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## Mobilizing resources activity to support PWDs - Social work-oriented approach

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### Abstract

People with disabilities (PWDs) are one of the disadvantaged groups in society that are always cared for and supported by Vietnam. Over the years, there have been many supportive policies and interventions, but PWDs still face many difficulties and challenges in life. Although PWDs always need to work to get ahead in life. However, with the characteristics of being one of the disadvantaged groups in society, they urgently need support resources to create conditions for them to develop their own strength to integrate into the community, stabilize their lives as well as partly contribute to the development of society. The following article analyzes activities to mobilize and connect PWDs resources base on the approach of social work. The results show there are still some resources that have not been properly mobilized for both subjective and objective reasons. There are also some resources, although they have been mobilized for PWDs, these resources have not brought many benefits to PWDs. Therefore, applying knowledge and skills as well as enhancing the role of social workers is very important in mobilizing to connect more resources as well as help PWDs use those resources most effectively.

**Keywords:** People with disabilities, social work, resources mobilization

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### Introduction

In Vietnam, the disabled workforce accounts for a large proportion. According to statistics from the National Committee for People with disability (PWD), by early 2018, Vietnam had about eight million PWD aged 5 years and older, equal to 7.8% of the population (National Committee for PWD Disability Vietnam, 2020). Causes of disability are congenital, genetic, traffic accidents, labor accidents, injuries due to war, environmental pollution, climate change, natural disasters... forecast in the coming years. In the future, the number of PWD will continue to increase. Although Vietnam has tried a lot to enhance and improve the quality of life of PWDs by signing the Convention on the Rights of PWDs; promulgate policies and programs to help PWD as well as their families to create every opportunity for PWDs to integrate into the community and have opportunities for development (UNDP, 2023). However, PWD still faces many difficulties and inequalities in daily life. The difficulties that PWD often encounter are discrimination, limited opportunities for learning and jobs, lack of access to public services and social policies... (Tran Thi Binh, 2017). To solve the difficulties faced by PWDs requires the whole community and society to join hands. Furthermore, it is also necessary to have professional support intervention activities for PWDs to solve problems and meet both physical and mental needs. Resource mobilization activities are considered one of the important activities to meet basic needs as well as create conditions for PWDs to integrate into the community. In recent years, social work, after being recognized as a professional profession in 2010 (Prime Minister, 2010), has proven to be of great importance in supporting vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities. This article focuses on analyzing resource mobilization activities for PWDs based on social work in Thanh Son town.

### Research Methods

#### Document analysis method

This method was used throughout the research process of the topic. During the process of researching the topic, the research

team collected statistical reports, surveys, and investigations on people with disabilities from the Invalids and Social Affairs Department of Thanh Son Town People's Committee. At the same time, research documents on people with disabilities and social work with people with disabilities have been collected to build a theoretical basis and theoretical framework for the research of the topic and analyze and evaluate social work activities in supporting people with disabilities in Thanh Son town.

### Questionnaire survey method

This method was used to collect information from target groups about the needs of people with disabilities as well as support activities for people with disabilities and evaluate the effectiveness of resources mobilization. The study surveyed 100 out of 128 people with disabilities in the study area. These are people with disabilities who are between the ages of 16 and 60 and can answer the questionnaire. The survey process is always anonymous and does not pose any danger to the respondents. In addition, the survey team is always ready to explain if PWDs do not understand the question well. The research team will randomly select survey subjects through the local government's list of PWDs.

### In-depth interview method

This is a method used to get necessary information from the target research subjects through direct questioning and answering between the researchers and the research subjects.

Conduct in-depth interviews with 02 PWDs, 02 family members of PWD, 03 owner of production and business establishments employing PWD workers, 01 officials in charge of Invalids and Social Affairs in Thanh Son town and 03 social workers. The purpose of the in-depth interview is to collect information and opinions from the research subjects on the current situation of PWD, the needs of PWD, the status of social work activities to support PWDs. This method helps the research team have a deeper insight from the initial judgment of the document analysis process. The research team conducted 11 in-depth interviews with the duration of each session lasting from 20 to 30 minutes. The content of the in-depth interview is prepared in advance into arrays of questions and issues to be analyzed. The order of the interviews was flexible, the main content of the interviews revolved around finding out more specifically about the effectiveness of social work activities in supporting PWDs, learning about local guidelines and policies related to social work activities in support of PWDs.

