

MINISTRY OF LABOUR – INVALIDS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

“SUPPORT FOR CHILD DROWNING PREVENTION” POLICY

Hà Nội, September 2016

The issue

Drowning is the leading cause resulting in death among children and minors in Vietnam. On average approximately 3,000 children died of drowning during the period 2010-2013. Most vulnerable were those in the age bracket of 5 to 14. Fatality among children due to drowning accounts for more than 50% all deaths because of accident injuries. Drowning death in Vietnam is highest in the region and eight times that in developing countries. Drowning is the biggest threat to children's survival and the leading cause resulting in death among children. Social and economic losses among children and minors are huge. Millions of people on the globe are facing death and disability among their family members due to injuries¹. Years of potential life are lost (YPLL). Drowning is the leading cause resulting in injuries, accounting for 58% YPLL, while traffic trauma accounts for 21 % YPLL and falls accounts for 14% YPLL. It can be said that drowning requires huge social and economic expenses and is a real threat to the development of the country. The major cause lies in the lack safety skills among parents, childcare givers and especially the children themselves; in rampant potential drowning risks in living environments within families and communities; in loose enforcement of waterway safety regulations resulting in limited effectiveness and efficiency of laws and policies on this issue. At present of approximately 15000.000 primary and junior high schoolchildren only 30% know how to swim. Swim training for children encounters many difficulties, especially in poor and mountainous provinces lacking swimming pools and trainers and where training fees are unaffordable to children from poor and borderline families.

Training in swimming and safety skills in water environments is a need among about 2500.000 primary & junior high schoolchildren from poor, borderline families and families defined as beneficiaries of social policies nationwide while facilitation and support for training in swimming & safety skills in water environment for children is needed in 894 especially difficult communes. Over 30% kindergarten-age children having no access to

¹ Source : Decision # 197/2001/QĐ-TTg dated Dec 27, 2001 by the Prime Minister approving the Policy on national defense, accident/injury prevention for the period 2002-2010

kindergarten classes may fall victim to drowning any time if left unattended. Evidence worldwide shows that drowning rate decreases among children trained in swimming and safety skills in water environment and given proper childcare. Beside, difficult localities lack the resources to improve the environment and eliminate drowning risks for children. Researches also point out that a great majority of drowning fatalities is preventable. Child drowning often takes place within a 20m-radius from his/her home when they are left unattended.

With a view to implementing the objectives set forth by the Prime Minister's Decision 234/Q Đ-TTg on child accident/ injury prevention, including child drowning prevention, ensure children's right to life and safeguard the country's future human resources it is mandatory that a policy aiding child drowning prevention be developed.

Part 1.
**NECESSITY FOR FOR A POLICY IN SUPPORT OF CHILD DROWNING
PREVENTION EFFORTS IN VIETNAM**

I. Legal foundation

Vietnam is the first nation in Asia and the second nation in the world to ratify the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The Convention stipulates that children have the rights to live in safe environment and be protected from injury and violence. 2002 'A World Fit for Children' Declaration calls for “care for all children, bringing them up in safe environment and facilitating their healthy physical and care-free mental life”. We are legally bound by our ratification of aforementioned documents and convention vis-à-vis the international community with regard to enforcement of fundamental child rights.

The Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and many of its statutory documents related to children illustrate the Party’s and the State’s consistent viewpoint pertaining to the responsibilities of families, the society and the State in childcare, protection and education. Article 37 of 2013 Constitution stipulates that “ *Children are entitled to care, protection and education by the State, families and the society. may participate in child issues. Acts of abuse, corporal punishment, neglect, labour exploitation and other acts in violation of child rights are strictly forbidden.*” The Law on Childcare, protection and education promulgated in 2004 provides that children have the rights to care to nourish physical, mental, spiritual and moral development. Decree 71/2011/NĐ-CP dated 22/8/2011 by the Government detailing and guiding enforcement of a number of provisions under the Law on Childcare, protection and Education defines the responsibilities of MOLISA, various ministries, sectors and localities in combating and preventing child accidents/injuries.

The Law on Children 102/2016/QH13 ratified by the National Assembly on April 4, 2016 has an item – Item 2, Article 2, Chapter III – relevant to the State’s responsibilities to ensure enforcement of measures to combat & prevent child accidents/injuries. Article 82 of said Law entrusts MOLISA with proactively coordinating with relevant agencies and organizations to guide and implement child accident/injury prevention.

Directive 17/CT-TTg dated June 16, 2016 by the Prime Minister deals with strengthening guidance and implementation of accident/injury prevention and drowning among minors and school-children.

On February 4, 2016 the Prime Minister issued Decision 234/QĐ-TTg ratifying the Child accident/injury prevention Program for the period 2016 – 2020 with the following goals: Curbing child accidents/injuries, especially drowning and road accidents in order to keep children safe and the society happy; reducing child drowning fatality by 6% as against 20115; training 40% of primary and junior secondary school-children in safety skills in water environment; affording life-vest to 90% children engaged in waterway traffic; piloting safe swimming for children program in provinces and centrally-run cities.

II. Status quo of child drowning

1. Status quo of child drowning in the world

Drowning fatality worldwide is highest in the 1-4 age bracket, followed by 5-9. More than 98% child drowning cases take place in low and middle-income countries, with the highest rate in the Pacific – twice the world's average.

In the Pacific child drowning among 5-14 children is the top killer compared to others such as road accidents, birth defects, lower respiratory tract inflammation, dengue fever or meningitis (WHO 2012).

Major risk factors in child drowning include: absence of barrier between children and open water bodies, especially those within easy reach from home; lack or absence of adults' supervision; absence of covers and protection at water supply sources and inadequacy of safe water transports; Inadequate knowledge about safety in water environment and high-risk acts such as solitary swimming; travelling on overcrowded or rundown waterway vessels; natural disasters and floods.

2. Drowning in Vietnam

Drowning is the top killer among children and minors in Vietnam during 2010-2013 , claiming on average 3,000 children and minors aged 0-19 a year. Drowning in Vietnam

ranks highest in the region, 10 times the rate in developed countries. Drowning among children accounts for more than 50% of accident-related deaths.

Fatality due to accident/injury in recent years tend to decrease, though not much² Of 20 killers in Vietnam drowning ranks 10.

