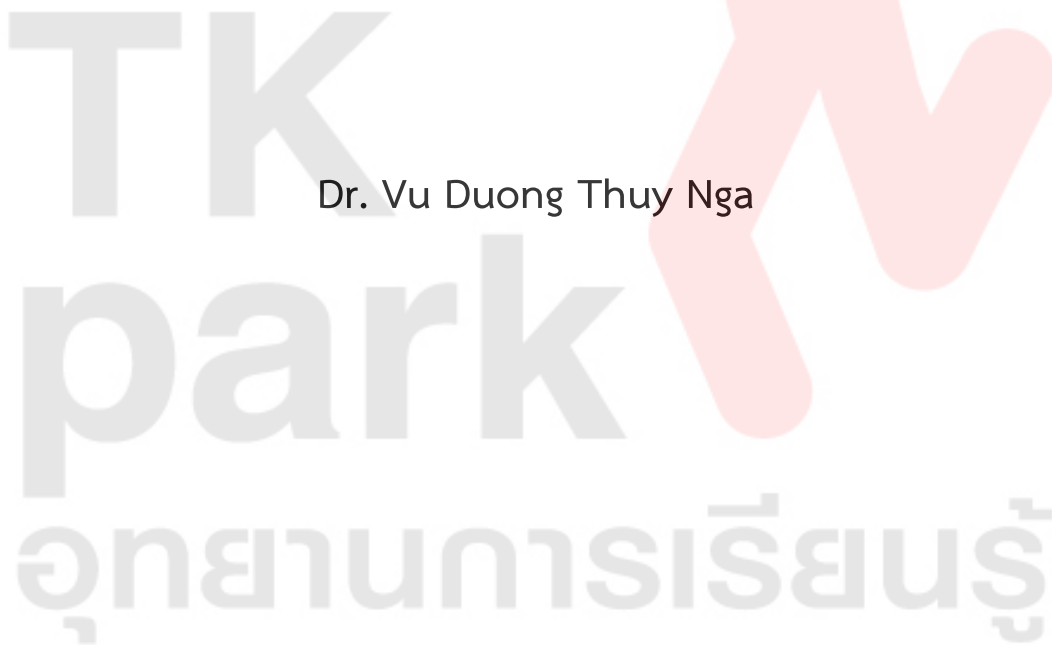
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Transferring of books among libraries:

The solution of effective promotion of the use of the books  
and other information in order to reduce people cultural standard  
between rural and city communities

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Transferring of books among libraries: The solution of effective promotion of the use of the books and other information in order to reduce people cultural standard between rural and city communities

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**Abstract:** The efforts of the libraries to narrow the gaps between the urban and the rural area, between the mountainous area and the plain area of reading promotion and information use of Vietnamese people. Vietnam is the country of 54 ethnic groups with 70% of the population live in rural areas. There are about 1 million visually impaired people. In recent years, the public libraries have made many efforts to make equality and favorable conditions for people in remote areas and the visually impaired to access books and information easily and conveniently. Books and other library materials are circulated from provincial libraries to community at grass-root level; specific reading points have been available for the visually impaired. Provincial libraries take their significant role in improving intellectual level and providing information and knowledge with community.

Forms of libraries' material circulation to community, include: The book-transferring service of public libraries (Automobile library, Book motor, Sending library staff to residential areas and schools...); The service for the visually-impaired (Onsite services, Transferring books to the Blind Association branches of provinces, cities...).

The support from Government, domestic and oversea organizations, includes: The state programs funding in libraries with, The target program in cultural development, The program of providing books for community at grass-root level, and the support of NGOs, individuals.

Analysis the difficulties of the libraries in serving people in remote areas and the blind: The lack of materials, especially materials in ethnic languages, the lack of transportation books,



mobile libraries, wage and allowance for librarians at grass-root level are inappropriate, most people work very hard for living, they don't spend much time for reading.

Some proposals regarding the equality for people to access books, information and knowledge in Vietnam.