### Research results

The purpose of this resource mobilization/connection is to help PWDs find resources (internal and external) including human, physical, financial, technical, policy support, providing PWD with necessary information about the services, policies, and resources available from agencies and organizations so that PWD can access those resources. above to support the life of PWD.

**Table 1:** Resources involved in supporting People with disabilities

| Supporting resources                                   | Received support | Frequency of support |          |       |            |
|--|------------------|----------------------|----------|-------|------------|
|  |                  | Rare                 | Sometime | Often | Very often |
| Family   | 91.7%            | 0%                   | 8.3%     | 25%   | 66.7%      |
| Local government                                       | 100%             | 8.3%                 | 45.8%    | 29.2% | 16.7%      |
| Agencies, centers, organizations in locality           | 83.3%            | 8.3%                 | 70.8%    | 16.7% | 4.2%       |
| Agencies, centers, organizations from other localities | 58.5%            | 37.5%                | 41.7%    | 20.8% | 0%         |
| Individual in the community                            | 33.3%            | 12.5%                | 58.3%    | 20.8% | 8.3%       |
| Relatives  | 75%              | 12.5%                | 45.8%    | 29.2% | 12.5%      |
| Local businesses/philanthropists                       | 62.5%            | 25%                  | 54.2%    | 12.5% | 8.3%       |
| Friends  | 45.8%            | 42%                  | 29.2%    | 25%   | 4.2%       |

*Source:* From the outputs of Research on Resources mobilization supporting PWDs

Looking from the data from table 1, we can see that the resources in supporting PWDs in Thanh Son town are diverse, detail as below:

All PWDs who have been receiving support from resource mobilization activities believe that they were received resources from local officials and authorities. This shows that leaders along with officials at all levels of the Party Committee and Party have had very close coordination in carrying out advocacy/connection activities to support PWDs locally. However, the frequency of support is not regular. In-depth interview opinions show that: *Usually when there are events or holidays, local authorities will give gifts or support to local PWDs.* So, it is still necessary to pay attention to planning so that it is not only during holidays or events that PWD receives support from these resources but when they are in need.

The PWD family is the resource chosen by the majority of PWD with 91.7%. In addition, this is also the resource that most often supports PWD. Family is an extremely important factor and plays a large role in PWDs support activities. Love, care, the understanding of family members or the

family's economic conditions will be a huge resource to greatly support PWDs. Although there is only a small number, there are still some PWDs who have not received support and support from their families. Thus, these are also cases that need attention and attention as well as deeper interventions or case management by social workers.

Agencies, organizations, and units such as Agricultural Bank, People's Credit Fund, Social Insurance, and local medical centers were selected by 83.3% of PWD. These are extremely important units in supporting PWDs in health care, employment, and daily livelihood activities. Especially material resources and money will be mobilized from this source. However, the frequency of mobilization is mostly only occasional. Thus, it will not really meet the needs of PWDs in meeting basic needs or developing production and livelihood.

Relatives are chosen by 75% of PWD. These are people who have close blood relations with PWDs. The love, support, and encouragement of close people will be a great source of encouragement and strength for PWD. However, due to many factors such as geographical distance, thinking concepts, and

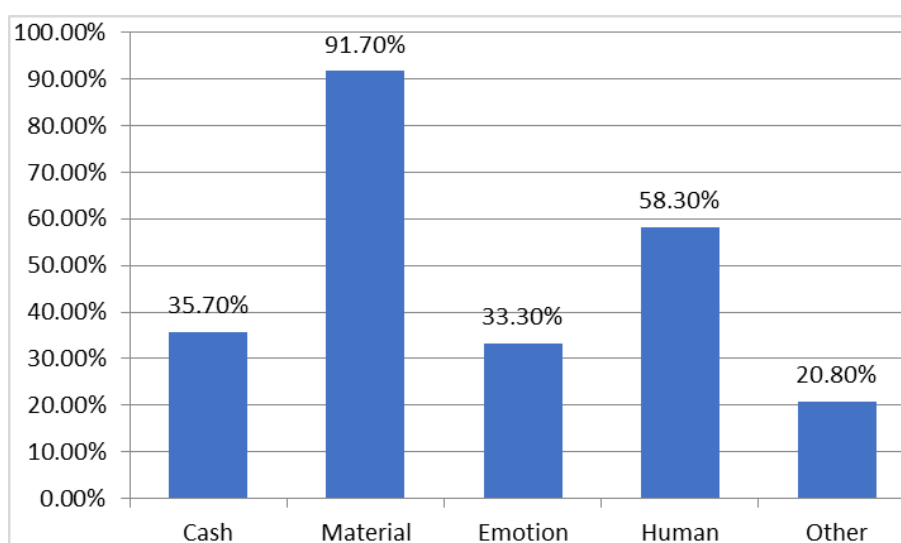
awareness of relatives, many PWDs do not regularly receive support from this important resource.