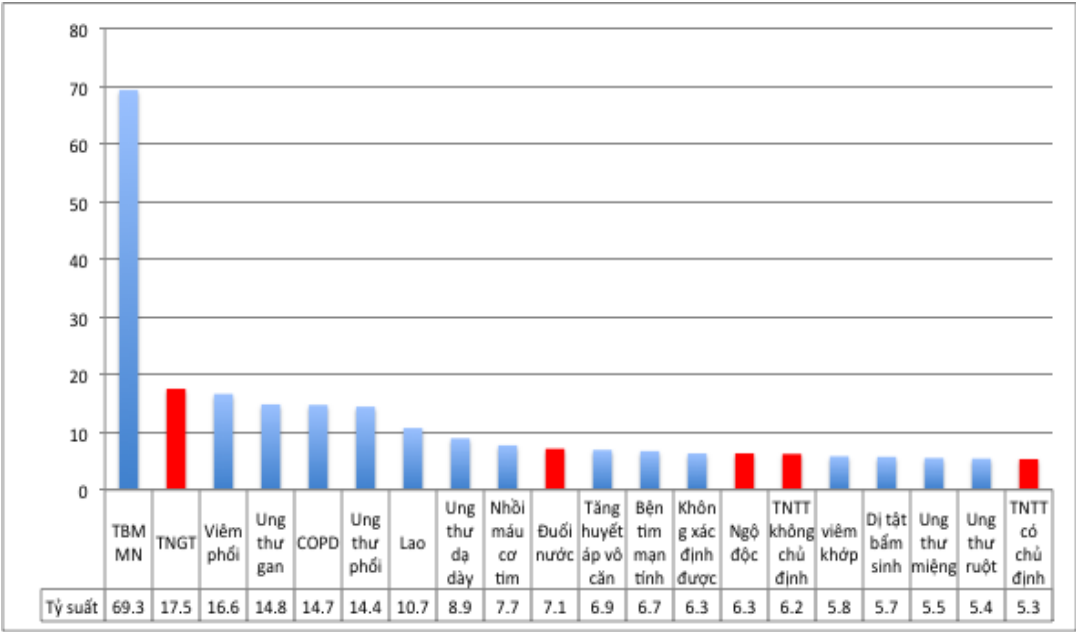


Chart 1. Accident/injury fatality rate (/100.000) and others

Top accident/injury killer among children and under-19 is drowning, followed by road accidents, falls, poisoning.

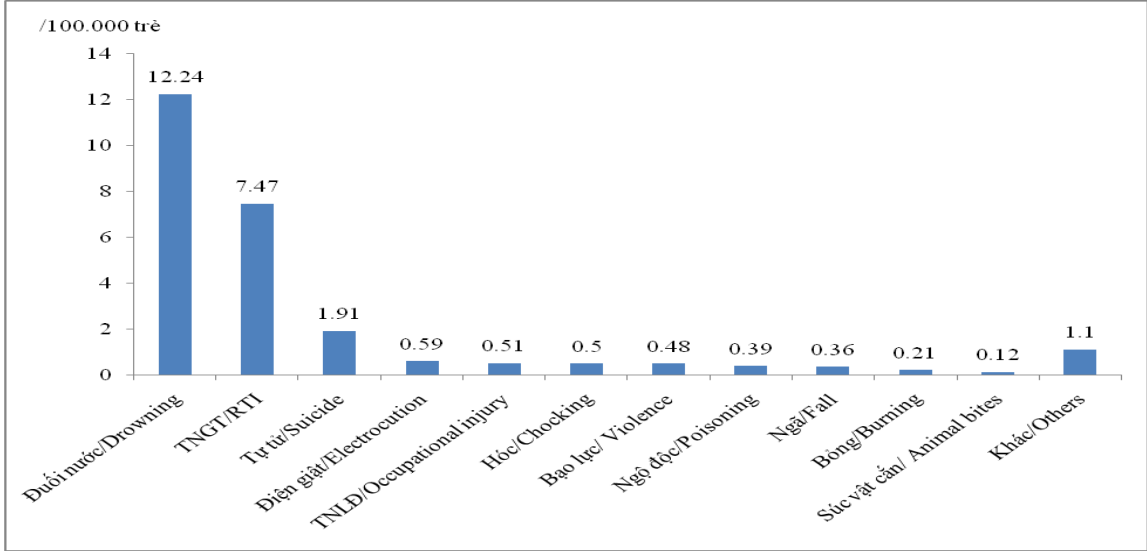


Chart 2 : Child & minor fatality rate by accident/injury - 2013

Drowning rates are not equally distributed among geographical regions, highest in the Western Highland (19,2/100.000); Northern mountainous region (17,48/100.000); North central provinces (12,78/100.000); the Mekong delta (11,11/100.000);the Red River delta (11.08/100.000) and lowest in Eastern South.

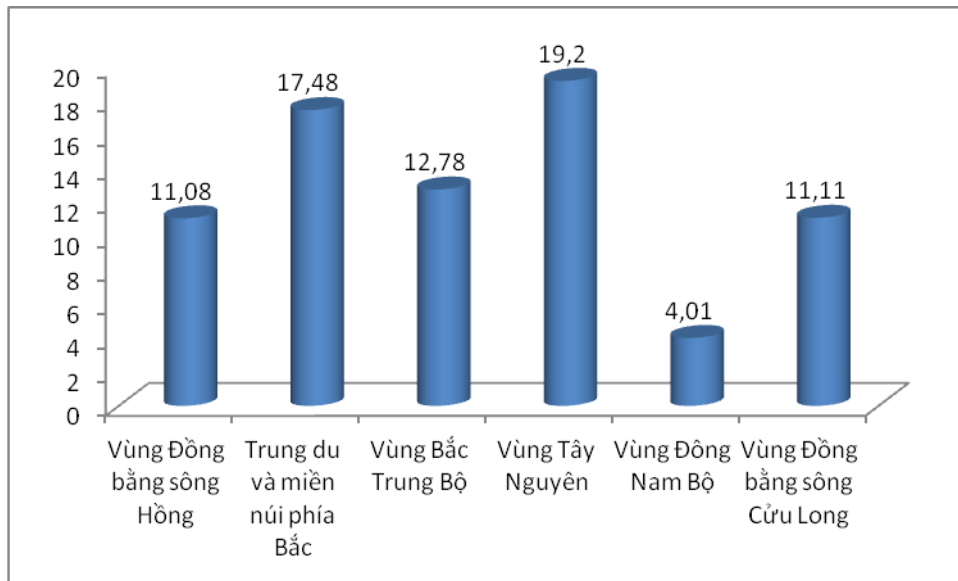


Chart 3: Drowning rate among children and Under-19 by ecological regions

Drowning rates are highest among the age groups of 0 – 4 (12,9/100.000) and 5-9 (11/100.000)

Child drowning in rural areas is 4 times the rate in urban regions, and the rate among boys is 1.5 times that of girls.

55,9% of children die of drowning are from poor families, mostly in rural areas. Over 50% of child drowning victims are from families of less than 5 persons, 55,9% of which are from poor families , mostly from rural areas.

Most drownings take place in public places such as ponds, lakes, streams, seas, manholes, accounting for 77%, and mostly involve non-swimmers. Drowning also occurs by falling onto water basin at home (15,6%) and others. Drowning at swimming pools while taking swim lessons also occurred.

