

2009 CDNLAO COUNTRY REPORT



NATIONAL LIBRARY OF VIETNAM

1. General Overview

Vietnam has achieved a remarkable success in developing the country. To maintain a steady and balanced progress in the long run, incessant efforts to collect, preserve, and disseminate knowledge, including both methodologies and technologies, in several fields of development will be needed. Libraries can play an important role in these efforts. It has been noted that in Vietnam, attention has come to focus on potential of libraries to contribute to the socio-economic development.

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 December 2001 and came into effect on 1st April 2001.

The Library Department is the advisory agency for the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism to make policies and enforce the regulations on library.

The National Library of Vietnam (NLV) is “The Central Library of the country”(defined in Library Ordinance - 4/2001). Its functions and responsibilities are to provide professional guidance on library for other libraries entirely the country such as cataloguing standards, continuing professional education and more.

Vietnamese Library Association established on 22nd October 2006 is the professional association for librarians in Vietnam.

For a developing country, Vietnam possesses a remarkably sophisticated library system. Actually, there are five major systems in Vietnam:

- Public Library System headed by the NLV consists of 63 city and provincial libraries, 582 district libraries and nearly 7,000 commune and village libraries.
- Academic Library System: 353 libraries.
- School Library System: 17,459 libraries.
- Special Library System: 60 research libraries run by research institutes and 218 libraries and information centres under ministries and other governmental agencies.
- Military Library System: 2,740 libraries and reading rooms.

Apart from those government funded library systems, there exist thousands of communities 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. entirely the country.

The National Library of Vietnam is the leading in the public library system and the central library of the whole country. The National Library of Vietnam is the country's largest reference library. Our role is to ensure that documentary resources of national significance relating to Vietnam and the Vietnam people, as well as significant non-Vietnamese library materials, are collected, preserved and made accessible either through the library itself or through collaborative arrangements with other libraries and information providers.

By offering a strong national focus in all that we do and cooperating with others who share our goals, the Library contributes to the continuing vitality of Vietnam's culture and heritage.

The National Library of Vietnam enjoys departmental status under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism. It has a staff of 187 employees of which 150 staff members are librarians (01 Doctor, 17 Masters and 132 Graduates). In recent years, the library's staff has attended regularly study tours, regional workshops and conferences in Malaysia, China, Thailand, USA, France, Japan and so on.

Now, the Library has international relation with 122 libraries from 32 countries in the world. It has become the official member of IFLA, CONSAL and CDNLAO. The legal depository collections in Vietnam *average 15,000 items* each year from 45 publishing houses. The following is the record of publications collected over the last five years:

2004: 13,342 items

2005: 15,303 items

2006: 17,322 items

2007: 17,677 items

2008: 17,686 items

In addition, there are about 550 annual titles of domestic newspapers and periodicals; about 890 doctoral dissertations per year. And other, the National Library maintains the collection of about 6,000 rare books and 20,000 titles of Indo-Chinese books dating from the late 19th century to the early 29th century. National collections include:

- Books Collections is the major collections of over 1,400,000 million volumes.
- Periodicals Collection comprises 10,000 titles of Vietnamese and foreign newspapers and magazines.
- Doctoral Thesis Collection consists of 14,959 doctoral theses written by Vietnamese citizens at Vietnamese and foreign institutions since 1954.
- Audio-visual materials are more than 2,000 items of CDs, VCDs and tapes.

- Microfilms: 220 titles.
- Digitized materials are made up of over 1.5 millions pages.

Being the most popular library of the country, the NLV usually receives about 2,000 visits per day. For the last year (2008), the NLV issued 21,890 membership cards and provided its services with 849,370 circulation of items for 419,106 customers.

2. New Information Products

2.1 Tutorials, courses & help files

From the beginning of 2009, the National Library of Vietnam has provided *Orientation Programmes* for new library's members. They aim at providing new library's members an overview about the library; the library's collections, information products and services; information searching skills. Up to now, NLV has organised three orientation programmes for nearly 250 new library's members.

In 2008, *Guide Books for using the library* have been compiled and delivered to the library's members who may concern.