## Introduction

Vietnam is a country with 54 ethnic groups living together in harmony way. In addition, nearly 70 % of Vietnam population is engaged their lives in rural areas. They have to work in hard conditions for their living in terms of poor infrastructure, cultural life provided from government. Last, unfortunately there are about one million visually impaired people and most of them live in rural regions of the country. As a result of such circumstances, the rate of poverty is still high and the gap of rural and city in standard of life is enlarged. However, It is true that ethnic diversity creates much more traditional cultures which recognized as a excellent contribution to make multi- culture for the country. We recognize that multi-culture means diversity in traditional carnival, multi-eating one and spiritual demonstration activities. All of such diversities will contribute for developing tourism industry in the country. The question raises from our librarians and book interest ones that how we can help poor-chance people especially the blind one to approach books and magazines from media resources easily in order to increase their incomes and promote their standard living? Say in other ways, how can they match their potentials as a mean of local resources to improve their living condition by reliving reading culture activities? It is more concerned knowledge park concept which we would like to raise in Asian countries.

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## 1. Dynamic policy of Vietnamese government for poor community throughout reading culture campaign

It is clear that our expectation of reliving reading culture especially for less - opportunity people to approach the books meets to the Vietnamese government policy of development of reading culture which is aimed to make opportunities for citizen in poor communities to read the book as much as possible they can. By this way, they may have a channel of self-learning for improving their knowledge and living skill to adapt new life that oriented with globalization. Further, reading culture provide the tool for poor people to perfect themselves engaged with Buddhist philosophy of "heartfelt and doing right things will get beautiful reaction from the life". In short, reliving reading culture is a strategic in one hand for improving standard living and in other hand contributing reduction of poverty in poor communities of the country. Such policy is not only strongly supporting from central government but also from local ones in all provinces and districts of the nation. In some cases, companies, publication houses and even individuals also support books and other conditions for development of reading culture for less-educated people in poor communities. As a result of such policy, there are many reading rooms established for villagers in rural areas in different parts of the country and especially book room for visually impaired people in Ho Chi Minh city made by public libraries.

It cannot decline the fact that reading culture campaign raise much more impacts in our society in the way of improving cultural life in all communities of the country. We assume that the more we raise the campaign the more we get the responding from society and step by step we will making better use of book resources supporting for poor people in the way of helping them overcoming their difficulties.



## 2. The role of public libraries in promoting book bring to community

In Vietnam, we are now could not establish the model of library system including central library and subordinated ones as a mean of branch libraries. Therefore, it is difficult exchange and loan the books among libraries through the system. However, we try our best to enrich the book source of each individual library by some suitable ways with the target of caring them to poor people.

In fact, in recent years, public libraries in different districts and provinces have been affording to supply enough books for such poor villagers in some flexible ways such as circulation of the books among libraries with the aim of self-renew resources and especially creating reading room for blink people in some locations.

It is significant to say that reading culture contribute an opportunity to farmers in many parts of the country to learn how they can reduce their poverties based on their local resources. The reports from different journals and newspapers indicated that the results on reading culture campaign is productive. Some farmers in remote areas including minority one have been applied appropriate techniques and technologies for their farming effectively. It is reasonable to say that for the less - educated people, the way of learning by short books with more pictures are more needed to make them in self-sufficiency and self-reliance. In some cases, public library has made reading book campaign in order to stimulate students to go to libraries to read. Library card will provide to good student if they are poor. Some libraries also permit soldier cam, commune and other reading group borrow more books for their reading at home.



## *2.1 Circulation of book loan from public library of district and province to small one in remote village*

The programme of book circulation have been doing for ten years in 63 provincial libraries of Vietnam. It seem to be that the programme have more effective in terms of supporting books to rural areas especially minority groups in high lands, border sand island regions where less - opportunity people to approach the book live in.

The rotation of book is done 3 or 6 month times. Each small library in remote areas can borrow from 200 to 400 books free of charge for use in the period. Such tactic have more effects in poor society as two mean of stimulating book reading habit and informed to poor people new policy from government and other information concerned to their current need. Approaching books in terms of technique transfer, new product supporting the life and production meet the current needs of the farmer. It is interesting that some poor families learn to apply new technique and technology for their farming and they become rich from their poor lands. Women union in each village is first pioneer in self-learning and adopting new things from the books for their production and lives. It is clear that the more they apply new way of farming the easy loan money they receive from bank for their farming production.