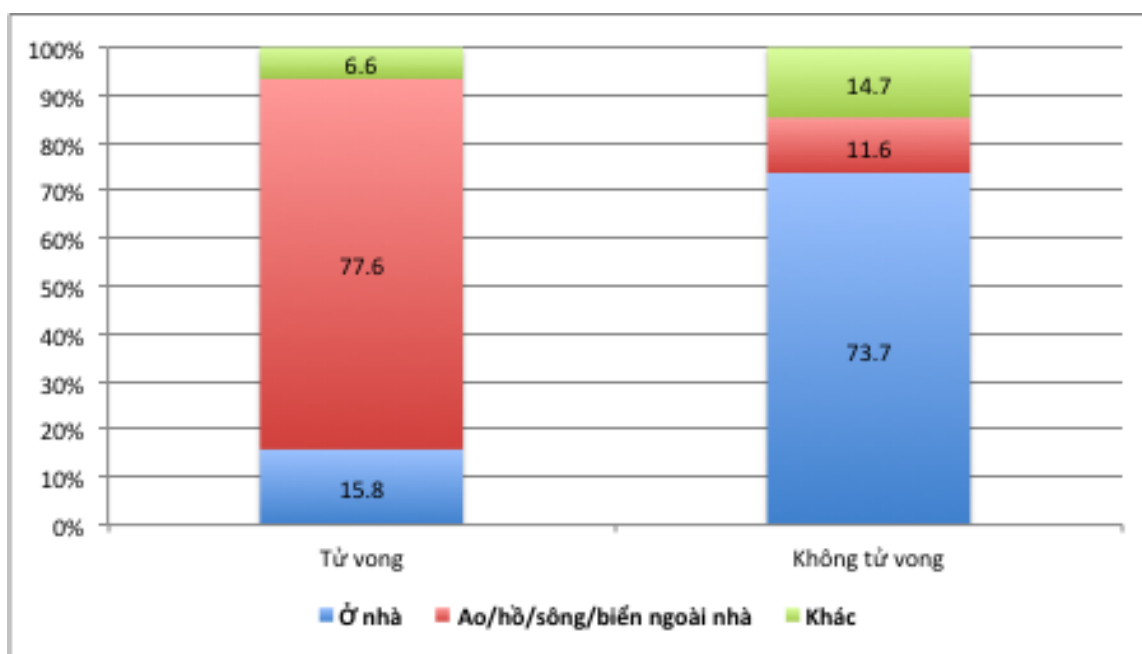


Chart 4. Sites of drowning and drowning rates

Unsafe public factors resulting in under-5 drownings are very high, 80% in both urban and rural areas. Rural children are twice vulnerable to drowning than their urban peers.

Drowning often happens during the daytime, from 06:00 hrs to 16:00 hrs, peaking at 09:00 hrs. No drowning in the evening or at night has been reported.

III. Status quo of child-drowning prevention

1. Organizational & instructive aspects: Child drowning prevention has received the Government’s interest and guidance in nationwide implementation. On April 26, 2012 various Directorates, Departments and Sectors from 9 Ministries signed the Inter-ministerial Plan # 176/KHLT/BVCSTE-MT-CĐTĐN-ĐC68-TCTDTT-CTHSSV-HĐĐTW-ĐCT- DSGĐTE) on Child drowning prevention with the overall objectives of promoting interministerial concerted efforts to minimize drowning fatality and disability rates among children, especially in provinces hardest-hit by drowning.

Ministries have issued documents directing sub-ministry departments to implement inter-ministerial child drowning prevention plan. 50 provinces /municipalities have formulated inter-ministerial child drowning prevention plan in respective localities. At the same time MOLISA also issued documents guiding People’s Committees of provinces and

centrally-run cities to step up child injury prevention, especially drowning prevention. The Directorate of Waterway Police issued document 112/C68(P2) dated Jan 31, 2013 on implementation of the inter-ministerial plan, instructing waterway police forces in various localities to research, review and assess the status of children going to and returning from school by water and submit reports on implementation of Plan #176 on child drowning prevention for the period 2010 to 2012.

Child drowning prevention has always been integrated into the Government's programs and action plans. In 2013 the Prime Minister issued Decision 2158/QĐ-TTg approving Child injury prevention program for the period 2013-2015 which targets 10% reduction in child drowning and 50% children of primary and junior high school age trained in swimming. In 2016 the Prime Minister issued Decision 234/Q Đ-TTg approving Child injury prevention program with detailed objectives relevant to child drowning prevention. Immediately after the issuance of the decision the MOLISA issued documents guiding various localities and relevant ministries through implementation of the Prime Minister's decision. Until now Prevention plans with total implementation budget of 64 billion VND have been formulated by 63/63 provinces/municipalities and submitted to respective Provincial People's Committee for approval.

Ministry of Education and Training has formulated documents guiding various localities through submission of reports on implementation of Official letter 664/BGDĐT-CTHSSV pertaining to implementation of drowning prevention and pilot swim training in primary schools during the period 2010 – 2015.

Pursuant to the Prime Minister's decision and based on its functions and mandate the Ministry of Public Security on April 26, 2014 issued Action Plan # 05/Ctr-BCA-C61 on "Child accident/injury prevention for 2013 – 2015". The Action Plan aims at enhancing the awareness and responsibility of every staff/cadre in the Public Security force and the society as a whole in creating safe environment, especially water environment, for children and preventing drowning among children.

Plans on implementing Child injury & drowning prevention for 2013 – 2015 consistent with each locality's conditions and characteristics have been formulated by 100% provincial & municipal Women's Unions.

In addition, guiding documents have been issued by ministries & sectors directing departments to enforce child drowning prevention activities. In particular the Prime Minister in 2016 promulgated Directive 17/CT-TTg dated May 16, 2016 on stepping up supervision and implementation of accident prevention.

MOLISA on April 20, 2016 issued official letter # 1299/LĐTBXH – BVCSTE on stepping up supervision and implementation of child drowning prevention in light of the summer break.

2. Communication drives on child-drowning prevention nationwide

Communication drives against child accident/injury in general and child drowning in particular have been waged nationwide. More and more communication campaigns promoting child drowning prevention have been launched via VTV, VoV and other local mass media. MOLISA has launched communication campaigns advocating child drowning prevention nationwide every year. The campaign in 2014 attracted participation from 63 provinces/municipalities, various ministries and international organizations. Other activities include communication drives on child drowning prevention in Action for children Month and during the summer break.; propagation via mass media; flyers and handbooks on child drowning prevention; flyers on safe houses; booklets on accident/injury prevention at home; messages on child accident/injury via TV. Over 7000 Child accident/injury prevention campaigns focusing on drowning prevention have been launched by various localities.

MOLISA in 2016 chose “Child drowning prevention” as the theme for “Action for children Month” and at the same time gave guidance to and coordinated with various ministries and sectors to implement the “Action for children Month” focusing on “a safe environment, child accident/injury prevention” and especially on drowning prevention.

In addition, ministries, sectors and organizations, depending on functions entrusted to them, also stepped up communication drives against child drowning. In 2013 the National Traffic Safety commission, the Directorate of Waterway Police, MOLISA and other ministries and sectors launched a campaign in Hanoi entitled “For child safety on waterways” to promote the sense of responsibilities of the State, communities and families in child drowning prevention. The campaign was warmly received across the country.

