

## **I. EVALUATION OF CURRENT VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM**

### **1. Network of schools**

According to statistics of the HCMC Service of Training and Education, the number of vocational schools and training centers was over 200 in 1996. There were 153 training centers and 22 vocational high school licensed by the HCMC Service of Training and Education in 1998. However, the HCMC Economic Institute's survey revealed 31 units had been disbanded, so the city vocational networks dropped sharply to 122 units, down nearly 100%. The reason of decline is mainly that some careers boomed without plan including tailoring, haircutting, and the training was hasty, therefore the training quality was poor and the graduates could not find a job.

The HCMC-based vocational schools were owned by the central government, local authorities, and private sector. According to the survey, 40 schools were state-run establishments, accounting for 32.79% and 82 by the private sector, or 67.21%.

### **2. Trained occupation and industry**

The occupation and industry trained in HCMC-based vocational schools include:

a. Culture and art: music, harmony, musical instruments, audio technique, computer music, fine arts, painting, culture.

b. Social and human sciences: foreign language, interpretation, pedagogy, medicine and pharmaceuticals.

c. Economics and administration: tourism and hotel, business administration, accounting, trade, foreign trade, typewriting, clerk, security guarding, cooking, haircutting, nutrition, bartender, make-up.

d. Technique: mechanical engineering, electricity, electronics, informatics, food processing, chemicals, printing, sea and road transport, agriculture and forestry, construction, textile and garment and others.

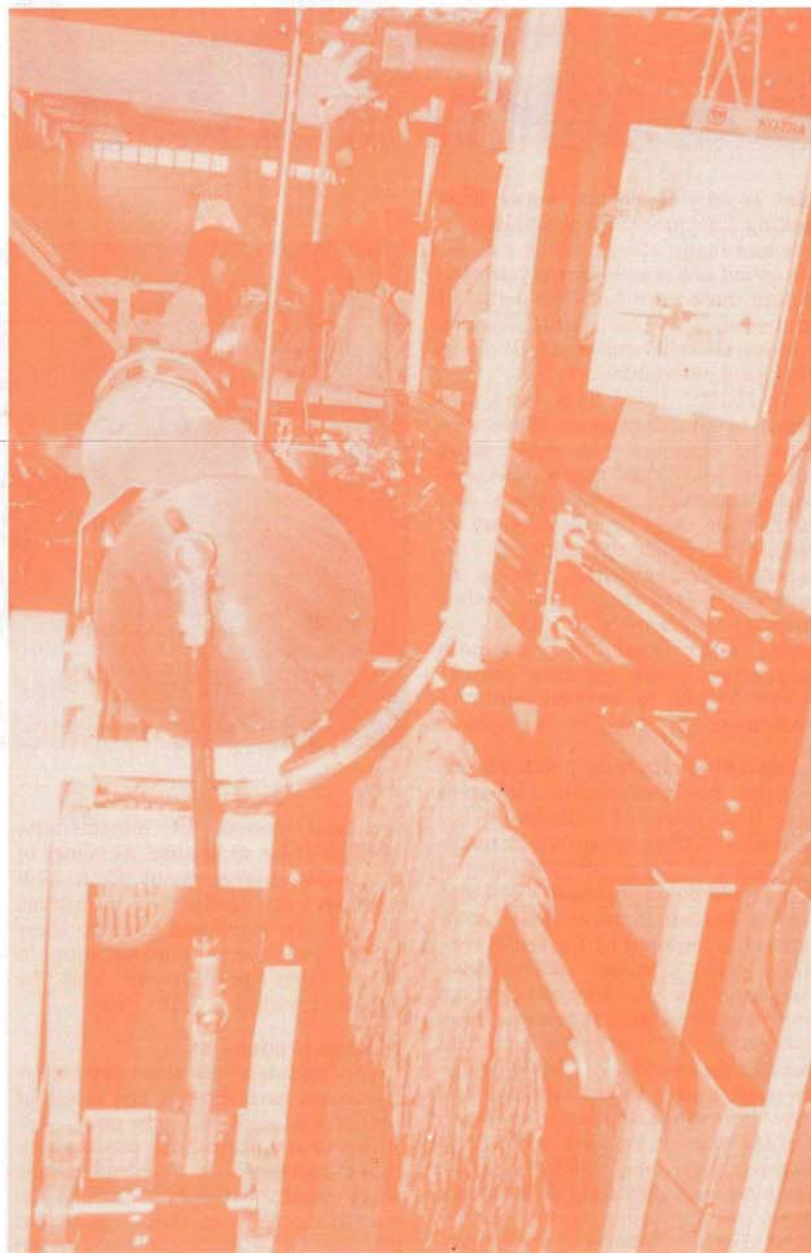
There were 19 schools, or 15.57% training in social and human sciences; 19 or 15.57% in economics and administration; 84 or 68.85% in technology. Nevertheless, some schools also trained additional careers in addition to their major functions stated in their license.