### *- Carry books to remote areas by motor-bicycle*

Concerned to transfer book to remote areas, it is true that there is a campaign of making better way for less - opportunity people to approach the book in our society. Because of poor road in remote region especially in high land, the librarian of public library has to carry books to villagers by motor-bicycle. Fixed period of two or three months depend on plan of each public library, librarians use their own motor-bicycle to bring about 100 to 300 books to reading room in poor communities. A good example, madam Mai Thi Lam who is a librarian of school library in Tan Khanh Hoa village, Giang Thanh district, Kien Giang province near Cambodia- Vietnam border. Every day she carries the books from her library to reading rooms in



6 school branches for Khmer pupil readers. It is noted that one of these location is far from her library up till 20 km. The other good example, madam Pham Thi Hoa who is a director of public library of Bat Cat district, Lao Cai province. She has made the duty to for her library is that each time of circulation of book, there are about 200 to 300 books transferred to remote destination by motor-bicycle. This supporting to make an opportunity for village pupils to learn by reading productively. For ethnic minority in-stay school library, she spend one day a week to help librarians in small library there completing their professional work and directing service pupils perfectly.

*- Supplying books to remote zone by special book vehicle*

In Vietnam there has three libraries established thus new way of rotation of books to support readers in remote areas. They are General Science Library if Ho Chi Minh city, Public Library if Hanoi city and Public Library of Yen Bai City. It considered a new model of rotation of book in Vietnam. By such way, readers in rural zones can have a chance to read new books support to their current needs comprised of knowledge , information, entertainment and others. The method is more useful for minority groups and soldiers who live in border regions which is isolated from society.



Figure 1: Car mobile library of the General Science Library in Ho Chi Minh City





The public library of Hanoi has one book vehicle with 1500 books and 6 connected Internet computers to serve 10 poor villages in the city. The library has planned for three future years that every weekend this vehicle run to work with the aim of supporting pupils in the village to learn from reading and use of internet effectively.



Figure 2: Mobile Library- Knowledge Wheel of the Hanoi Library service in the suburbs of Hanoi

*- New model of book supply for school readers*

Since 2007, school named Le Van Tam located in Long My town, Hau Giang province has been created new tactic to attract pupils to reading book in different contents of life in rest time during school time. One beautiful book case with colorful decoration is offered to pupils during rest times. Each class representative comes to such book case to bring one book or magazine as a mean of collect sample randomly. Then under shade of big tree, pupils listen story or information from the book or the paper. It is remark that the book and magazine in the special book case usually change typically in order to introduce new ones to pupils with new concept and information as a mean of oriented young readers to in right way of learning engaged with their psychology lass.





- *Touching letter room for visually impaired people*

It is very happy that since 1999, Minister of Culture - Sport - Tourism of Vietnam has been supported some public libraries in big city such as Public Library of Hanoi and General Science Library of Ho Chi Minh city to provide service of touching letter room for such visually impaired people. Up till now there are 34 other such rooms have opened to serve visually impaired people in different provinces. However, there are a few people to come to library reading braille books. It is clear that to learn to read braille need more times for training them. On the other hand, due to travel difficulty for them, they did not want to go to library. So it is useful to transfer braille books to visually impaired union. By this way reading activity for such people will be done well. In fact, some public libraries of the country have collaborated with visually impaired unions in order to increase activities in terms of training and introduction braille books for such poor people. There are some braille book contests to hold in different cities for blind people to help them a opportunity to learn and improve their knowledge for portion of their quality of life.



Figure 3: General Science Library in Ho Chi Minh City with visually impaired children



*- Contribution of private libraries to promote reading activities*

There are 50 private libraries and 80 family bookcase to establish to serve community in different locations supported by different donors in the country. They are rich man and good intention people. A good example, sir Nguyen Quang Thach in Quynh Phu district, Thai Binh province have raised for money to build the family bookcase to supply book for his rural commune. He is aware that rural has few books but in this case there are many people who need reading books. He is quite right and his bookcase has more people to come to read books. There are about 80 % of pupil readers in total. Nowadays, there have a tendency to apply this model in deferent locations in Thai Binh province. They expect that the more family bookcases establish the more "reading space" will be made. They also state that readers go to family bookcase not only for reading book but also for sharing interest, habit and other aspect of life each other. Further, through the chance they can help together in their farming production and difficulties of their lives.

