

Gabriel Meranze Levitt
Livelihoods Specialist

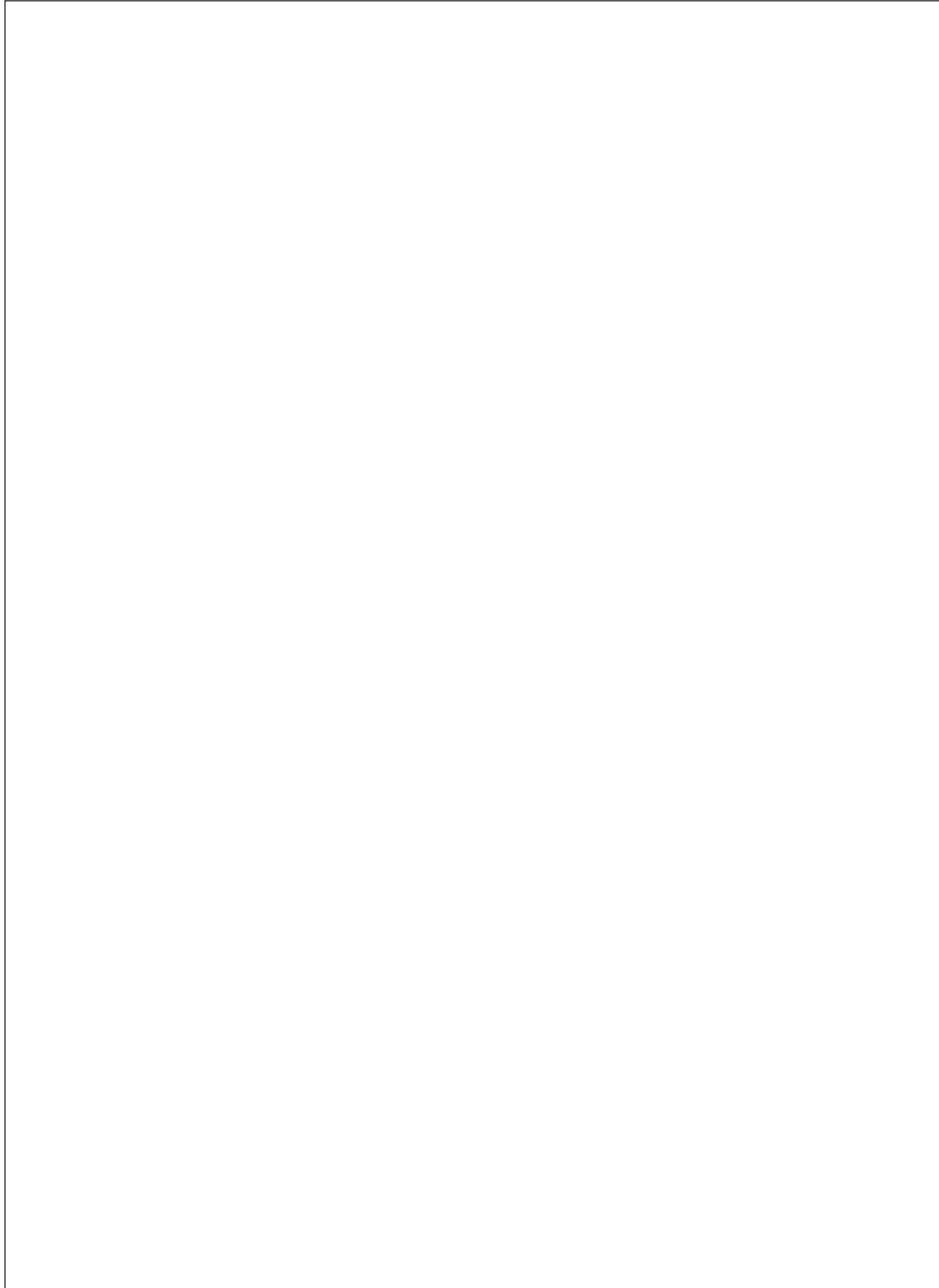
Pact Viet Nam

October 2011

Make your livelihoods program work

Suggestions for health-oriented organizations
serving people living with HIV in Viet Nam





This booklet is designed to inform the leaders of health-oriented NGOs in Viet Nam about options for promoting income-generating activities that truly work for beneficiaries living with HIV.