Women Unions introduced drowning prevention into their regular activities. Women Unions at various levels have incorporated drowning prevention into propaganda campaigns within the framework of the Child rearing Project in 14 pilot provinces nationwide. As of early June 2016 out of 6.220.901 mothers of under 16 children, 5.000.000 have been given training in child rearing; out of 2.193.666 fathers of under 16 children, 2.000.000 have been given training in child rearing; 1.500.000 out of 2.820.898 minors have been given training in reproduction health and living skills, including drowning prevention for children, exceeding the target. Women Unions came up with models integrating child injury prevention into other ongoing models such as Happy family Club, Child rearing Club promoting parenting skills, including skills to ensure safety for children. At present every

province/municipality has developed its own Happy Family model where communication drives advocating child injury prevention became part of its periodic activities.

Farmers' Unions have incorporated child injury prevention in general and drowning prevention in particular into training courses for key leaders so that the message can be spread far and wide.

Ministry of Transportation and Ministry of Public Security have also stepped up communication campaigns to propagate laws on waterway traffic and drowning prevention skills; intensified policing waterway routes frequently used by schoolchildren, drowning-prone amusement & recreation settings and at the same time taken strict measures against cases of law violation likely leading to drowning. The Public Security have joined forces with relevant sectors, departments and people's committees at various levels to realize hundreds of child-drowning prevention models in drowning-prone provinces, municipalities and localities; assisted and offered advice in establishing community childcare centers during the flood & storm seasons; conducted search & rescue drills and first-aid training sessions.

The Youth Union has come up with volunteer teams/groups interested in propagating child drowning prevention messages while propagation contest on child injury/drowning prevention was held by the Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union

It can be seen that awareness of child-drowning prevention on the part of the community, parents and childcare givers has been enhanced, resulting in the elimination of many child injury risks at home, in the community and at schools.

3. Establishing safe living environment for children at home, school and community

The Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Training have increasingly guided various localities through establishment of "safe houses", "safe schools" and "safe communities". MOLISA has sent official letters to provincial people's committees urging them to formulate drowning-prevention plans and guiding them to implement Decision # 548/QĐ-LĐTBXH on Safe house criteria and put in place accident/injury proof safe houses across the country. The criteria fall into 6 groups, namely safety in home surroundings; safety in rooms; electricity safety; staircase safety; home appliance/utensil safety; and some others. Houses recognized as safe houses are those owned by households achieving 23 out of 33 criteria, of which 15 are mandatory, and experiencing no child accident/injury in the relevant year.

Ministry of Health and MoET continued enforcing Decision 170/QĐ-BYT on safe communities and Decision 4458/QĐ- BGDĐT and Circular 13/TT-GDĐT on safe schools

& safe kindergartens, while MOLISA maintained safe houses previously put in place in many provinces. So far child injury/drowning prevention safe houses have been built in 2,040 communes, engaging 29,022 households committed in maintaining child injury/drowning prevention safe houses. In addition, MOLISA conducted many courses on child injury/drowning prevention skills, with a special focus on communication & education activities, for provincial and district-level childcare givers. Ministry of Health organized courses aimed at improving health workers' skills to provide pre-admission care to victims and put into effect child injury first-aid networks in community.

4) Swimming and water safety skill training

Activities related to swimming & water safety skills have been carried out at schools & communities with interest and enthusiasm from various ministries, sectors and mass organizations. So far 2,500 swimming courses have been held by Ministry of Culture, Sports & Tourism, MoET and localities, benefiting 60,000 child trainees. All swimming pools have been found to be in conformity with safety regulations, while water skill training has been piloted, giving rise to production of life vests and inflatables for children and child injury firstaid networks at community level.

Enhanced training in swimming and lifesaving skills has been conducted via the Lifesaving contest by the Directorate of Mass Sports under Ministry of Culture-Sports and Tourism (CST) in addition to Swimming Training-to-Trainers (ToT) in key provinces such as An Giang and Dong Thap. 56 provincial departments of CST across the country have developed “universal child drowning prevention” program as part of annual plans to be carried out.

MoET continued with preparations to introduce swimming into primary school curriculum. At the same time MoET sent official letters to provincial DoET instructing the latter to enforce child drowning prevention activities at school; organize swimming courses for primary schoolchildren; pilot Swimming TOT courses for sport teachers from primary schools and personnel from sport departments.

“Swim training week for children” was launched by the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, attracting youths participating as swimming trainers to minors during the summer break. In 2015 the Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union in coordination with the Directorate of Childcare and Protection implemented a pilot water safety skills training for disadvantaged children in 2 provinces of Ninh Binh and...

Many localities have allocated funds & mobilized community contributions to construct smart swimming pools in primary schools in Thanh Tri district of Ha Noi, where

100% communes have swimming pools based at primary schools; conducted lifesaving courses and child swimming courses. Fluvial regions have mobilized resources to build bridges to facilitate children's access to school; install fences/railings and warning signs around ponds; stepped up policing and spot check of ferry boats; inspected and eliminated drowning risks at communities, et.

So far over 900.000 primary schoolchildren are capable of swimming, 80% in the habit of wearing life vests while on boats/ships, 83,1% ferry places and 87,62% swimming pools have been granted licenses.

4. Reviewing, revising, promulgating and enforcing documents/regulations pertaining to child drowning prevention and relevant data/information collection

Policy documents relevant to child drowning prevention have been reviewed and enforced. Ministry of Transportation has reviewed, amended and modified normative documents and others related to waterway safety. The Minister of Transportation on May 10, 2012 signed Circular 15/2012/TT-BGTVT stipulating provision and utilization of lifevests and individual lifesaving tools on board ferry boats. MOLISA in concert with UNICEF and several other departments carried out a review of legislation/policies relevant to child drowning prevention.

III. Causes and shortcomings

1. Poor awareness and knowledge about child drowning

Even though drowning is the leading cause resulting in deaths among children and minors (0-19 years of age), awareness of the society and populace at large is still low. This is illustrated by the disregard for drowning risks faced by children and communities and absence of skills among parents and childcare givers to provide initial emergency aid to drowning children; by the fact that communication/propagation of drowning preventions has not, until lately, been given inadequate attention given by mass media; and the lack of water safety skills among the majority of primary and junior schoolchildren

Absence of swimming & response skills among many children facing drowning risks

Many researches in Vietnam show that most drowning fatalities were due to swim inability. A UNICEF rapid appraisal conducted at a junior highschool in Ha Tinh province in May 2007 indicated that less than 10% of schoolchildren could swim a 25m distance. Evaluation of (implementation of) Decision 234/Q Đ-TTg by the Prime

Minister on child injury prevention pointed out that barely 30% of primary and junior high schoolchildren could swim. In spite of swimming inability, many children tend to frolic near rivers, ponds and streams which could lead to drowning. There have been cases where child-swimmers without water safety skills risked their lives saving their peers ended up in mass drowning. Swimming training encounters a host of difficulties, especially in mountainous provinces characterized by absence of swimming pools in many primary and junior high schools and at community and the fact that most ponds, lakes, rivers, streams, etc.. are too polluted for swim training. Statistics by the Sports sector from 47 out of 63 provinces showed that as of 2015 there were 620 swimming pools managed by the sector, a situation falling short of children's swim training demand. Disadvantaged provinces like Yen Bai has only 1 swimming pool, Bac Can 2 and Dac Nong 3 pools. Space for swimming pool construction is the first obstacle faced by land-strapped cities. In addition, the costs of a swimming pool are rather high: approximately 700 million VND for a small pool. to say nothing of upkeep and custodian's maintenance skills to keep the water clean and free from pollution. What's more, swim training depends largely on the climate and weather, especially in the North, while pools need to be maintained during low-season. In addition parents are reluctant to train their children in swimming, either because of their busy schedule or fear of drowning risks imposed on their children if the latter are trained. Swimming pools currently in operation, mostly in cities/municipalities, record high utilization rate. In reality these pools only aim for profits and are therefore affordable only to better-off clients.