62.5% of PWDs are supported by local businesses/donors. This number is 58.5% for organizations, units, and businesses from other localities. These are important work and economic support resources for PWD. This is also a bright spot recognizing the efforts of local leaders and officials when trying, campaigning/connecting with external resources to bring more value to PWD. However, with only about half of PWDs having been receiving support from this resource mobilization activity, it is clear that there is still a need to further promote the mobilization of useful resources.

Resources from friends were chosen by 45.8% of PWD. This is also an important resource but there is no active participation. Because most PWDs are quite self-conscious and shy, communicating and establishing relationships will be difficult, so it will be difficult for PWDs to make friends, especially close friends, in order to receive empathy from peers or friends.

33.3% of PWD think they receive support from villages and local people. This is something to be concerned about because the community is an extremely important factor that directly affects the effectiveness of support activities, but only very few people participate as resources. This can be considered a huge shortcoming of local social workers who have not mobilized and taken advantage of this important resource. Social work officials and staff need to find solutions to mobilize people's resources to support PWD locally.

With the skills and methods of social work, the officers taking on the role of implementing social work activities have connected PWD to access policy capital sources; mobilize resources to provide economic and employment support for PWD; support for daily necessities; Support for medical treatment and examination... All are specifically informed by local officials to each PWD and PWD family so that they can benefit as quickly and fully as possible. Through the survey, PWDs are supported through specific mobilization resource activities as follows:



Source: From the outputs of Research on Resources mobilization supporting PWDs

Fig 1: Supports from resource mobilization activities for PWDs

Looking at chart 1, we can see that through resource mobilization activities, PWDs in Thanh Son town have received support from many different forms and resources, specifically:

For PWDs who have received support from advocacy/resource connection activities, only 35.7% have received cash support. In fact, according to State regulations, only severe and especially severe PWDs will be entitled to monthly social protection benefits. However, the survey subjects in this project are mainly light PWDs, so they are not eligible to receive cash. Therefore, the rate of PWD receiving financial support is not high, but only falls on a few subjects whose families and relatives support them as they develop their livelihoods.

97.1% of PWD received material support. In addition to monetary support, depending on the type of disability, level of disability, and living conditions of PWD, leaders and officials will mobilize, arrange, and distribute gifts. The differences can be basic items such as clothes or items for care and treatment such as wheelchairs, crutches, glasses, hearing aids..., basically, most PWDs accept receive support

from material resources.

58.3% received support from human resources. People are not just about quantity but about quality; In other words, it is human potential, it is the qualifications, skills, understanding, effort, and positivity of local officials' families, friends, relatives... for PWD support. Considering the overall factors, only 14 PWDs believe they receive support from this resource. This shows that the professional skills, knowledge, enthusiasm, and positivity of those involved in supporting PWD still have many limitations and shortcomings.

There are 33.3%, PWD receive emotional support. They here are understood as the sympathy, encouragement, sharing, respectful attitude... of family, community, and local government for PWD. This number proves the fact that most PWDs suffer discrimination and disrespectful attitudes from their neighbors and society.

With the supported resources, PWD in Thanh Son town basically recognizes and evaluates these supports well and that these supports have brought effectiveness as well as positive changes in work and daily life. Specific results are shown in the table below.

**Table 2:** Effectiveness of resources to support People with disabilities

| Supporting resources | Efficiency level |        |                | Total |
|----------------------|------------------|--------|----------------|-------|
|                      | Not effective    | Normal | Very effective |       |
| Cash                 | 10%              | 14,2%  | 75,8%          | 100%  |
| Material             | 32,7%            | 30,8%  | 36,5%          | 100%  |
| Emotion              | 15,6%            | 33,3%  | ,8%            | 100%  |
| Human                | 27,8%            | 58,3%  | ,%             | 100%  |
| Other                | 19,7%            | 16,7%  | 25%            | 100%  |

*Source:* From the outputs of Research on Resources mobilization supporting PWDs

According to the survey results, the support resources for PWDs are evaluated very well with the highest percentage of efficiency. Providing monetary support to PWDs is important because it is a resource that can help solve immediate problems or improve the quality of daily life. However, through synthesizing results from in-depth interviews, the study found that PWD uses support money to meet expenses for living and daily activities as well as to meet basic needs for themselves and their families such as buying food, clothes, paying debts, etc. It should be noted that if monetary support is only to solve problems or meet basic needs of PWD, it sometimes makes them dependent on it. Therefore, in social work, material, or monetary support, if there is no urgent problem, should be directed to helping PWDs improve the livelihoods of them and their families to facilitate their development and self-improvement later.