### **3. Training model**

a. Length of training:

# **EVALUATION OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM AND SUPPLY OF SKILLED WORKERS IN HCMC**

by Prof. Dr. NGUYỄN THỊ CÀNH





- Short-term training prolonged 1, 3, or 6 months for simple careers meeting the market demand for seasonal workers including tailors, repairer of home appliances, haircutters. This kind of training was mainly implemented by state-owned vocational centers (in districts) and private schools.

- Long-term training was undertaken following courses and syllabus supervised by the state agencies. The training duration was 18 to 24 months for long-term courses or 6 to 12 months for short ones. The professional skill of graduates would reach the 3/7 level;

- Training both general subjects and professional skills: the duration was 2 years or up, the graduates could attain high school degree and 2/7 professional skill certificate.

b. Linking training and production:

Some schools undertook both training and production such as hair-cutting, tailoring. Some trained workers for enterprises in the same corporation, some both trained and provided employment services. Some had financial relations with enterprises (joint venture or training contract). In HCMC, there were also foreign-invested vocational schools, mainly training in foreign language and information technology. Other foreign investors provided only finance, not professional training, to local schools.

#### 4. Evaluation of teachers' quality

First, we examined the educational attainment of directors of current vocational schools. The survey indicated out of 122 directors there were 58 obtaining college and university degree, accounting for 47.54%, 44 acquiring some training, or 36.07%, 10 obtaining vocational high school degree, or 8.2%; 6 having master degree, or 4.92%; and 4 having Ph.D. degree, or 3.28%. The total number of vocational teachers was 1,807, including 1,168 teachers or 64.64% working for state-owned schools; and 639 teachers or 35.36% for private schools. Those teaching theory numbered 775, representing 42.89% and practice 1,032 or 57.11%. The structure of teacher in public and private sectors was different: 44.86% theory and 55.14% practice in the public sector and 39.28% theory and 60.72% practice in the private sector. In the meantime, the enterprises required training in theory (30%) and practice (70%). As a result, there was a surplus of theory teachers and shortage of practice ones.

In terms of occupation and industry, there were 32 teachers for general subjects, or 1.88%; 177 or 10.41% for social and human sciences; 151 or 8.88% for economics and administration; and 1,251 or 73.54% for technical training. The teacher quality could be seen by their degrees: Ph.D. (38 persons, accounting for 2.23%); MA (129 or 7.58%); college and university (1,081 or 63.55%), vocational high school (203 or 11.93%) and skilled workers (250 or 14.7%).

#### 5. Facilities in vocational schools

The evaluation of facilities of vocational schools was based on the following criteria: capital investment, ground, room, equipment, workshop and laboratory. According to the survey, most of vocational schools had small investment capital. The reason was as follows:

- For state-owned schools: Their finance came mainly from state budget but 94% of this amount was used for construction and fixed asset. Their working capital was thus very small.

- For private schools: Their own capital included 75% for construction and fixed assets and 25% for operational costs.

The survey also revealed there were 86 schools with an investment capital of VND1-5 billion, accounting for 70.49% of total vocational schools; 26 schools or 21.31% with VND1-5 billion, and 5 schools or 4.1% mainly state-owned ones with VND5-10 billion and 5 schools mainly state-owned ones with over VND10 billion.