Child swimming training remains a challenge in spite of evidence showing drowning rate is down by 90% among 4 and above 4 children participating in safe swimming program.

At present qualified swimming trainers are under the management of Sport sector, while sports school-teachers fall short of swimming trainers' standards. This is due to inadequate attention accorded to sports school-teachers who are mostly part-timers wearing more than one hat (music, painting, among others). Obviously these teachers are fit to give only classroom swimming lessons, not hands-on training in demand by swimming trainees. Swimming trainers are of course thin on the ground at community level.

2. Inadequate interest and supervision from adults

Another major factor leading to high rate of child drowning lies in inadequate supervision by adults. Many children found themselves in a river, pond, well or water basin because of a split second of inattention / negligence on the part of parents or childcare givers. Primary schoolchildren rarely have the luxury of parental supervision, especially during summer break, because of their parents' busy schedule at work. Child drownings at beaches, recreation settings and swimming pools are mostly due to adults' inadequate supervision. Parents' negligence, inattention and carelessness, worsened by lack of interest and supervision from families and the society, leads to disregard for child drowning risks. Over 50% drownings occurred outdoors while children were bathing in ponds, lakes, rivers or streams or swimming unattended in the sea

3. Poverty: a potential risk factor resulting in drowning

In 2003 a research on child drowning in the Mekong delta sponsored by Child Relief Alliance found that drowning-prone areas were mostly in poverty-stricken regions, and hardest hit were families lacking constant child supervision. This conclusion reinforced previous findings that most drownings fell on U6 children, right at home or nearby.

In general families suffering child drowning are landless or land-strapped households. This fact forces household heads to work as migratory labours and therefore deny their children parental care. Parents in Mekong provinces such as Long An and Dong Thap have their children in tow while they are farming/fishing, and accidental falls onto the water while parents are busy making ends meet are all in a day's work.

6. Living environment within individual household and at community is far from safe & often rife with child drowning risks. Most wells and water tanks are not covered, many work sites have ponds unfenced & unbackfilled after construction is completed. Sections of rivers near residential areas, deep ponds and whirlpools are neither fenced off nor marked with danger signs.

7. Inadequate compliance with waterway traffic safety among the populace

At present the country has over 2,300 ferry terminals which house more than 5,000 means of transport carrying over 80 million passengers a year, accounting for more than 20% passengers of the entire transportation sector.

Despite the National Assembly's ratification on June 15, 2004 of the Inland waterway traffic law, enforcement in reality encounters several shortcomings such as unlicensed operators, unsafe means of transport, inadequate safety equipment, especially life-vests, overcrowding, extremely low life-vest utilization rate, especially among children, and undue attention paid to management/administrative issues at ferry sites by local authorities, in spite of thousands of bookings and license suspension/ cancellation by Waterway Police. Aforementioned factors led to grave accidents claiming many children's lives and orphaning many others².

9.Overseeing child drowning prevention and implementation of safety rules governing child drowning prevention leaves something to be desired. What's more, statutory regulations dealing with culprits of child drownings remain to be promulgated.

IV. Impacts of drowning

Social impacts on children :

Accident/injury in general and drowning accident/injury in particular is the biggest threat to children's survival and leading cause resulting in child death. Accident/injury requires huge social & economical expenses and remains a real threat to national development.

Social and economic losses due to injuries in general and drowning in particular among children and minors are enormous. Millions of people all over the globe are facing household members' death or incapacity due to injuries³.

Non-fatal drowning leaves its long-lasting mark on the whole family of drowning survivors, including psychological impacts on their parents, siblings and care givers. Of all

² Đặc biệt trong những năm gần đây đã xảy ra nhiều vụ đắm tàu, thuyền nghiêm trọng như vụ đắm đò ở Cà Tang tỉnh Quảng Nam, ở bến đò Chôm Lôm tỉnh Nghệ An, chìm Nhà hàng du lịch Dìn Ký ở sông Sài Gòn.v.v.. đã cướp đi sinh mạng của nhiều em học sinh.

³ Nguồn số liệu : Quyết định số 197/2001/QĐ-TTg ngày 27/12/2001 của Thủ Tướng Chính phủ về phê duyệt Chính sách quốc gia phòng, chống tai nạn, thương tích giai đoạn 2002-2010

social impacts, mental consequences are most complicated and unquantifiable. For parents, the agony of being suddenly deprived of a child due to accident may take scores of years to heal and is in many cases irremediable. Impacts of accidents/injuries on children are also manifested by inequality of development opportunity experienced by children suffering life injuries, especially those from poor families.

Effects of drowning on community can be estimated using either disability-adjusted life year or years of potential life lost formulas. Both measure loss of production due to premature death before retirement age, normally 65. Case studies in Bangladesh, China and Vietnam give good examples of the enormous effects of drowning on economy(6).

Years of potential life lost (DALYs) varies greatly from country to country. For under-15 children in low & medium income countries in the Pacific, drowning is the cause of 4% DALYs

Years of potential life lost (YPLL) is used in Vietnam evaluation which shows drowning the leading cause resulting in years lost, accounting for 58% YPLL, road injuries accounting for 21% and falls accounting for 14% YPLL.

V. Experience from child-drowning prevention lessons

1. Each nation should develop its own agenda, with objectives tailored to local settings, to deal with the issue of drowning. Although drowning rates are high, they are nonetheless preventable, therefore resources should be committed to preventive strategies.
2. Concerted efforts between various department, communities, industrial and private sectors to tackle drowning issue.
3. Improved data collection & sharing: Data and information are needed to develop effective intervention strategies.
4. Universalizing water safety skills for children, including swimming and survival skills.
5. Implementing interventions to eradicate child drowning risks at communities: This can be achieved by eliminating drowning risks and setting up barrier between children and drowning risk factors.

6. Setting up community drowning prevention safe houses in areas with many open water sources and flooding threat

6. Familiarizing children with individual inflatables

7. Providing initial response prior to medical worker's arrival and enhancing capacity of professional relief workers to respond to drowning cases.

8. Strengthening parents' & adults' supervision and ensuring presence of life-savers at swimming pools & beaches.

9. Awareness raising about drowning, safety regulations and water safety skills. Skills include improved risk recognition, cognizance of one's limitations, including swimming constraints.