As for material support, the level of effectiveness is not rated high compared to the remaining support resources. Specifically, up to 32.7% of PWDs think that this resource is inefficient and a similar proportion of 30.8% think that the material resources supporting them are only at normal efficiency. In other words, many times they receive support because programs and activities give them, but they do not have much need for this support. This is an issue that needs attention because if resources do not meet needs, they will not be effective and waste resources while others in need do not receive them. Social work staff or those in charge of implementing resource connection activities should pay attention to the assessment of PWD's needs as well as make recommendations to individuals and supporting organizations to obtain resources that best meets the needs of PWDs.

The remaining resources are mental resources or social resources, and other resources are all evaluated as quite effective. However, there are still certain rates rated as ineffective or normal. It should be noted that these are very important resources because the needs of PWDs are not only limited to their material needs or daily life, but they also need to be satisfied and meet their spiritual needs, mental, socializing, entertaining and interacting. When people are mentally and socially comfortable, their quality of life will be significantly improved and other activities in life and work will also be much more effective. Thus, the role of social workers in this field needs to be more focused in promoting and improving the effectiveness of human and spiritual resources to bring the best benefits to PWDs.

### Discussion

Through PWD's assessments, research shows that the main resources in advocacy/connection are the PWD family and local government. The resources considered by PWDs to play an important role in supporting and providing great spiritual support for PWDs such as local people and PWD relatives,

the level of participation support for PWD is very limited, most of the time just stops at the occasional and little level. Therefore, social workers need to promote communication activities, increase the interest of families and communities in facilitating and encouraging PWD support.

According to the report of Thanh Son Town People's Committee, there are nearly 70 businesses and 332 individual business households in the locality, but according to the results of the PWD survey, this resource has not really had many positive contributions and impacts. As far as PWD support is concerned, support is very limited. With such a favorable condition, local businesses should be an important resource for PWD, assisting local government in solving employment and income problems for PWD and contributing to the overall budget for PWD. However, the government and businesses are still unable to solve the problem of PWD employment, the source of budget mobilization for PWD is still very limited, mainly still from the State. So social workers should advocacy to raise movements in communities and organizations or even individual to socialize the mobilization resources for PWDs.

Local businesses also said that although they also want to support a lot, they only trade and do small business, for nearly 2 years due to the impact of the epidemic, business and business have met many difficulties and not only contribute to PWD, but the government also calls for contributions to many other funds and activities in the locality. So, the resources must mobilize carefully. In addition, most of the subjects introduced by the staff for support and employment are PWDs, so they are concerned about the quality and efficiency of their work. The establishment/organizations that receives PWDs to work will receive more benefits and incentives, but after careful investigation, it is known that 30% of employees must be PWD to receive the support and priority. However, if PWDs could not work or their work is not good enough, thus it makes more problems for enterprises. Thus, the policy mechanism as well as the objective context is one of the limitations for resources from enterprises. This requires that the role of social workers as policy advocates should be further strengthened.

### Conclusion

Thus, in addition to the remarkable results that have been achieved, resource mobilization activities still have some limitations. That is, the contributions of businesses and philanthropists have not been much mobilized as well as external resources have not been maximized. The assessment and identification of PWD's needs and desires has not been done well, leading to inadequate and timely support that does not match PWD's actual needs. Local social workers are only interested in supporting the physical needs of PWD, but the mental and social needs are not taken care of.

It can be said that advocacy is important not only in

supporting PWD, but the results of advocacy resource mobilization are also a measure of assessment: Local leaders and civil servants; Performance of individuals and organizations of the leadership team and staff implementing social work activities in Thanh Son town; The influence and reputation of the government and each official in the community. Therefore, in addition to grasping the situation of PWDs in Thanh Son town, determining the difficulties and needs of PWD, searching, evaluating, and determining the necessary resources for PWD support activities. The best way to improve and enhance the effectiveness of resource mobilization activities is that local government staff, social workers... must find their own way to improve professional capacity; improve work efficiency in mobilizing resources for PWDs effectively.

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