

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM

A THESIS

PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

AT MASSEY UNIVERSITY

MARIA ALTMANN

1996

HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT IN VIETNAM

Contents

<i>Abstract</i>	ii
<i>Acknowledgment</i>	iii
<u>Chapter I: Introduction</u>	1
Methodology	5
<u>Chapter II: Exploring Issues in Health and Development</u>	11
Concepts of Development	12
Women and Development	20
Towards Social and Environmental Sustainability	25
Sanitation, a Fundamental Issue of Health, Development and the Environment	32
Health, Poverty and Underdevelopment	34
Summary	41
<u>Chapter III: Aspects of Vietnamese Cultural Heritage and Social Organisation</u>	40
Early Civilisations in Vietnam	44
Position of Women in Early Vietnamese History	45
The Evolving Communal Village	53
Production Relations	61
The Colonial Impact	64
The National Liberation Front	66
<u>Chapter IV: Political and Economic Policy Development 1976-1992</u>	70
Background to 1976	70
Cultural Attitudes of Political and Economic Significance	74
National Socio-Economic Management Problems 1976-79 and 1979-85	78
The Policy of Renovation, 1986	85
Continued Reforms, 1988-89	88
Ideological Shift	90
1990-92	94

Chapter V: Current Situation of Health and Development in Vietnam

95

Overview: Impact of Reforms	101
Data Reliability	108
Population Distribution and Growth	110
Gender Discrimination and the Status of Women	120
Household Poverty, Income and Productive Resources	128
Women's Poverty and Woman-Headed Households	131
Unemployment and Underemployment	135
Education	146
Water Supply and Sanitation	151
The Wellbeing of Vietnamese Women During Motherhood	157
Wellbeing of Vietnamese Children	164

Chapter VI: Health Care Services and System

Introduction to Vietnamese Medicine	177
Development of Communal Health Services	180
The Post-Reform Health Care System	182
National Health Budget	193
Human Resources	195
Media and Health Education	197

Chapter VII: Conclusion

Bibliography	203
---------------------	------------

List of Figures

Figure 1. Mind-Map Outlining the Process of my Methodology	8
Figure 2. How International Commerce is Divided	14
Figure 3. Beenstock's Basic Needs Model	15
Figure 4. ILO Basic Needs Model	16
Figure 5. Arenas of Decision-Making Power influencing Fertility	24
Figure 6. Flow Components in a Livelihood	27
Figure 7. Development Integration within the Ecology of the Total Environment.	28
Figure 8. Linkages between the Forest, Fuelwood, Women's Labour and Household Nutrition	29
Figure 9. Interrelationship of Factors in Human Development	31
Figure 10. Solid Waste and Human Disease Pathways (postulated)	33
Figure 11. Health Practice and the Role of Environmental Health	34
Figure 12. Vicious Circles of Poverty and Disease	36
Figure 13. Life Quality Projection of a Person's Experience	37
Figure 14. Categories of Income Opportunities	40
Figure 15. Spatial Relationship of the Changing Role of Gender Relations Over Time	46
Figure 16. Basic Historical Patterns of Vietnamese Systems of Thought	52
Figure 17. An Idealised Version of Land Distribution in the Traditional Vietnamese Village	55
Figure 18. Per Capita National Income 1976-1980	79
Figure 19. National Income 1976-80 and 1980-85	82
Figure 20. Annual Inflation Rate 1987-93	89
Figure 21. Consumer Price Index and Salaries Index, 1989-1991	95
Figure 22. Comparative View Showing Official and Parallel Exchange Rate Between 1985-1990	96
Figure 23. Percentage of Retail Turnover by Sector, 1991	97
Figure 24. Annual Growth of GDP and Main Economic Branches, 1987-92	98
Figure 25. Strategic Objectives for 1991-95 Five Year Plan	99
Figure 26. Organisational Structure of the Commune of Hai Van	106
Figure 27. Approximate Location of the Major Ethnic Groups in Vietnam	100
Figure 28. Population by Age (1989)	111
Figure 29. Induced Abortions by Urban and Rural Areas, 1976-1987.	116
Figure 30. Decision-Making in the Family (three rural communes)	123
Figure 31. Percentage of Female Representatives in Central Government	127