Section 1 presents a directory of suggested referral options, for outsourcing livelihoods support to specialized organizations with established track records. **Section 2** outlines key considerations and resources for NGOs considering an in-house livelihoods program, and **Section 3** concludes with tips on matching individual beneficiaries with the type of income-generating activity that best suits their wants and needs.

The referral options included here are not exhaustive, and practitioners are invited to share their experiences so that the list can be periodically updated. Please e-mail any updated information to glevitt@pactworld.org, with a CC to lhyen@pactworld.org.

This booklet was made possible with the support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and with technical assistance from implementing partner Pact. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the USAID, PEPFAR or the U.S. Government.

1. Referral options

For most health-oriented NGOs in Viet Nam, the most effective way to improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries living with HIV is by referring them to outside organizations that specialize in facilitating income-generating activities for disadvantaged people. This lets the NGOs stay focused on delivering their core psychosocial and/or medical services.

This section lists microfinance and vocational training referral options across Viet Nam. Section 3 provides further notes to help decide whether these approaches are right for particular beneficiaries.

Microfinance

Bright Futures Network represents several self-help groups that have run informal, independent microfinance programs.

352 Duong Ngoc Thuy, Ha Noi
04.3872.4184

Center for Community Health and Development (COHED) has served beneficiaries from various Pact-supported organizations through its microfinance network, funded by Irish Aid.

Contact Dao Thi Mai Hoa: maihoa@cohed.org.vn

100 Lo Duc, Ha Noi
04.4972.1452

FHI360 is partnering with the USAID HIV Workplace Project (implemented by Chemonics) and TYM on a microfinance pilot for women living with HIV in Thai Nguyen, Nghe An and Ha Tinh.

Contact Vuong Thi Huong Thu: huongthu@fhi.org.vn

7th floor Ha Noi Tourist Building, 18 Ly Thuong Kiet, Ha Noi
04.3934.8560

Tinh Thuong One-Member Limited Liability Microfinance Institution (TYM)

is partnering with USAID HIV Workplace Project (implemented by Chemonics) and FHI360 on a microfinance pilot for women living with HIV in Thai Nguyen, Nghe An and Ha Tinh.

Contact Ho Thi Quy: quyht@tymfund.org.vn

Room 301, 20 Thuy Khue, Ha Noi
04.3728.1003

USAID HIV Workplace Project, implemented by Chemonics, is an excellent source of information on microfinance referrals for people living with HIV.

Contact Nguyen Thu Anh: tanguyen@chemonics-vn.com

B16, Lane 34 Nguyen Thi Dinh, Ha Noi
04.6251.0745

Viet Nam Bank for Social Policies offers microfinance products in 64 provinces and more than 600 districts.

www.vbsp.org.vn/evbsp/

Viet Nam Women's Union manages microfinance funds in many locations.

Contact your local Women's Union branch.

<http://hoilhpn.org.vn/>

Women, AIDS and Reproductive Health Center (WARC) has also offered microfinance oriented to women living with HIV.

39 Hang Chuoi, Ha Noi

Vocational training

The following vocational training options have shown successful results. Additional public and private facilities may offer local training courses, but their availability must be determined city by city, or ward by ward. For more information, a good online resource is <http://thongtintuyensinh.vn>. The USAID HIV Workplace Project, implemented by Chemonics, has also offered soft skills training and some job placement services for people living with HIV (contact Nguyen Thu Anh: tanguyen@chemonics-vn.com).

North and Central Viet Nam

Hoa Sua School: Hospitality school for disadvantaged and disabled youth.

1118 Nguyen Khoai, Hoang Mai, Ha Noi
infos@hoasuaschool.com
04.3644.3068

KOTO: Hospitality school with a two-year program for street youth.

Locations in Ha Noi and Ho Chi Minh City.
Contact Do Thuy Nga: ngadt.hn@koto.com.au
9 Ngach 52/28 To Ngoc Van, Tay Ho, Ha Noi
04.3718.4573

REACH: Three enrollments per year, with locations in Ha Noi, Da Nang and Hue, plus activities planned for Ho Chi Minh City. Preference given to people living with HIV and their family members aged 18–28.

