



Persons with Disabilities Support Program Project Year One Brief

The USAID Persons with Disabilities Support Program (PDSP) began October 1, 2012. This ambitious three year program is jointly implemented by DAI and VNAH.

PDSP's three main objectives are creating an effective disability case management and referral system, improving the quality of and access to specialized services for people with disabilities (PWD) and public health systems strengthening. PDSP is headquartered in Danang, Vietnam and operates in 3 provinces in Central Vietnam, with plans for future expansion.

The first year of the program's implementation yielded significant progress in meeting objectives, despite initial delays in start-up and project registration. In April 2012, formal project approval was received from the Danang People's Committee allowing the implementation of project activities to begin. Over the last six months, PDSP has worked with DOLISA, DOET and DOH to surpass initial Year 1 targets for service provider training (Fig. 1) and direct assistance to people with disabilities. The following are selected highlights of Project accomplishment.

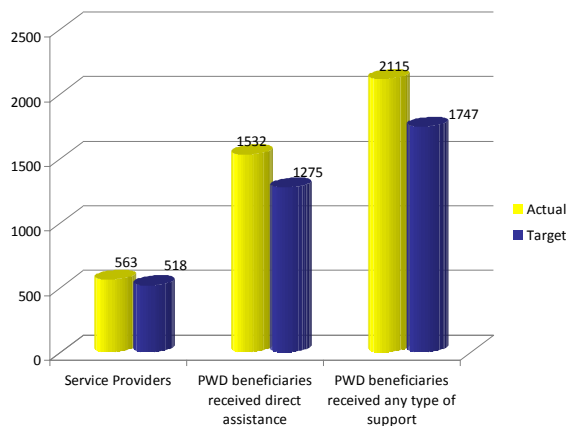


Fig. 1

IR 1 – Social Work Case Management

The project helped DOLISA conduct an extensive assessment of social work case management training needs earlier this year. Since the assessment, PDSP has worked with DOLISA, DOET, and DOH to select 168 of their community-level employees to receive social work training and become case managers for PWD in Danang. The project has also delivered two out of three TOT courses to certify 27 master trainings on social work and case management for PWDs. These master trainers will in turn train the community case managers.

IR 2 – Improving Quality Of and Access to Specialized Services

In Danang, PDSP carried out a comprehensive assessment of inclusive education (IE) and special education (SE) needs with the Hanoi Education University and DOET. A capacity development plan has been developed to train 126 educators and education officials to improve IE and SE services for students with disabilities and their families.

Together, PDSP and DOLISA provided training and implementation support to establish disability determination councils in all 56 communes of Danang city. The councils will help classify the type and determine severity of disabilities in accordance with the new disability law, Circular 37. Their overarching responsibility is to help ensure PWD in their communities receive improved access to the services and allowances accorded them under Circular 37.

In Dong Nai province, PDSP supported the provincial government in completing the Dong Nai Disability Action Plan for 2013-2020. Also in Dong Nai, a “School to Work” service model is now operational, providing vocational training for



students with disabilities. To date, 36 youth with disabilities have enrolled.

Over 75 physicians and physical therapists received advanced training on autism spectrum disorders and developmental disorders. This activity is part of a larger effort to improve training and resources for specialists in physical and learning disabilities rehabilitation therapy, after results from a recent assessment indicated shortcomings in existing resources.

PDSP fully equipped a new rehabilitation unit in the Danang Obstetric and Pediatric Hospital with special physical therapy equipment used to treat children with disabilities.

IR 3 – Public Health Systems Strengthened

Three joint PDSP-CDC teams conducted baseline assessments of newborn screening, surveillance for birth defects, and cancer surveillance in Vietnam. Some recommendations from the assessments are starting to be implemented and plans are being made with DOH to possibly pilot a birth defects surveillance system and support a newborn screening center in Danang.

Direct Assistance



Provision of assistance directly to PWD is another key component of the program. PDSP provides direct assistance in four areas – access to health services, such as clinical exams and necessary assistive devices or rehabilitation therapy, education support, livelihood support, and improved living conditions (Fig. 2).

