



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF VIETNAM

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CDNLAO Vietnam Country Report 2005

Hanoi, March 2006

I. Library Administration

Vietnamese Library Systems

Vietnamese libraries are divided into five major systems

- **Public Libraries:** As of 2005, the public library system consists of the National Library of Vietnam, 64 provincial libraries, 577 district libraries and nearly 7,000 commune and village libraries.
- **Academic Libraries (including university learning resource centres):** 250
- **School Libraries:** 17,459
- **Special Libraries:** 60 research libraries run by research institutes and 218 library and information centres under ministries and other governmental agencies.
- **Military Libraries:** more than 1000 libraries and reading rooms

Apart from those government funded library systems, there exist thousands community and private libraries, reading rooms, book stacks operating in various forms such as international information centres, boat libraries, communal cultural post offices, border posts, books cafés, etc. across the country.

The National Library of Vietnam, as stipulated in the Ordinance on Libraries adopted by the National Assembly of Vietnam in April 2001, remains the Central Library of the country with the following responsibilities:

- **Exploit domestic and foreign sources to meet the readers' needs;**
- **Collect legal deposit publications;**
- **build up and preserve the National collection;**
- **compile and publish the National Bibliography and General Bibliography of Vietnam;**
- **Provide readers with library services;**
- **Cooperate and exchange materials with domestic and foreign libraries;**
- **Study information-library science and technology;**

- Improve expertise and professional skills for librarians, provide professional guidance on library.

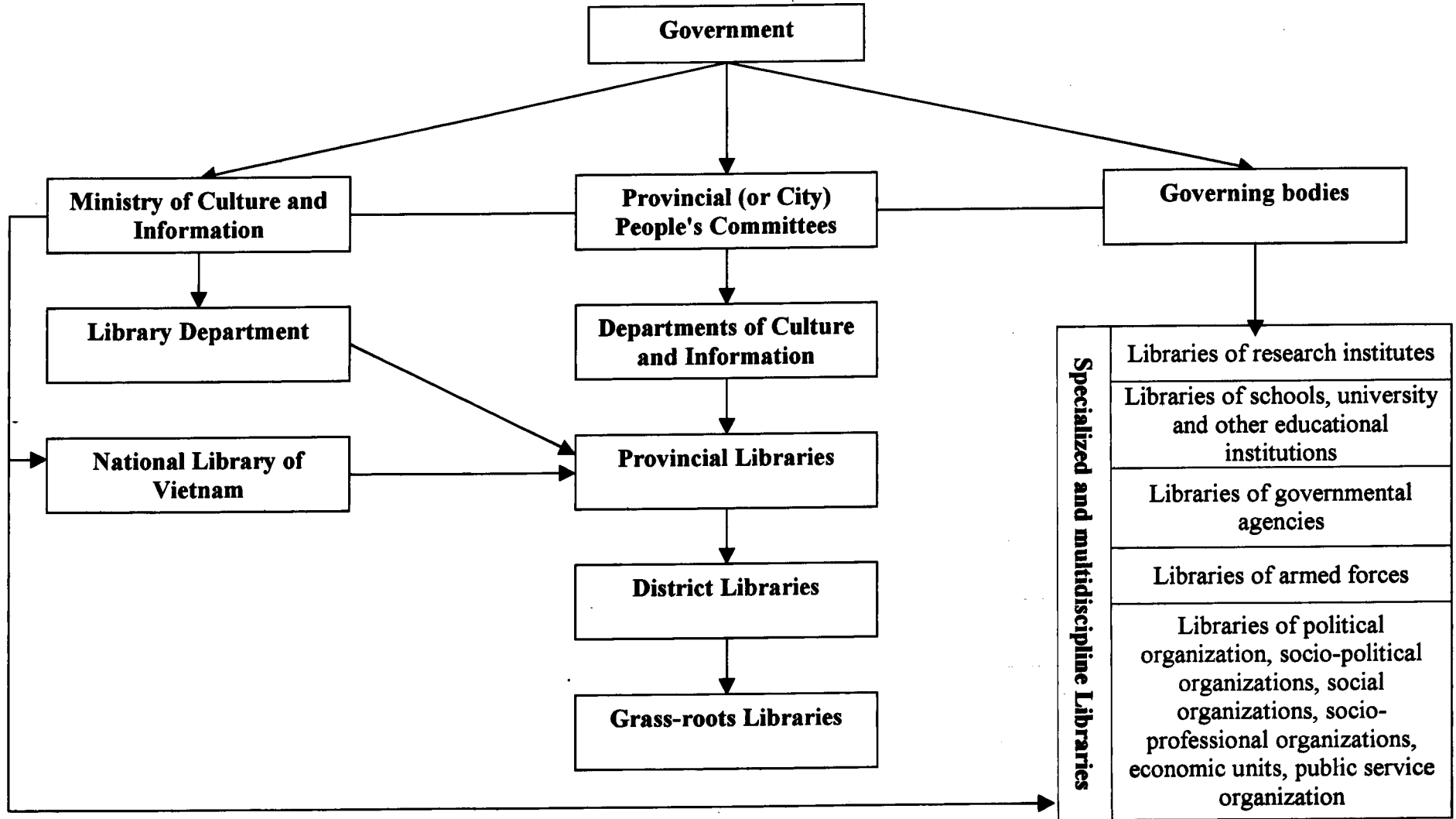
Although the National Library of Vietnam is independent with other libraries in terms of funding and administration, it has the strongest professional influence over the other libraries in the country. It is also Vietnam's biggest library, the national bibliography publisher and the sole national legal depository agency which acquires and houses the most sufficient collection of materials published in Vietnam and Indochina since 1917.