Courses in Information and Technology, Sales and Marketing, Hospitality and (for students aged 16–30) Nail Painting.
Contact Pham Thi Thanh Tam: tam.pham@reach.org.vn
Contact Nguyen Thi Thanh Huyen: huyen.nguyen@reach.org.vn
303 Building B, 347 Doi Can, Ha Noi
www.reach.org.vn
04.3762.3995

Trung tâm dạy nghề Thanh Xuân: Courses in approximately 20 professions, including Auto and Motorcycle Repair, Cooking, Electrical Work, Refrigerator Repair, Telephone Repair.

1 Xa La, Ha Dong, Ha Noi
www.thanhxuan.edu.vn
04.2240.0400 or 04.2240.4040

Trường Trung Cấp Bách Khoa Hải Phòng: Courses in Accounting, Auto Repair, Electrical Work.

To Hieu, Le Chan, Hai Phong
03.1384.0114

South Viet Nam

Hospitality School of Ho Chi Minh City: Free one-year program including internship, in Housekeeping, Hotel, Kitchen Chef and Pastry Chef. Ages 16–21. Formerly run by TGH – France.
Contact Ms. Hoang Thi My Hanh: 153xvnt@hcmc.netnam.vn
153 Xo Viet Nghe Tinh, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City
08.899.3378

Nhà Văn Hóa Phụ Nữ Tp HCM: Three-to-six-month training in Cooking and Bartending, Cosmetics, Fashion Design and Tailoring, Decorative Arts (flower arranging, paper flowers, crafts), Hairdressing, Pastry Decoration. Three to 5 million VND.
nvhphunu@hcm.fpt.vn
192–194 LyChinh Thang, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City
www.phunu.hochiminhcity.gov.vn/web/tintuc/default.aspx?cat_id=496&news_id=31
08.931.2309

Saigon Children's Charity: Free courses at Thang Long vocational training school (District 4), including English, Hairdressing, Information Technology, Office Work, Art and Photography.
Contact Paul Finnis: pf@saigonchildren.com
59 Tran Quoc Thao, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City
08.3930.3502

Tan Dinh Church: Sewing classes for women and men. Two million VND or less, depending on circumstances.
Contact Ms. My (Pastoral Care)
289 Hai Ba Trung, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City
08.359.1778

Truong Day Nghe Dan Lap Duc Minh: Courses for computer technicians (monthly), garment workers (three-month training) and motorcycle repair (continuous enrollment). Approximately 3 million VND, depending on class and discounts.
146/42B Vo Thi Sau, P. 8, District 3
www.lsvn.info/modules.php?name=News&op=viewst&sid=237
03.820.9693 (computer, motorcycle), 03.539.1778 (garment)

2. In-house options

There are also some ways that health-oriented NGOs can design and implement income-generating activities themselves to improve the livelihoods of their beneficiaries. This section describes job placement and social enterprise approaches. Section 3 provides further notes to help decide whether these options are right for particular beneficiaries.

Job placement

To find out what job vacancies are available, start by searching the professional and informal networks that people already use in a given profession.

- For example, you can ask about contacts at companies that deliver office supplies, local florists or beauty shops.
- Using personal relationships that already exist within networks gives you an essential head start.
- Prerequisite: For a job placement program to work, your beneficiaries' soft skills (social ease, communications skills, etc.) must already be strong.

Note: You must ensure that safeguards are in place to protect your clients' HIV status. Clients must be in control of who knows their status **at all times**.

Social enterprise

If your organization is interested in running a social enterprise, your leadership should consider the following basic requirements.

The **end customers**, who buy your beneficiaries' service or product, must:

1. Be clearly **identified**
2. **Say** they will purchase the service/product
3. Be **able** to purchase the service/product
4. Recognize the service/product as something that will **fulfill a real need** (be sure that this assessment is based on evidence, not assumptions!)

For more on identifying your market and customers, see www.avidian.com/identifying-target-markets.aspx.