In respect of ground, there were 55 schools occupying a small area (below 100 m<sup>2</sup>), representing 45.05% of total vocational schools, they were wholly private-owned. Nineteen schools (13 private ones) had a ground of 100-500 m<sup>2</sup>, accounting for 15.57%, 48 schools (34 public ones and 14 private ones) or 39.49% with over 500 m<sup>2</sup>. As for public schools, their ground allocated by the Government represented 99.42%, and 0.58% was rented land while in the private sector, their allocated land made up 4.84%; procured land 43.24% and rented land 51.92%.

The size of classroom remained small due to low training requirements. Nevertheless, the survey revealed that 37% of total classroom could accommodate 25 students while in the public sector, these rooms represented 7.72% and the rest might provide seats for 25-50 students.

In respect of workshop and laboratory, 47 schools had no workshops or computer lab, accounting for 43.4% of the total. According to the statistics, 9 schools (15.57%) had no training equipment, 54 (44.26%) without computers. If the ratio of student to equipment and computer is included, the equipment ratio is quite high (2.7 students/one unit of equipment and 5.7 students/computer). However, the distribution of equipment and computer was not even and the equipment very obsolete. According to their self-assessment, 83 schools (68.03%) met the equipment standard and the rest (39 schools) did not. Private schools meeting technical standard outnumbered state-owned ones (73.1% against 57.5%). However, the state schools had more computers than private ones (on average 4.1 students/computer against 9 students/computer). The state schools obtaining 30 units of machinery and equipment represented 57.5% while the figure of private schools was 18.29%. As for training capacity and quality (teachers and facilities), 69.93% of schools claimed they had enough capacity, 11.48% excessive capacity and 24.59% inadequate capacity.

## II. EVALUATION OF THE SUPPLY OF SKILLED LABOR

### 1. Enrolment and training structure

In the 1997-1998 school year, the number of students enrolled in vocational schools was 153,598 trained in 80 careers. The students coming from other provinces accounted for 16.27%, from rural areas 4.32%, graduates from senior high school (12<sup>th</sup> grade) 39.42%, those graduated from junior high school (9<sup>th</sup> grade) 26.17%. The students attending official courses (over one year) made up only 4.39%, refresher courses 0.57%, the rest (95.04%) was trained only in 2-3 months. These figures showed the training quality remained very low.

#### - Graduates by career

According to the survey, total graduates from 122 vocational schools and 80 trained careers amounted to 119,724, accounting for 77.95% compared to the enrolment. The low graduation was attributed to a lot of dropouts.

In respect of graduates by career: there were 3,743 graduates in culture, accounting for 3.18%; 9,190 in social and human sciences, mainly foreign language, or 7.68%; 11,581 in economics and administration or 9.67%; 91,059 in technology or



73.54% including 38,379 or 31.79% in electronics and information technology. As for gender, male graduates outnumbered female ones (55.33% against 44.67%). Those residing in HCMC accounted for 78.35% and the rest (21.65%) came from other provinces. In respect of training model, the students in the long-term training system made up a very low ratio, only 1.56%; most of graduates (98.44%) came from the short-term system. The annual growth rate of graduates in the past three years was 8.9%. However, this figure showed a downward trend, especially for the long-term training system, from 3.32% in 1995-1996 down to 2.4% in 1996-1997 and 1.56% in 1997-1998).

In the meantime, the training duration in short-term courses was very short on average: culture 2.8 months/course (24 months for long-term courses), foreign language 3 months, economics and administration 4.78 months (19.33 months for long term); mechanical engineering 4.3 months (21.7 months for long term); information technology 2.9 months (24 months for long term); auto transport 5.7 months (26 months for long term); tailoring 1.4 months (12 months for long term); technology in general 4.2 months (17.6 months for long term). The evidence indicated the training duration was very short, leading to low quality. The graduates of vocational schools thus did not meet requirements of employees, not mentioning those of the national industrialization and modernization.

