



VIETNAM ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION FOR ALL

SUMMARY OF COUNTRY REPORT

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE CENTER: YOUTH INFORMING THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION



MARCH, APRIL / 2021




INTRODUCTION

Having supported by the Vietnam Association for Education for All (VAEFA) with funding from the Asia-South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE), at the end of March and in early April 2021, three consultation sessions were organized on "The Futures of Education" in Hanoi, Vietnam.

This activity aiming at including "Marginalized youth voices in the Asia Pacific region shaping the futures of education". The purpose of the consultation sessions were to gather ideas and recommendations from young people, especially the disadvantaged youth on the education system they want to build in the future.

Two groups of youth that have been actively engaged in the work of VAEFA, the Hanoi Queer (a group of LGBTIQ youth) and deaf students of the National College of Education. They have conducted the consultation among their members. Although the consultation sessions took place in Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, some members of the consulted groups came from different provinces and cities in Vietnam. Due to this, the results of consultation sessions reflected the situation not only in Hanoi but also in other localities. With the support of VAEFA, these two groups actively planned the activity, conducted consultation meetings and then later sent reports on the outcomes of the consultations to VAEFA.



ABOUT THE CONSULTATIONS

Hanoi Queer

- **Who:** 24 LGBTIQ participants from 16 – 25 years old
- **When:** 27th Mar & 31st Mar, 2021
- **Where:** Queer Hub, Room.406, Block 12, Lane 3 Vu Thanh, Ha Noi, Vietnam
- **Method:**
 - Select objects (toy, pencil...) and develop a story based on the selected objects.
 - Together compile a funny story based on individual stories.
 - Conduct a role play and mold clay.
 - Group work: Sharing perspectives of the current education and dreaming about school in the future.

Deaf students of the National College of Education

- **Who:** 10 participants, including 3 male and 6 female, 1 non-binary at the age from 15 – 21 years old
- **When:** 3rd Apr, 2021
- **Where:** VAEFA office in N03 – T3A, Diplomatic Compound, Xuan Tao wards, Bac Tu Liem district, Hanoi, Vietnam
- **Method:**
 - Share personal stories/experiences about challenges of current learning environment.
 - Discuss in groups about what are good issues and what is needed for improvement, using pieces of color paper to record ideas.
 - Discuss in group and draw up a picture on "education in the future" from the perspectives and insights of deaf students.

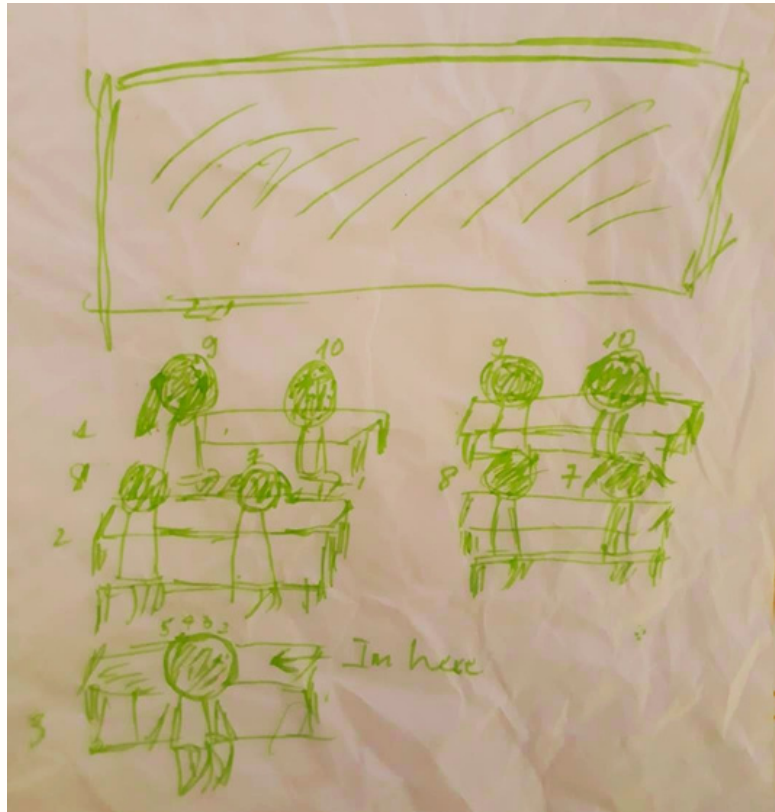
RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