Your business approach must also make sense:

1. All **costs** must be factored in and calculated (e.g., input and procurement costs, rent, staff time). For an online business start-up calculator, visit www.businessknowhow.com/startup/startup.html.
2. **Sales** projections and **pricing** must be based on a realistic understanding of:
 - The market's desire to pay for product (beware of market saturation!)
 - Capacity of your new business to meet market demand
 - Supply chain and logistics

For more on how to forecast sales, visit www.vainteractive.com/inbusiness/editorial/sales/ibt/sales_fo.html.

You must identify likely **legal** complications, and plan solutions regarding:

1. Registration
2. Licenses
3. Tax issues, etc.

To download CSIP's legal manual for social entrepreneurship in Viet Nam, visit www.doanhnhanchahoi.org/document/cam-nang-phap-ly-dnxh-2010.pdf.

The following resources can provide additional support to make your social enterprise work:

1. A knowledgeable mentor – do you know one who is willing to help? For more on mentors, visit <http://entrepreneurs.about.com/od/businessmentoring/a/valueofamentor.htm>.
2. Other HIV-oriented organizations that have experience with the challenges and benefits of running a social enterprise (e.g., CARE, COHED, Life, Pastoral Care).
3. Seed money and training to run a social enterprise. Three potential sources are:
 - Center for Social Initiatives Promotion (CSIP): www.doanhnhanxahoi.org
 - LIN Center for Community Development: www.linvn.org
 - Spark: www.spark.org.vn

3. Choosing the right income-g for each benefi

Determining which clients will excel most with a given type of income generation support is not an exact science. While people living with HIV may share some things in common regarding their livelihoods needs, it is important to keep in mind this community's diverse interests, dreams, skill sets, physical abilities, educational and work backgrounds, and job requirements. Such diversity means that there is no single "best" employment strategy for all people living with HIV.

With the support of health-oriented NGOs in Viet Nam, people living with HIV have successfully engaged in everything from sales and marketing of products to hospitality, food stalls, small shops,

enerating tool ciary

motorcycle repair and washing, mobile telephone repair, oyster farming, animal husbandry, garment manufacturing and more. While there is little evidence on the relative merits of any one type of business for people living with HIV, stationary food stalls are known to present particular drawbacks when the vendor's HIV status becomes public and customers may boycott the stall.

This section gives an overview of the four main strategies for supporting beneficiary livelihoods: microfinance, vocational training, direct job placement and social enterprise. Your organization should consider each one when designing your livelihoods approach.

Microfinance

Who it works for: Beneficiaries who have a good business idea, and who are dedicated to managing their own time and money as their business grows over the medium to long term. This option has been most successful when the person living with HIV is part of a household.

Advantages:

- Some people living with HIV need just a small loan and a bit of training to create a self-sufficient microenterprise.
- Subsistence vending is a common livelihood strategy in Viet Nam, with rural wealth often most visible in small stores. Access to small capital at reasonable interest rates can remove a significant barrier for this kind of activity.
- Other family members can run the business when the person living with HIV is ill.
- Avoids the direct stigma and discrimination typical of many workplaces.
- Avoids difficult adjustments to the soft skills and hierarchy required for wage labor.

Ideal outcome: People living with HIV are empowered by learning transferable business skills, strengthening their social networks, and raising their household income – leading to improved quality of life and personal status.

Risks: Like all approaches, microfinance is not an effective option for every person living with HIV. As business failure can cause future risk aversion and a large loss of self-esteem, it is essential that organizations invest enough to avert preventable business failure. NGOs risk programming insufficient resources to support their loan recipients, or underestimating the complexity of issues that may arise after loans are distributed. One-off group trainings in microfinance are rarely effective, especially if they use technical jargon and academic theory.

Notes:

Savings-led vs. credit-led microfinance: In savings-led microfinance, a group of people saves its own money. The group then lends this money to group members and benefits from the interest paid. In credit-led microfinance, a donor provides capital for lending to groups or individuals. Repayment of loans then follows a strict schedule.

Selling products in rural areas: In isolated rural areas and some periurban areas, there is little access to well-paid wage labor and services are hard to sell. The local economy tends to rely on selling products (e.g., retail, animal husbandry, agricultural production).