2. Legal framework and administration

All libraries and information centres in Vietnam operate under the Ordinance on Libraries – the highest legislation on library and information services passed by the National Assembly of Vietnam in 2001.

The Library Department under the Ministry of Culture and Information is the policy maker and enforcement agency of regulations on library and information services. The National Library of Vietnam, however, has stronger voice in professional issues such as cataloguing standards and continuing professional education.

Figure 1. LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION IN VIETNAM



The public library system consists of:
 + The National Library of Vietnam and
 + Libraries at local levels established by local People's Committees

II. Collection Profile

- Total collection in the public library system: 17,545,431 volumes of which over 1.2 million are held at the National Library of Vietnam.
- Annual average acquisitions: 864,610 volumes
- Provincial libraries' annual acquisitions of periodicals: 180-240 titles of newspapers and magazines
- District libraries' annual acquisitions of periodicals: 15-30 titles of newspapers and magazines
- Nearly half of the National Library of Vietnam's collection have been catalogued on to the National Bibliographic Databases:
 - SACH Database: 230,000 records of Vietnamese books published since 1917 and books in Latin languages acquired by the NLV since 1980
 - LA Database: 12,000 records of doctoral thesis by Vietnamese citizens
 - JM Database: 6,000 records of Vietnamese and foreign newspapers and magazines published from 1954 to present
 - NCUU Database: 1,700 records of periodical titles published in Indochina before 1954 and those published in Saigon before the Fall of Saigon in April 1975.
- With regards to foreign publications, Vietnamese libraries have been donated nearly 80,000 books in English by the Asia Foundation, USA, in the period 2003-2005. Another gift of 120,000 volumes has also been promised for the next three years.

III. Services

- Total number of membership cards issued annually in public libraries: 495,649 cards
- Annual visits to public libraries: 14,305,865 visits

- Annual circulation in public libraries: 38,882,967 items
- Average number of items per user in one library: 0.22

National Bibliographic Service

National Bibliographies are published monthly and annually by the National Library of Vietnam and available to all Vietnamese libraries both in paper and on the NLV's web site. The electronic versions are in *.iso format being ready for import into UNESCO's CDS ISIS library software, which is popular in Vietnamese public libraries. Bibliographic records in MARC21 format are also available for download in the National Library of Vietnam's online catalogue. However, there is no national union catalogue available.