### **3. Take care about citizen reading activities of the Government and NGO for development of personal ability**

Since alive, President Ho Chi Minh was very interested in making opportunity for reading of citizen. He said in the time of preparations for the establishment of the Party, in "Revolutionary Way" book (Duong Cach Menh) (1927) that it was necessary to open reading room together with building schools and hospitals. He also stated that the learning method is in diversity ways such as in school, in books and in life.

Therefore, in policy to develop nation of the Communist Party of Vietnam was made guideline for the Government to work concerned. The main duty is to make a good condition for helping citizen in reading book effective. In 2004, one of very important instruction of the Party Central Committee with number of 42/CT-TW did point out that



(i) We need take care of the development of reading culture for all citizen classes and all organizations in the country

(ii) We try our best to develop the network of supplying book and magazine and other kinds of publications with the right subjects for current needs of citizen in reading in different locations of the country especially rural, remote area and isolated ones [1].

We are clearly recognized that to develop information, knowledge and culture in right way to be main components to develop the nation. So concerned to key point of culture for future development of nation, Vietnam also has the cultural strategy named Cultural Development Strategy oriented to the year of 2020 made by the Government. The strategy has identified one of the objectives and tasks for the development of the cultural in general and libraries in particular are: (a) Innovative modes of operation to library for serving citizen to read effectively are focused on information service, technology engaged with automatic and modernize in the stages of the operation of the library. They are (b) Establishing link among the libraries in order to exploit useful characteristic of network with full documentary environment and to enrich each library in the network is should be done as perfect as possible (c) Development of reading for citizen oriented to long - term programme of nation in the way of industrialization and modernization of the country is a useful for sustainable development of nation [2].

It is very essential to making better use of media resources with the target of easy selection of books for readers. In addition, the construction of library materials and providing right and enough time for readers to read is necessary. Last, it needs to make the campaign of reading in whole country in order to contributing development of effective reading now and future Vietnamese generation.



### ***3.1 The programme of Central Government in funding for library and reading book of citizen***

The government has spent much more money from public sector for the programme. In fact, a number of following programmes and projects have been implemented. They are concluded three main activities. The target programme of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism has been equipping books for district libraries in remote areas and supporting books for stock rotation of the province library. As a result of the programme, each year target programme is spent about 25 billion Vietnam currency for such. The Ministry of Information and Communication did set up and invest in post-cultural unit in the village. The Ministry of Justice equipped law-book for the commune. All the programmes and projects mentioned about is considered the efforts to help people to access and use of books more convenient.

### ***3.2 The support of NGO concerned reading book for citizen***

It is true that there are a number of international organizations and foreign countries supporting for such activity. Some of main donors are the UNESCO, the Asia Foundation, the British Council and the World Bank. They have many activities like supporting books for the library, budget funding, invited to author, organization to advocate for reading events. In fact, total of 163 libraries has received books funded from The Asia Foundation in the period from 2000 to present with a value of approximately \$ 15 million.

The other useful support for 40 provinces and cities which have received funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through the project "Improving the ability to use public computers and Internet access in Vietnam". The money we get \$ 50 million in total. (of which from Donors: 33 million, from Vietnamese counterpart: 17 million).





provisions of the responsibilities of the public library are set out in the Government Decree of 72/2002/ND-CP. The decree said that the public library in province need to establish responsible department produced document by ethnic minority language for them who located in the province. Public libraries also have the responsibility to coordinate with the blind union to produce Braille books and newspapers in Braille for the visually impaired people [4]. In some cases, the investment budget for library activities is limited especially for district libraries. In fact, some library districts have poor condition for their professional work. The district library staff are still weak in professional skill. Funds allocated for library activities of the Centre for Culture, Information and Sport are not enough to pay for all activity especially for buying new book. Therefore, the application of information technology in the district library activities is still poor. The public library is the same situation. So books and materials are still poor due to limited funds, while the price of books, newspapers and documents tends to increase day by day. At the result of such reasons, average number of books per capita people in public libraries is very low with 0.36 copies per people. Ethnic minority people go to the library is limited because the books in their own language are not so more. Transfer book and library which service are limited. In some cases, people in remote areas needs to read book but they live far from the library.