Selling services in rural areas:

- Cash is generally more limited in isolated rural areas.
- Many services sold in cities may be more difficult to sell in rural areas, where they are considered to be household chores.
- Some services can be readily sold in rural areas, as demand is constant and customers see the value in hiring a skilled individual (e.g., motorcycle repair, haircutting/beauty services).

Vocational training

Who it works for: Beneficiaries seeking a long-term career or a better position in a specific field, and who believe that education will help realize this goal.

Advantages: Some individuals will transform their employment prospects through specialized training. People empowered with specific skills increase their salary and employability.

Ideal outcome: People living with HIV, previously not exposed to sufficient formal education, are empowered with skills and self-esteem leading directly to sustainable employment.

Risks: Beneficiaries can fail to find a job even after training. In Viet Nam, many vocational schools are criticized for being out of touch with market needs, emphasizing low-demand skills, employing poor teaching methods, and lacking essential job referrals.

Notes:

Health-oriented NGOs have provided training in needlework, flower arrangement, beauty techniques, etc. **Success has either been very high or very low**, with very little in between.

Outside referral is strongly recommended in most cases. For health-oriented NGOs, creating small vocational programs from scratch is generally neither feasible nor cost-effective. Initial investment in infrastructure and curriculum development can be high, and new vocational programs require test cycles and constant modification to meet market and beneficiary needs.

At health-oriented NGOs, in-house vocational training has been most successful when connected to a social enterprise. The social enterprise provides a job that focused training can help support.

Vocational training programs must constantly adapt training options to the **needs of both the beneficiary and the market.**

Job placement

Who it works for: Beneficiaries who want to be salaried employees but who do not want or need to pursue vocational training.

Advantages: Some beneficiaries need only very basic linkage assistance to reenter the workforce. NGOs are qualified to assist in providing this linkage, as well as help with CV development and interview skills.

Ideal outcome: Those who are ready for job placement find employment, with help from the NGO.

Risks: NGO staff usually depend on strong personal relationships with prospective employers to negotiate job placements with them – and these relationships can suffer if a beneficiary performs problematically on the job. Beneficiary expectations also need to be managed to make sure they are based on realistic salaries and job requirements.

Notes:

NGOs are very well-positioned to **train beneficiaries on interview skills and CV drafting**, both of which tend to be within their core competencies.

The USAID HIV Workplace Project, implemented by Chemonics, encourages people living with HIV to **attend job fairs**.

NGOs should expect to provide **guidance and encouragement** before and during the application process, as well as after the beneficiary begins work. This support service is also within the core competencies of most health-oriented NGOs.

Social enterprise

Who it works for:

1. **Beneficiaries** who have identified a market need that they can satisfy, want to work and prefer working with a group of other people living with HIV.
 2. **Health-oriented NGOs** that see a market need they can satisfy.
- These two options can also be combined in one social enterprise.

Advantages:

1. **For beneficiaries:** By working together in a supportive business environment, people living with HIV can build transferrable skills, self-esteem, economic resources and valuable networks.
2. **For NGOs:** Potential new revenue streams (although most NGOs only recover their expenses, even if the business goes well), promotion of their cause through business activities.

Ideal outcome:

1. **For beneficiaries:** On-the-job vocational training, a supportive social network, sustainable employment, occupational therapy
2. **For NGOs:** New revenue stream, social benefit for beneficiaries, showcasing social impact to community and donors