- The ratio of students to teachers in each kind of schools

The survey disclosed this ratio remained low, 13.2 students/teacher, cultural schools topped the list (19.6 students/teacher); foreign language 7.3; economics and administration 5.0; and technology ratio fell to the bottom: 3.3 including many careers having the ratio under 1: mechanical engineering 0.9; chemicals 0.3; printing 0.8... These figures showed the technology courses attracted less students, so the army of teachers was temporarily redundant.

## 2. Training quality evaluated by graduates' employment

According to statistics, the graduates finding jobs in 1996 (1995-1996) accounted for 69.74% of the total, the highest rate belonged to the food processing industry (83.96%), followed by tailoring and chemicals (84.59% and 83.96% respectively); other industries with high employment rate (70-80%) included construction, building materials, jewelry, tourism and hotel and foreign language; those having the rate of 60%-70% included remaining technologies and economics and administration; the cultural sector bottomed the list (50%). In 1997 (1996-1997), the rate of employed graduates was lower than that of 1996; 62.17% of the total, especially the cultural sector topped the list, over 90%. Other industries with high employment rate of 80%-90% included food processing, porcelain, building construction, jewelry, garment; 70-80%: tourism and hotel, mechanical engineering, electronics; 60-70%: electricity; 50-60%: transport, construction, printing; under 50%: information technology, agriculture, foreign language, economics, especially economics graduates faced the most difficult job opportunities: only 31.75% of them were employed. The above facts showed job opportunities tended to change into industries of mechanical engineering, electricity, construction, garment, chemicals, processing while the initial trend increased in information technology, foreign language and economics. However, the surveyed schools said they would increase training demand by 14.56% on the whole including refrigeration electricity 18.48%, enterprise electricity repair 18.27%, communications 11.56%, precise mechanical engineering 6.42%, electricity 6.11%, professional security guard 5.78%, industrial machinery operation 4.7%, porcelain 4.54%, housework 4.13%, director clerk 2.89%, foreign language 2.37%, auto and motorcycle repair 1.86%, food processing 1.42%, biotechnology 1.42%, farm machine repair 1.86%, woodwork 1.05% and other careers under 1%.

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## III. STRONG AND WEAK POINTS IN TRAINING

### 1. Strong points

The socialization policy for education has produced positive effects on the development of vocational system in HCMC. As a result, it has become diversified and involved all economic sectors and attracted investment flows into education and training. This may be proved by robust growth of private and public vocational schools. A lot of new careers have been trained and the occupational structure has been rectified in line with the market demand. The percentage of high school graduates learning in vocational courses are increasing, some vocational schools are

able to provide official long-term courses and train skilled workers and even practice engineers. Nevertheless, the vocational system on the whole still encounters large challenges.

### 2. Shortcomings and challenges

- The size of many vocational schools remains small in terms of teachers, ground, and investment capital for facilities. Therefore, their training capacity cannot meet the standard and training quality is thus low.

- Over 98% of vocational schools provide short-term training, mainly from 2 to 3 months. In our opinions, such training cannot train workers with 3/7 level. Their graduates are only a bit better than unskilled labor.

- The teachers' quality is on the whole low; 65% of them have college and university degree and 43% of them are theory teachers. While technical careers require more practice time and higher skill. As a result, the teachers must specialize in practice, be high level workers at least or practice engineers.

- The training program is backward and not supervised and there are no standards for each training program and no appropriate level for graduates in accordance with each career.

- Schools do not secure sufficient facilities for training, for example restricted ground and obsolete equipment and machinery.

- The trend of vocational training is wholly at will due to lack of planning. Courses in information technology, foreign language, economics attract a lot of students while enterprises need technical workers. As a result, the training structure is not proportional and does not meet the requirement of economic shift to industrialization and modernization. The evidence also shows graduates in information technology, economics and foreign language face less job opportunities.

- The training model is an inverse pyramid, that is the number of graduates with higher degree is larger while the number of trained workers have to be larger in accordance with the common model (the pyramid bottom). The survey of graduates in HCMC in 1998 revealed for one graduate from college and university, there was 0.6 graduate from vocational high school (long-term system) and only 0.07 graduate from the short training system. ■