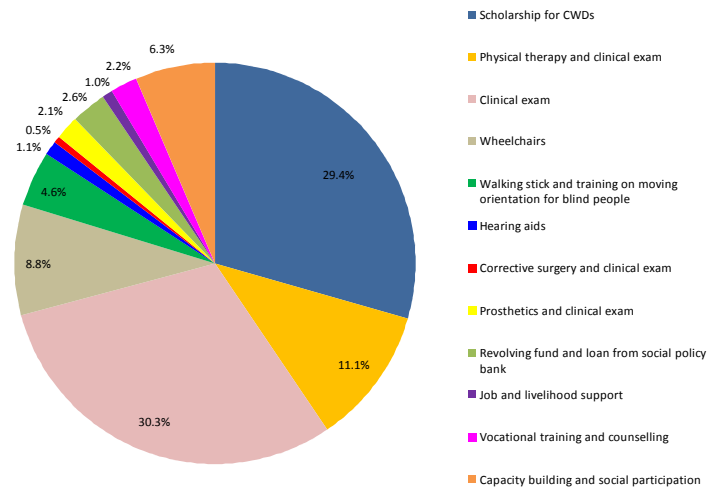


Fig. 2

Over 10,000 children in Hoa Vang District have undergone early screening for disabilities. Of these, 100 have been diagnosed with disabilities and will receive support and medical treatment as needed. With PDSP's help, 536 PWD received clinical exams and over 300 have been provided physical therapy and assistive devices they needed, including wheelchairs, walkers, orthotics, prosthetics, hearing aids and mobility canes for visually impaired people.

Under a grant from PDSP, the Danang Disabled People's Organization partnered with the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry to provide over 50 PWD with ILO's accredited business start-up training. A third of the proposals from the training were selected to receive start-up loans from a revolving fund the DPO created.



Grant Activities

PDSP has awarded nearly \$60,000 in grants to support capacity building for disabled people’s organizations, early childhood disability screening and vocational opportunities for PWD in Danang and Dong Nai. Proposed grant activities with an estimated total of \$500,000 are currently under review, for implementation early in the second year of the program. The proposed grants focus on improving medical rehabilitation services and facilities, expanding access to inclusive or special education for children with disabilities, and strengthening the sustainability of the disability case management and referral systems in Danang.

Financial Snapshot

In its first year, PDSP expended about 20% of its current obligation of \$7,669,924. The chart below (Fig. 3) shows the expended budget to date and projected expenses for next quarter are compared to the current obligation. In the coming year, grant disbursements, direct assistance and project activities are expected to increase.

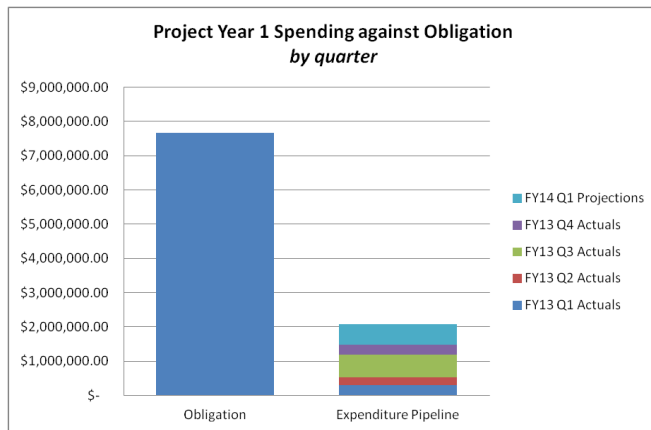


Fig. 3

Looking Ahead

The second year of the program will see a significant ramping up of activities across the board. Planned activities include:

- Roll out case management training, including PWD assessment tools and “yellow book” to allow PWDs and their case managers to better track the quantity and quality of support received.
- Identify needed housing improvements for PWDs and engage design and construction firms to implement the improvements.
- Provide over 600 PWD with needed clinical exams, orthotic or prosthetic devices and physical therapy.
- Support curriculum development and implementation for the Danang University of Medical Technology and Pharmacology’s occupational and speech therapy programs.