- Hanoi Queer - Group discussion outcomes:



Picture 1. Friendly and inclusive learning environment for LGBTIQ students (Hanoi Queer group)

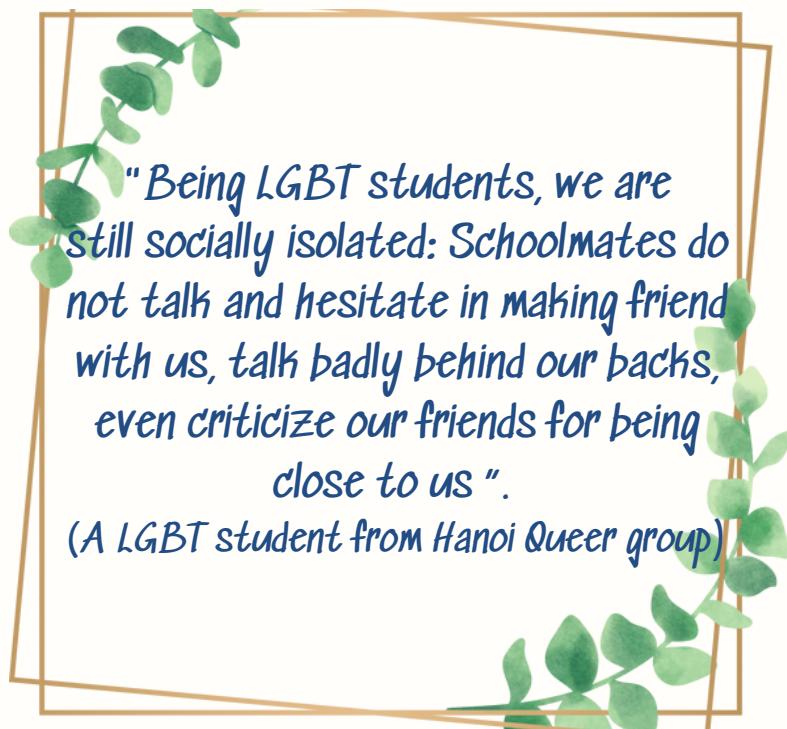
- Academic achievement - focused: The assignments and homework are quite heavy, making students either spend most of their time and their mind to complete the assignments, or else they postpone to do it until the due date.
- Learning pressure from their friends and family: Excellent students feel pressured trying to gain better marks. Teachers often praise and care for good students while sometime neglect students with poor performance.



Picture 2: Placement of the poor performance students in the classroom
(by Hanoi Queer)