VI. Lessons learned from child drowning interventions

1. State's support for swimming & safety skill training for children

Rate of fatal drowning among 4 year olds and over participating in Safe Swimming (safe swimming and lifesaving) has been down by 90%.

- People's committees in Da Nang, Ha Noi, An Giang, Ba Ria Vung Tau and Quang Ninh have adopted policies in support of swim training, by various forms, focusing mainly on:

+ Local budget to cover all costs from swimming training at Gymnastics & Sports centers, procurement of smart pools, building of improvised pools, training of trainers, trainees' fees. Total expenses per child trainee come up to 500,000 VND.

+ Local budget to cover all costs from swimming training at Gymnastics & Sports centers, procurement of smart pools, free training for children from poor & boorderline families while charging ordinary trainees 500,000 VND/each.

+ Several districts in Ha Noi provided swim training to children through contractual agreement with smart pool suppliers by the following arrangment: Schools/localities entered into contracts with companies who take charge of pool installation at schools/communes; pool operation; provision of swimming trainers & supervisors. The

costs are 1200.000 đ/trainee, with 30% subsidized by local authorities, leaving 840.000 đ to be paid by trainees. Children from poor, borderline and disadvantaged families are eligible for fee-exemption.

2. Favourable policy: Safe swimming program implemented from 2006-2010 in Bangladesh provided swimming & water safety skills to children aged 5-17, turning out over 200.000 graduates. Children were trained in non-stop swimming in minimum distance of 25m and remaining afloat for 30". By the program's own assessment drowning rate among participants was reduced considerably compared to those in the control group.

The program benefited both genders. The program is achievable by making use of existing natural water sources such as rivers, streams, ponds, lake, and swimming pools provided safety and water quality assurance measures are in place. Safe swimming program also pointed out that mobile pools could be a effective solution to child swim-training. Advantages include positive control of water depth and water quality; absolute safety; much lower investment compared with that of fixed pools, and prolonged life span of up to 5 years. Safe swimming programs in Thailand and Da Nang of Vietnam proved mobile pools to be a safe and low-cost solution to child swimming. Average cost per trainee is \$13.46.

Smart assembly pool: Made of simple materials, these pools cost much less than traditional reinforced concrete pools, totalling about 100 million each. Pools are easy to assemble, disassemble, transport and don not take up much space when not in use. They can be moved to training venues and made to measure to suit actual conditions. Standard filters used assures that water quality would have no detrimental effects on swimmers.

3. Maximizing natural conditions could be a feasible solution to swim training. However, given shrinking area of water bodies such as canals, ponds, etc and increasing pollution, the above solution can barely scratch the surface of swim training needs.

4. Investment in childcare at kindergartens and childcare groups helped reduce drowning rate among kindergarten children by 80%.

5. Childcare groups, each comprising 20-25 high-risk children aged 1-5, implemented in Anchal of Bangladesh, where the central housing, provided by the community, was situated in a residential cluster of 50-60 households and 5-10 minutes' walk from other groups. A certified female teacher trained in childcare, health, nutrition, etc... was selected to be the childcare giver.

Cost per child , inclusive of teacher's remuneration, was USD\$30/year.

6. Mitigating child drowning risks by putting safe communities, safe schools and safe houses in place and stepping up implementation of waterway traffic safety regulations

7. Success of child drowning prevention calls for concerted efforts and capacity building for government staff and communities in implementing and overseeing drowning prevention programs.

Part 2

OBJECTIVE, CONTENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION SOLUTIONS

I. Objective

To contribute to drowning reduction and afford water safety skill training to children

II. Beneficiaries

Children, with preference given to children from poor and borderline families, children benefitting from social protection schemes, children living in mountainous regions & islands and in disadvantaged communes.

V. Key interventions :

1. Swim & water safety skill training at school and community

- Children from poor and borderline families, children with special circumstances, children living in 62 poorest defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP are entitled to swim & water safety skill training, free of charge, at community-based swim & water safety skill training courses, schools and public sports facilities.

- Localities, depending on their circumstances, to share part of swim & water safety skill training costs incurred by children not falling into aforementioned categories

- Support for swim training for primary and junior high schoolchildren in 62 poorest districts defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

2. Capacity building for swim trainers & supervisors

- Swim & water safety skill training materials developed for use at sports centers, communities and schools
- Training courses on swim training skills, water safety training skills, supervision at swimming classes, child first-aid skills organized for Culture-Sports & Tourism guides, sports school teachers, local Youth Union cadres

Preference should be given to training for Culture-Sports & Tourism guides, sports school teachers, local Youth Union cadres and facilitators in 62 poorest districts defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

3. Improving & developing child swimming classes & facilities

- Existing pools: Pool safety conditions reviewed, safety equipment, swimming supervisors & first-aid supplies added; medical workers & swimming supervisors trained on drowning response.

- Mobile pools made available to schools and communes far from solid pools to ensure that schools/communes capable of offering child swimming will have 1 pool each.

- Improvised pools designed for communes with rivers/lakes suitable for swim training

- Mobile pools made available to 62 poorest districts defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

4. Child swim training at communities & schools

- 1 smart assembly pool measuring preferably 7m x 15m, depending on local circumstances, made available to each cluster of schools/comunes (including filter system, safety barrier, boy/girl bathrooms) or improvised pools meeting child safety & health requirements designed.

- 2 certified swim trainers & 2 supervisors assigned to each class.

- Each trainee entitled to 12 – 15 sessions in total, 3 sessions/week, 4-5 sessions a day, each session lasting 60'

- Course material: Should be tailored to local circumstances and Vietnamese children's physique and comprise swimming skills, water safety skills and life saving skills

- Training schedule: 2 months during summer break

- For safety reasons each class should have maximum 20 trainees/trainer, and every training site should have an external supervisor in charge of attendance, security and safety. School health workers and parents should be involved to take note of irregular incidents and respond to emergencies

- Allowance for swim trainers and supervisors at courses organized in 62 poorest communes defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

6. Childcare sites for 1-5 children not participating in kindergarten classes and those in flood-affected localities

- Each group comprising 25-30 children aged 1-5.

- Sites inside cluster of 50-60 households and within 5-10' walk

- Childcare givers selected from voluntary facilitators trained in kindergarten childcare. 3-4 facilitators/childcare group.

- 1-2 kindergarten teachers from commune kindergarten chosen to regular monitor household-based childcare groups.

- Budgetary support for childcare sites, childcare facilitators, kindergarten teachers monitoring household-based childcare groups in 62 poorest communes defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

7. Consulting services, child drowning prevention and water safety skills developed for social service centers; child drowning prevention skill training developed for schools.

8. Enforcing waterway safety regulations: Spot check on water transport & tourism vessels for safety; provision of lifevests; training for captains and crew members on child drowning prevention regulations.

9. Improved environment in favour of child drowning prevention interventions with preference given to 62 poorest districts defined by Government's Resolution 30a/2008/NQ-CP

VI. Implementation solutions

1. Mechanism/Policy

- Strengthened guidance from People's committees of provinces and municipalities with regard to child drowning prevention; Support for swim & safety skill training for children and improved child training services network; elimination of drowning risks at communities and families; and support for enforcement of waterway traffic regulations.