A large number of bibliographies and indexes are compiled in Vietnam on various subjects and disciplines. Public libraries focus on indexing local information while other libraries pay attention to users' needs. However, few bibliographies and indexes are published or available on the Internet.

Digital Libraries

Digital libraries are still in pilot in Vietnam. Some of digital library initiatives under construction are listed below.

Vietnamese Doctoral Theses Abstracts

Abstracts of Vietnamese doctoral theses are being digitized and will be available to users of the National Library of Vietnam

CONSAL Digitization Project

As part of the regional project initiated by the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians, the National Library of Vietnam is digitizing 500 legal depository titles in English to contribute to the project's shared database.

Other digital library projects are also in progress in major academic libraries such as Ho Chi Minh City University of Natural Sciences Library (using Greenstone Digital Library open source software) and National University of Vietnam's Library and Information Centre (E-books Project).

DDC Translation

The translation of the Dewey Decimal Classification Abridge Edition 14 was completed in 2005 under OCLC's authorization and funds from the Atlantic Philanthropies – an American NGO. The Vietnamese version is to be published in the first half of the year 2006. Training of trainers in using DDC Abridge Edition 14 is also scheduled in 2006.

IV. Copyrights/ Intellectual Property Rights

One of the most important developments in copyrights and intellectual properties legislations in 2005 is the passage of Intellectual Properties Law by Vietnam's National Assembly on 29th November 2005. The Law will come into effect on 1st July 2006.

Currently, copyrights and intellectually properties in Vietnam are governed by the followings laws:

- Publishing Law: effective on 1st July 2005
- Berne Convention on the protection of copyrights in literature, science and arts publications: effective on 26th October 2004
- Civil Code: effective in 1995

The Copyright Department under the Ministry of Culture and Information is responsible for the enforcement of copyrights legislations. Meanwhile, legislations on the protection of intellectual properties such as trademarks, patents, etc. are enforced by the Intellectual Properties Department under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

So far, two non-governmental agencies have also been established in a concerted effort to protect copyrights and intellectual properties, i.e., Literature Copyrights Protection Centre by the Vietnamese Writers Association and Music Copyrights Projection Centre by the Vietnamese Musicians Association.

V. Professionalization/ Training/ Continuing Professional Education

There are approximately 10,000 library professionals (excluding incumbent library staff of plurality in school libraries and grass-roots libraries). However, no professional associations have been set up. The foundation of a national professional organization

(called Vietnam Library Association) devoted to the advancement of Vietnamese librarianship is still in progress.

Bachelor of Library and Information Science remains the qualified degree qualification for Vietnamese library and information professionals although more and more are advancing their study to post-graduate levels. Undergraduate programmes of library and information education are offered at the following universities:

- Hanoi University of Culture
- Social Sciences and Humanities College, Vietnam National University
- Social Sciences and Humanities College, Ho Chi Minh City National University
- Dong Do University
- Can Tho University
- Ho Chi Minh City College of Culture

Hanoi University of Culture, Social Sciences and Humanities College of Vietnam National University and Social Sciences and Humanities College of Ho Chi Minh City National University also offer Master of Library and Information Science programmes.

In 2005, dozens Vietnamese library and information lecturers and professionals were sent to New Zealand and the United States for Master's Degree and Ph.D education.

Several professional workshops were also held in the National Library of Vietnam and other major academic libraries and information centres with the participation of Vietnamese library and information professionals across the country.

VI. Infrastructure

In 2005, the National Library of Vietnam completed the national project "Building the National Electronic/Digital Library in the National Library of Vietnam" which started in 2001. Most major public and academic libraries and information centres have been powered by Integrated Library Systems. Two most popular ILS softwares are locally developed ILIB and LIBOL provided respectively by CMC Ltd. and Tinh Van Ltd. However, no dedicated library networks are available.