



SUCCESS STORY

Personalized Support Ignites Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

Comprehensive and individualized support plans address needs of persons with disabilities



Pham Thi Gai and her son, next to the fully stocked shelves of her store.

Photo: USAID

“Sales are now more than double. I have many clients...My son goes to school now and enjoys it so much. We are so grateful for this help.”

--Pham Thi Ga

USAID IN VIETNAM

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“My daughter was born as a pretty baby,” said the mother of 38-year old Pham Thi Gai, “but now, [she] lives in disability and tears”. Polio struck during childhood, leaving Pham with paralyzed limbs on the left side of her body. The years that followed were difficult, as Pham and her mother attempted to make a living in the coastal area of Son Tra district in Danang.

Married with children, Pham’s husband has struggled to find work. They had been unable to send their four-year-old son to school due to their inability to read the school application forms. The shelves of their family store were nearly empty and she had very few customers.

Pham and her family received support to help revive her business from the USAID Program of Comprehensive and Integrated Support for People with Disabilities, which is working in collaboration with the local Department of Social Affairs. With training provided by USAID, a government case management team learned how to properly assess and develop an individual support plan customized to the needs of Pham and her family. Together, the local government and USAID provided a small grant of \$435 and training to Pham to supply and manage her store. Case managers also provided a reference for Pham so she could receive a loan from the local women’s union, which had denied her previous applications. Lastly, the case managers helped Pham navigate the paperwork and process to enroll her four-year-old son in school.

“Sales are now more than double. I have many clients for rice and phone cards and also for other more profitable items, such as beverages,” Pham said after receiving government and USAID support. “My son goes to school now and enjoys it so much. We are so grateful for this help.” Pham’s mother added, “I look at my daughter’s shop and feel so happy. Her life is changing now, thanks to the support of many people.”

Pham is one of more than 2,000 persons with disabilities who have benefited from the USAID project in Vietnam over the past year. The case management system adopted by the government and supported by USAID through training and technical assistance, is a major step forward for the local disability support system by offering a comprehensive package of support, addressing vocational, health and educational needs of people with disabilities and their families through individualized support plans.