- Interest in policies pertaining to Childcare & Protection personnel at community level, swim teachers/trainers, health workers and supervisors stationed at swimming pools/training sites.

- Policies in support of investment in terms of infrastructure and equipment for services offering swim & water safety skill training and consultancy on child drowning prevention.

- Fund mobilization from charity fund, socio-economic organizations, individuals, families and international organizations for child drowning prevention interventions.

- Review, monitoring and evaluation of project activities. Coordination between ministries & sectors.

2. Communication & Education

Strengthen information dissemination and education drives to enhance the awareness, knowledge and skills of officials of various levels/sectors, facilitators, parents, childcare givers and the children themselves with regard to child drowning prevention. Educate & urge families to closely monitor their children during the summer break and in the storm/typhoon season. Instruct communication agencies to give prompt warnings about drowning-prone locations/sites and disseminate knowledge and skills in child drowning prevention to the populace.

3. Technical solutions

- Improve services offering swim & water safety skill training to children as well as social service centers offering consultancy on child drowning prevention.

- Improve capacity of swimming school-teachers, consultants on child drowning prevention as well as quality of pool & beach supervision and first response.

- Promote training in swimming and safety skills at swim training services, communities and schools.

- Implement child-drowning risk elimination interventions, focusing on inspection & spot check on high-risk or drowning-prone locations and take preventive measures to ensure safety for children during the summer break and storm&typhoon season, including covers for household water-containing tools, barrier or warning signs around lakes, ponds, rivers and beaches ...Continue monitoring implementation of safe houses, safe schools, safe communities....Regularly monitor & inspect implementation of laws, policies and standards governing child drowning prevention, water safety regulations, waterway traffic safety regulations. Promptly deal with cases in violation of child drowning prevention.

4. Social mobilization

Intensify families' involvement in child drowning prevention efforts, including taking children to and collecting them from swim & water safety skill training classes.

Intensify inter-departmental coordination and mobilize community participation in child drowning prevention efforts; develop inter-departmental plan for child drowning prevention; develop inter-departmental coordination mechanism in school-children transfer and management, in organizing safe summer activities and avert drowning incident during swim & skill training sessions.

IV. Implementation budget

1. Budget sources:

- State budget.
- Children Fund.
- Donations from domestic & foreign organizations & individuals as well other legitimate sources.

2. Implementation mechanism

a) Local budget to be implemented in conformity with stipulations defined by Budget Law

b) Localities are encouraged to consider & apply higher rate of support and extend their coverage to benefit children not covered by this policy.

c) In the event the funds from aforementioned sources fall short of expected implementation budget Chairpersons of People's Committees of provinces and centrally-

run municipalities shall report to MOLISA and MOF to seek the Prime Minister's consideration & approval of allocation from central budget. Specifically:

- Support from central budget is meant only for provinces/municipalities whose local revenues fail to match their local spending

- Localities meeting 50% of their local spending needs will be entitled to 50% from central budget; localities meeting less than 50% of their local spending needs will be entitled to 80% from central budget to implement the project.

d) Costing, allocation, disbursement and settlement of funds expended on Child drowning prevention Policy must be in line with the Law on State budget and relevant directives.

đ) Trường hợp trẻ em được hỗ trợ kinh phí học bơi, kỹ năng an toàn trong môi trường nước thuộc đối tượng quy định tại đề án tại các cơ sở dịch vụ tư nhân thì trẻ em được hưởng các chính sách quy định tại đề án này theo định mức chi được nhà nước quy định đối với các cơ sở dịch vụ công lập, các cơ sở dịch vụ ngoài công lập đã được xác nhận điều kiện đảm bảo an toàn và dạy bơi cho trẻ theo chương trình quy định của nhà nước.

Google translate: In cases where the children are supported with funding for swimming lessons or safety skills in water activities specified in the scheme at private service establishments, the children shall enjoy the policies prescribed in Clause This is in accordance with the cost norms set by the state for public service facilities and non-public service facilities that have been certified to ensure safety and swimming for children under the program prescribed by government.

In the event children defined by this project as eligible for budgetary support to take swimming & water safety skill training lessons choose to train at private services.....

e) The National Fund For Vietnamese Children at various levels, Fund for child drowning prevention, other charity funds, donations from individuals and organizations in the country and abroad.

III. Number of beneficiaries & localities needing support

1. Children trained in swimming and water safety skills

The number of children from poor, borderline households and “social protection” schemes eligible for support from this project is estimated to be 2.430.559, with an yearly increase of 18,000. State budget will spend on average 500.000đ per child on swim & water safety skill training at communities, schools and public sports facilities. Under present

circumstances the portion of trainees eligible for support in year 1 will be approximately 10% with a yearly increase of 20%. This means by 2020 50% policy beneficiaries will be eligible for support to take swim & safety skill lessons. (The goal for 2020 will be 205 children of primary and junior high school trained in water safety skills). Average annual budget will be around 155 billion VND.

2. Support for swim & safety skill training in poorest districts :

62 poorest districts comprise 894 communes with 944000 primary & junior high schoolchildren in total. The State is committed to give its support in the form of a smart pool, 2 swimming teachers, 2 swimming supervisors and 2 months' operation costs (June & July) per commune. Total allocation in year 1 will be 106 million/commune, and approximately 37 million for every subsequent year.

3. Support for childcare sites for children aged 1-4 not enrolled in kindergarten

The number of children aged 1-4 in 894 communes in 62 poorest districts is estimated to be 537, or 600 children per commune. Each commune should have 20 groups, each comprising about 30 children. Each group should be assigned 3 facilitators to assist in childcare and 2 supervisors who are actually commune kindergarten teachers. The State will allocate funds to support setting up childcare sites, paying childcare givers and kindergarten teachers taking on supervision at childcare groups. Total spending in year 1 on a commune will be 52 million VND, with an additional 22 VND/year from year 2 onwards.

VII. Expected outcome

1. Outcome

Implementation of the policy will go a long way towards reducing fatal and non-fatal drownings among children; minimizing or eliminating child drowning risks and creating safe environment for children; saving national spending on emergency, treatment, recuperation and fatalities resulted from drowning; mitigating the burden on the society; and enhancing the awareness of families, communities and children themselves about detecting and eliminating drowning risks and creating safe environment for children.

2. Impact

The "Support for child drowning prevention" Policy will help promote the realization of children rights, especially the right to survival and development, and promote the building of quality human resources essential to the country's future sustainable development.

VIII. Implementation arrangement

1. Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs to proactively coordinate with relevant ministries & departments to guide policy implementation; coordinate with MOF with regard to budget allocation; review fund allocation and utilization by localities; compile and submit reports to the Prime Minister.

2. Ministry of Culture-Sports-Tourism to proactively coordinate with Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs in improving the management of swimming pool system in the interest of safety; instruct subordinate departments to coordinate with others to conduct swim training for children; coordinate in developing materials for Training-of-Trainers in accordance with safe swimming program.