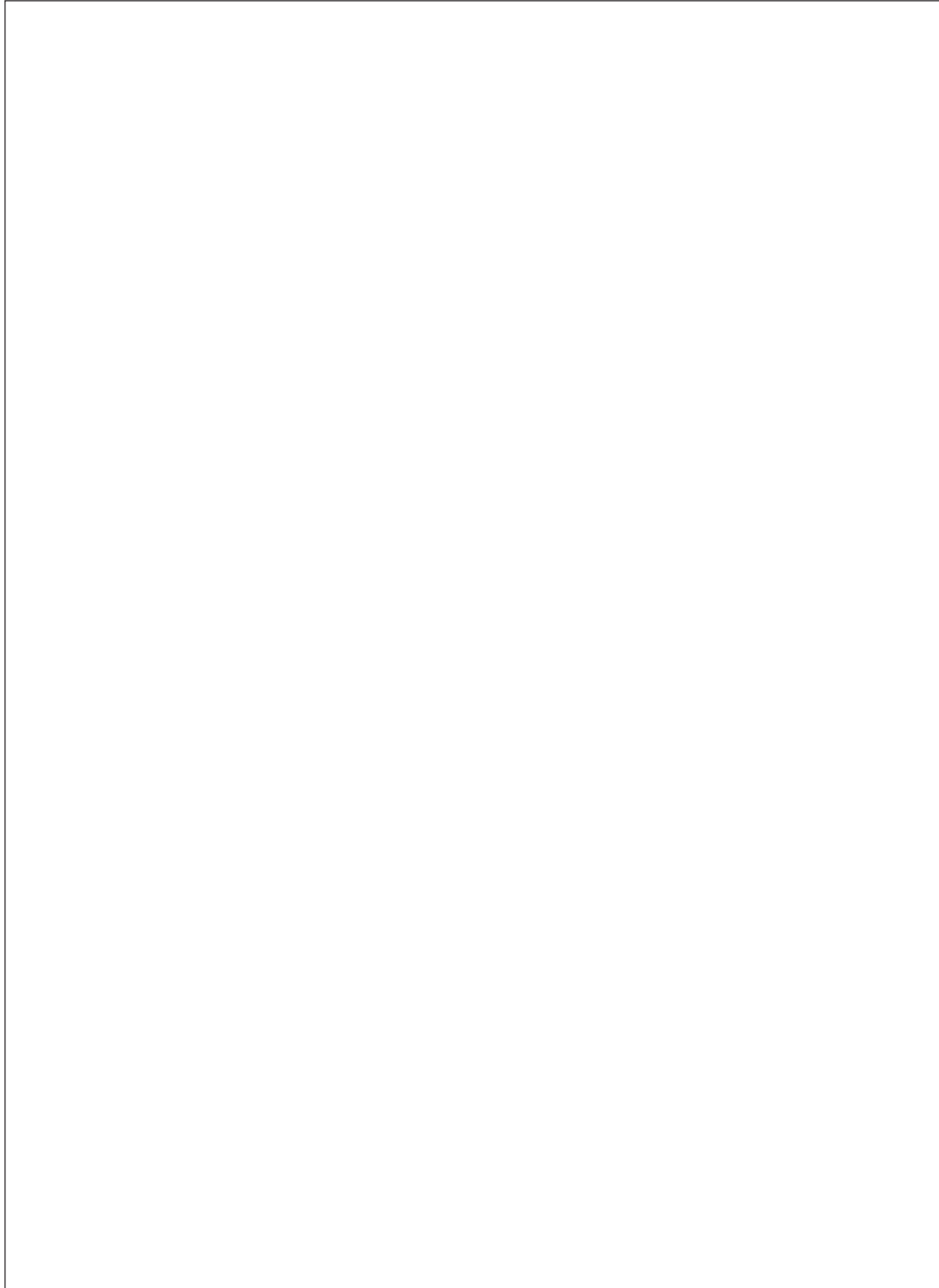
Risks: Personal conflicts can make the business very fragile for beneficiaries. Legal framework can be complicated. NGOs without adequate resources, preparation and understanding of the market find it very difficult to manage a social enterprise: Typically NGOs do not sufficiently research their potential customers, and as a result, NGOs frequently overestimate customers' desire to purchase their product or service, while underestimating needed inputs from the organization.

Notes:

Health-oriented NGOs have engaged in flower shops, garment factories, mobile phone repair shops, etc., with varying levels of success.

Many NGO-run social enterprises heavily involve people living with HIV in manufacturing, but have reserved management, creative design tasks and market linkages for program staff.

Typically there is a strong, smart, devoted visionary at the helm of a successful NGO-run social enterprise. As a result, middle management tends to be weak.



Pact Viet Nam

Add: 37A Xuan Dieu, Tay Ho
Ha Noi, Viet Nam

Tel: 84.4.3719.8899

Email: vn.info@pactworld.org