In universities and colleges, only some big ones have investment, development projects in order to have rich resources for learning and research of students. While most of them, the new library just built but not yet effective for the teaching and learning of teachers and students.

School library is generally weak due to limited fund, human resource and infrastructure. The number of books in the school library is generally poor. Most of librarians are poor in professional skill. For reader, people are busy earning a living and they do not have much time for reading. It is noted that 70% of Vietnam's population are farmers, and workers with low





incomes. Therefore, it is reasonable to say that reading habit among the population has not yet been established.

## 5. Some recommendations concerned to create equality for people in the use of books, information and knowledge

We assume that making better condition for citizen reading is the most important duty and needs more support from the government, NGO and all forces from society.

### *5.1 Petition to the Government*

The Government need to make the suitable policy to develop the reading to ensure that people have the right to read and enjoy books. It is more concerned to policies to develop education, science & technology and culture. It is also need to strongly support to library and publishing activities.

More related with library development, it is essential to have both short term and long term development programmes to support reading activities for the whole country. To meet current need for the development, the increase budget of the target programme of the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism is need in order to continue getting more achievements for long-term run. It is also need to have subsidy for the Publisher in the publication of book versions in ethnic minority languages and books for the blind.

### *5.2 Recommendations to the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism*

The Ministry is responsible to the Government for performing state management of library activity and so it is very important to have advised submit to the Government in the development of policy for library and creating conditions for people with different conditions in equality in the use of books, information and knowledge. Librarians have an important role because they are organized for people to read, to satisfy their reading needs and use of the



information right way. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct training and retraining for them to update skill and other needs.

### ***5.3 Recommendations to the Ministry of Information and Communications***

It is useful to have activity to stimulate the reading in all provinces and cities of the country and to help people to be aware about reading and its meaning. There are many way to work for these target, such as organizing Vietnamese festival reading with the types if organize national reading week, books exhibition and sale preferential prices and periodically organize book fairs in different regions of the country. It also need to open forum, recommend books on television, radio and the Internet. Because these programmes on radio and television should develop the appropriate time in order to attract a wider audience and viewers. On the other hand, we need to carry out activities to honor those who have contributed to the development of reading culture in the country with following aspects: creation of valuable works, organizing the reading and dissemination of material transfer valuable scientific education, arts and humanities.

### ***5.4 Recommendations to agencies, organizations and professional associations***

It is necessary to attract the attention of society to the reading culture included promoting dynamic and creative features in the way of works such as supporting the unions, teams with cultural creativity education, art, information, media. It is also need to promote the role of professional associations related to reading such as Author, Publication and Library Association.

It is also essential to raise cultural enjoyment for people especially workers and farmers. The other need is to promote coordination of the cultural institutions of the industry such as post-cultural centers, communal libraries and public reading rooms.



### 5.5 Recommendations to the library

For public libraries, we need to pay attention to a number of specific issues concerned effective service such nuclear bookstore in order to keep the representative works of world & Vietnam in the field of science and technology, culture and technology arts, medicine, economics, etc. On the other hand, it is useful to apply tactics to attract people to use the public library system effectively. Next, it is very important to improve quality of service to make more opportunity for reader to go to libraries to read easily. Last, we also need to call funding from organizations, individuals, NGOs in order to establish community libraries for remote areas.

#### Conclusion:

- Promoting reading for citizen in whole country is a bridge to shorten the gap between cities and rural areas by the way of making better access to information and knowledge through books and newspapers for everyone in the nation.

- It seems that promoting reading for citizen to make opportunity for sustainable development of nation and helping the poor man especially the handicapped people who live in remote areas to have a tool to overcome their difficulty of life.

- Increasing reading activity is a smart way for self-learning of citizen to support good human resources for development of economy of the country.

- Such activity is closely linked to the strategic objectives of development of nation in the period of the year of 2011 to 2020 that the Party and the Government of Viet Nam has set up.





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