3. Ministry of Education and Training to proactively coordinate with Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs in organizing water safety skills for children; with relevant departments in organizing swim training for children at swimming training services or at schools capable of providing such training; with other sectors in transferring the children to local communities at the end of school-year.

4. Ministry of Health to proactively coordinate with relevant ministries & departments to offer technical assistance regarding child drowning first-aid training; instruct subordinate health departments to provide child drowning first-aid training to community health workers and those at child swim training facilities.

5. Ministry of Public Security to proactively coordinate with Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs in overseeing enforcement of statutory provisions relevant to waterway traffic safety and monitor use of life-vests and inflatables as drowning deterrents.

7. Ministry of Transportation to proactively coordinate with Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs in overseeing enforcement of waterway traffic safety regulations.

8. Ministry of Finance, based on state budget capacity, to allocate implementation funds in accordance with current state budget decentralization; proactively coordinate with Ministry of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs to guide and monitor utilization of funds allocated for implementation of child drowning prevention policy.

9. People's committees of provinces and centrally-run municipalities:

- Instruct the Department of Labour-Invalids and Social Affairs to coordinate with other competent agencies to conduct survey of potential trainees at safe swimming courses; compile a list of children covered by this policy; prepare costing for approval by competent authorities; conduct studies of drowning risks at communities with a special emphasis on poor communes/districts and prepare costing for approval by competent authorities

- Incorporate (child drowning prevention) policy implementation budget into province’s annual budget forecast for approval by People’s Council.

-Guide, monitor and examine implementation of child drowning prevention policy

10. It is requested that the Central Committee of Vietnam Fatherland Front, Central Vietnam Women's Union, Central Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, Central Vietnam Farmers' Association, members of Vietnam Fatherland Front, Association for the Protection of the Rights of Vietnamese Children and other mass organizations, within the scope of its functions and duties, proactively participate in the implementation of this policy

**LIST OF 62 POOREST DISTRICTS
DEFINED BY RESOLUTION 30a/2008/NQ-CP**

Province	# poor districts	District names
Hà Giang	6	Đông Văn, Mèo Vạc, Yên Minh, Quản Bạ, Hoàng Su Phì, Xín Mần
Cao Bằng	5	Bảo Lâm, Bảo Lạc, Thông Nông, Hà Quảng, Hạ Lang
Lào Cai	3	Si Ma Cai, Mường Khương, Bắc Hà
Yên Bái	2	Mù Cang Chải, Trạm Tấu

Bắc Kạn	2	Ba Bể, Pác Nặm
Bắc Giang	1	Sơn Động
Phú Thọ	1	Tân Sơn
Sơn La	5	Sốp Cộp, Phù Yên, Bắc Yên, Mường La, Quỳnh Nhai
Lai Châu	5	Mường Tè, Phong Thổ, Sìn Hồ, Tân Yên, Than Uyên
Điện Biên	4	Điện Biên Đông, Mường Nhé, Tủa Chùa, Mường Ảng
Thanh Hóa	7	Lạng Chánh, Thường Xuân, Quan Hóa, Quan Sơn, Mường Lát, Như Xuân, Bá Thước
Nghệ An	3	Kỳ Sơn, Tương Dương, Quế Phong
Quảng Bình	1	Minh Hóa
Quảng Trị	1	Đa Krông
Quảng Ngãi	6	Sơn Hà, Trà Bồng, Sơn Tây, Minh Long, Tây Trà, Ba Tơ
Quảng Nam	3	Nam Trà My, Tây Giang, Phước Sơn
Bình Định	3	An Lão, Vĩnh Thạnh, Vân Canh
Ninh Thuận	1	Bác Ái
Kon Tum	2	Tu Mơ Rông, Kon Plông
Lâm Đồng	1	Đam Rông

**ĐƠN VỊ HÀNH CHÍNH 62 HUYỆN NGHÈO NHẤT CẢ NƯỚC
THEO NQ 30a/2008/NQ-CP**

Tỉnh/Huyện	Số xã	Thị trấn	Xã 135/II	Xã ngoài 135/II
Lai Châu				
1. Sìn Hồ	23	1	19	2
2. Mường Tè	16	1	15	
3. Phong Thổ	18	1	15	2
4. Tân Uyên	10	1	6	3
5. Than Uyên	12	1	8	3
Điện Biên				
6. Tủa Chùa	12	1	10	1
7. Mường Ảng	10	1	8	1
8. Mường Nhé	16		16	

9. Điện Biên Đông	14	1	13	
Sơn La				
10. Quỳnh Nhai	13		7	6
11. Sốp Cộp	8		7	1
12. Phù Yên	27	1	11	16
13. Mường La	16	1	7	9
14. Bắc Yên	16	1	15	
Cao Bằng				
15. Hạ Lang	14	1	9	4
16. Bảo Lâm	14	1	13	
17. Bảo Lạc	17	1	13	3
18. Thông Nông	11	1	9	1
19. Hà Quảng	19	1	12	6
Hà Giang				
20. Quán Bạ	13	1	9	3
21. Yên Minh	18	1	1	16
22. Hoàng Su Phì	25	1	21	3
23. Mèo Vạc	18	1	15	2
24. Đồng Văn	19	2	19	
25. Xín Mần	19	1	14	4
Lào Cai				
26. Si Ma Cai	13		12	1
27. Mường Khương	16		12	4
28. Bắc Hà	21	1	19	1
Yên Bái				
29. Mù Cang Chải	14	1	13	
30. Trạm Tấu	12	1	11	
Bắc Kạn				
31. Pác Nặm	10		10	
32. Ba Bể	16	1	12	3
Phú Thọ				
33. Tân Sơn	17		14	3
Bắc Giang				
34. Sơn Động	23	2	14	7
Thanh Hóa				
35. Lang Chánh	11	1	5	5
36. Quan Sơn	13	1	10	2
37. Quan Hóa	18	1	14	3
38. Thường Xuân	17	1	9	7
39. Mường Lát	9	1	7	1
40. Như Xuân	18	1	11	6
41. Bá Thước	23	1	13	9
Nghệ An				
42. Tương Dương	18	1	15	2
43. Kỳ Sơn	21	1	20	

44. Quế Phong	14	1	10	3
Quảng Bình				
45. Minh Hóa	16	1	12	3
Quảng Trị				
46. Đa Krông	14	1	8	5
Quảng Nam				
47. Tây Giang	10		10	
48. Phước Sơn	12	1	7	4
49. Nam Trà My	10		10	
Quảng Ngãi				
50. Sơn Hà	14	1	11	2
51. Trà Bồng	10	1	7	2
52. Sơn Tây	9		6	3
53. Minh Long	5		3	2
54. Tây Trà	9		9	
55. Ba Tơ	20	1	7	12
Bình Định				
56. An Lão	10	1	6	3
57. Vĩnh Thạnh	9	1	4	4
58. Vân Canh	7	1	3	3
Ninh Thuận				
59. Bác Ái	9		8	1
Kon Tum				
60. KonPlong	9		9	
61. Tu Mơ Rông	11		11	
Lâm Đồng				
62. Đam Rông	8		8	
Tổng	894	48	662	187