2.2 Bibliographies and Databases

For the last year (2008), twelve bibliographies and indexes are compiled in by NLV on various subjects and disciplines such as Bibliography on Books on Hanoi, Bibliography on English Children Books, Bibliography on HIV Prevention, etc...

Databases include:

- o Book Database: 395,720 records of Vietnamese books published since 1917 and books in Latin languages acquired by the NLV since 1980.
- o Doctoral Thesis Database: around 15,000 records of doctoral theses written by Vietnamese citizens at Vietnamese and foreign institutions since 1954.
- o Newspaper & Magazine Database: 6,488 records of Vietnamese and foreign newspapers and magazines published from 1954 to present.
- o Research Database: 1,718 records of periodical titles published in Indochina before 1954 and those published in Saigon before April 1975.
- o Abstract Database: 55,000 records of abstracts from 60 periodical titles from 2004 to 2007.

3. New Information Services

3.1 Reference

The National Library of Vietnam provides reference services from its ten reading rooms to about 500,000 visitors each year. In the last six months, the number of onsite reference enquiries met by reference librarians is about 390 enquiries per day. While offsite reference

services is to provide answers to 3,000 information requests in the form of bibliographies, indexes for customers' scientific research entirely the country.

3.2 Interlibrary loan

The National Library of Vietnam provides interlibrary loan with no charge to libraries and information centres on request. For the last six months, NLV provides nearly 150 titles of materials on Kings Hung's anniversary to Phu Tho Provincial Library and about 200 titles of materials on national culture to Library Department, Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism.

3.3 Reading promotion

To promote for reading habit, since July 2008 the National Library has organised 06 book-periodical exhibitions on the national occasions and on various subjects; 07 talks on special subjects; and a display area of "new arrival". Which encourage reading habit not only for the library's users and non-the library's users as well.

3.4 Acquisition, donation and exchange

Early this year, NLV signed continuously the project on Asia Foundation Books, phase 2009-2012. The project will distribute over 20,000 volumes to 116 libraries and information centres in Vietnam.

3.5 Digital library

Digital library is still in pilot in Vietnam. Some of digital library initiatives under construction in the NLV are listed below:

- *Vietnamese Doctoral Theses*

Full-text of Vietnamese doctoral theses are being digitized and available to users of the National Library of Vietnam, with the total pages of approximately 1.2 millions pages.

- *CONSAL Digitization Project*

As part of the regional project initiated by the Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians, the National Library of Vietnam has already digitized 338 books on Vietnam in English to contribute to the project's shared database.

- *VALEASE Project*

Under the VALEASE Project ran by the French Embassy in Vietnam, the National Library of Vietnam has been provided with modern equipment to digitize rare and precious materials stocked at the National Library of Vietnam with a view to preserving the heritage of ancient writings in Vietnam. The project digitized 80,000 pages of Indochina materials (published before 1954).

- *Sino-Nom Collection for Digitization* sponsored by the Vietnamese Nom Preservation Foundation - VNPF (The U.S) has been digitizing 40,000 pages of Nom written materials.

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 Hanoi's Library and Information Centre (E-books Project).

4. New and ongoing Projects

4.1 Seminars, workshops, etc.

Special Seminar on *Information Services in Public Libraries* was organized from 21st to 24th August 2008 with the complete participation from 63 city and provincial libraries of 63 cities and provinces in Vietnam.

Special Seminar on *Formulating Universities' Libraries* was held in 10th October, 2008.

On 5th -6th January 2009, a special seminar on *Subject Headings* was an open floor for librarians and specialists on library and information science to discuss on compiling the Vietnamese Subject Headings in the shortest time.

4.2 Local, regional and international

LEAF-VN Project to enrich collections for 10 village and commune libraries for the phase 2008-2009.

Vietnam-Lao Library Development Project sponsored by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA).

Korean Funded Project on Forming a model of Korean Dynamic Library.

Nom Special Collection for Digitization Project funded by Vietnamese Nom Preservation Foundation-VNPF (United States) is still in progress.

Chinese Books Project donated by the National Library of China.

The year 2009 remarks a continuous year of Library on the Internet Project

5 Major events

In April 2009, the Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia and Oceania Meeting (CDNLAO) is coming in conjunction with the 14th Congress of Southeast Asian Librarians (CONSAL XIV).