Figure 32. Daily Food Intakes: Families of Women Workers in Forestry and Agriculture	134
Figure 33. Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment in the Formal Economy	136
Figure 34. Retrenchments in the Public Sector, 1990-91	137
Figure 35. Decreasing Opportunities for Future Labour Pool	138
Figure 36. Wage Differences between the State and Private Sector.	139
Figure 37. Wage Levels by Centre and Sector, 1986-91	140
Figure 38. Percentage of Women in Different Branches of the National Economy, 1989	141
Figure 39. Working Age Population in Informal Sector by Urban and Rural Areas, 1989	143
Figure 40. Informal Sector Workers by Sex, Location and Age Group, 1983-88	144
Figure 41. National Literacy Rates Compared With Per Capita GNP	147
Figure 42. School Drop-Outs by Grade Between School Years 1990/91 and 1991/92	148
Figure 43. Adult Literacy 1992 by Sex	150
Figure 44. Estimated Family Expenditure on Education by Level, Sex and Urban or Rural Residence	150
Figure 45. Access to Safe Water and Sanitation, 1988-91	151
Figure 46. Waste Composition at Bien Hoa Landfill	157
Figure 47. Maternal Mortality Rate per 100,000 Between Two Provinces	158
Figure 48. Leading Causes of Maternal Mortality 1984-85	159
Figure 49. The Causes of Maternal and Child Mortality and Morbidity	160
Figure 50. Risks to Infant Health from Social Environment	165
Figure 51. Trend in Neonatal Mortality, 1986-1990	166
Figure 52. Main Causes of Neonatal Deaths, 1989	166
Figure 53. Neonatal Tetanus Incidence, 1984-1991	167
Figure 54. Comparison in Infant and Under-Five Mortality Between Two Regions	168
Figure 55. Five Underlying Causes of Vietnamese Child Illness and Mortality	169
Figure 56. Significant Child Health Problems in Vietnam	170
Figure 57. The GOBI/FFF Framework	171
Figure 58. Under-Ones Immunized 1986-1991	172
Figure 59. Structure of Health Services	185
Figure 60. Ministry of Health Budget Compared With National Budget 1986-1990	194
Figure 61. Distribution of Health Personnel	196

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the current situation of Vietnamese people's health and development, with a particular focus on the wellbeing of Vietnamese women. Its central question is the impact of the political and economic reforms in Vietnam from 1986 onward, which reinstated the "family economy" and a number of free market principles within the country's socialist framework. It is based on a combination of field observations from an investigative visit to Vietnam in April 1994 and literature reviews covering concepts of development, Vietnamese culture, history, politics and economics. Wherever possible, Vietnamese sources (in English translation) have been incorporated.

The first substantive chapter explores the connection between health, development and the environment, establishing the interrelationship between the wellbeing of marginalised groups within a society and the meaning behind sustainable human development. The concept of wellbeing is argued as encompassing values of self-determination, while the concept of provision for sustainable livelihood is highlighted as a means to intercept the cycles of poverty and disease.

A brief insight into aspects of Vietnamese cultural and social history up to the end of the colonial period is then offered, focusing on the organisation of the traditional village, so as to sign-post key aspects of culture and social organisation which have continued to influence the development of Vietnamese society.

The following chapter gives the background to the process of political and economic reform in Vietnam from reunification in 1976 following the end of the Vietnam War identifying the ideological changes involved and outlining the macroeconomic impact of the reforms. The goals of current Vietnamese social policy are also considered.

The final two chapters present data and analysis on the current state of Vietnamese people's wellbeing, identifying where possible the effects of recent policy changes. Topics covered are population, gender discrimination and the status of women, household poverty, education, employment, water supply and sanitation, women's health, child wellbeing, and the structure and operation of the Vietnamese health care system. The main findings are that the reforms have increased resource disparities between different groups in Vietnam and that the less advantaged, including a large proportion of Vietnamese women, face a serious decline in wellbeing unless changes occur in priorities for development.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Absoutely "thank you" to everyone in Vietnam, Australia and New Zeala who has supported me during the intense process of learning and expressi my discoveries through this research.