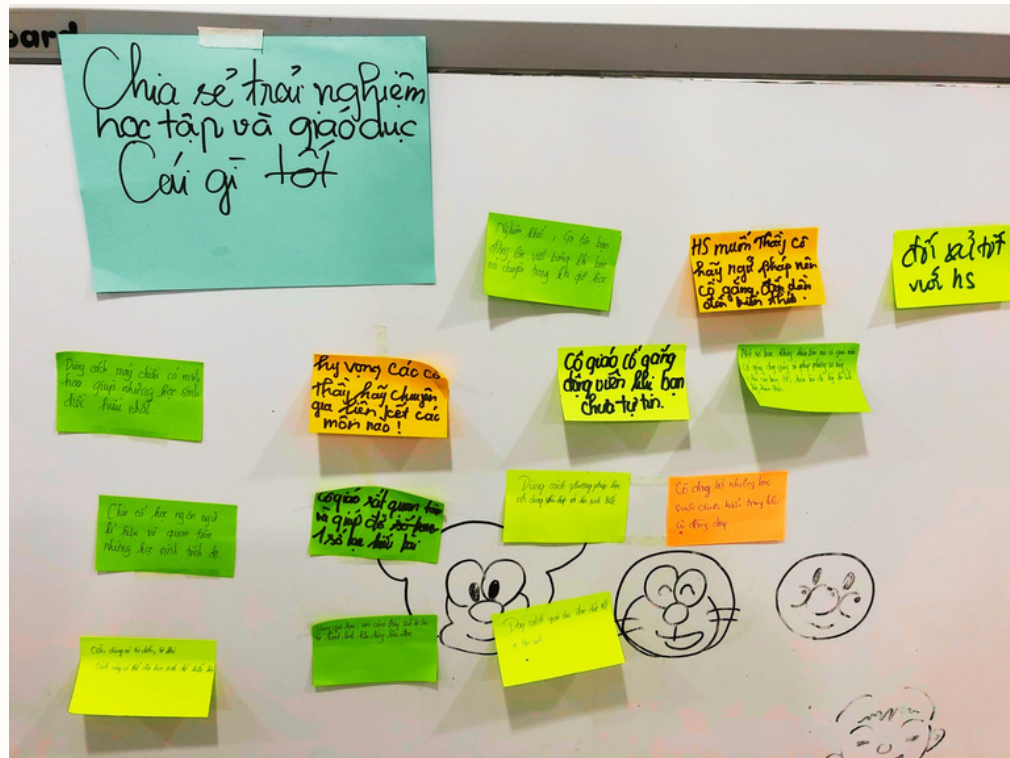
"Excellent students with mark of 9-10 are placed in the first rows of table and close to teachers, the students with mark of 7-8 are arranged in the middle rows and the ones with poor performance (mark from 2 to 5) are set in the last and isolated places in the class" -
Said a participant of Hanoi Queer

- School students in their last year in school seemed to receive no orientation and career guidance. They usually lose interest and motivation to learn in future.
- At school there has been more openness regarding awareness on sexual education and sexual orientation. However, most of the experience with teachers were often negative due to lack of understanding and existing stigma.



- Stigma against sexual orientation is more subtle and exists often in form of verbal violence. Sympathies and understanding about LGBTIQ students are somehow in shallow. LGBTIQ students feel hurt when hearing ridicule or joke made by school - mates.

- Deaf student group - Group discussion outcomes:



Picture 3: Group work discussion in drawing containing advantage points and points to be improved (Deaf student group)

A grade 8 student stated out:

"As a deaf student with limitation in vocabulary I wish that a subject of literature would visualize with pictures or videos explaining meaning of new words. That would be easier for us to understand and to remember these words for longer time.





- **Deaf student group - Group discussion outcomes:**

Strengths of teachers:

- During lectures some teachers use projector and visual illustrations that are very useful for deaf students.
- Teachers provide encouragement if deaf students are not confident enough in classroom, accompanying them to gain/accumulate more knowledge.
- For a difficult subject like Literature, a teacher tries to help deaf students through summary of lesson content.

Things to be improved:

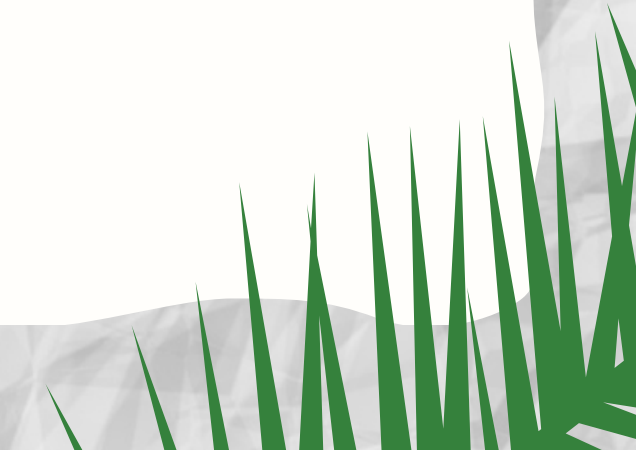
- Some of teachers deliver their lesson in less than regulated time fixed for their single lesson. They hardly pay attention or insufficient attention to support students with homework. Few teachers were observed to be busy looking at their mobile phones while getting distracted from their lesson delivery.
 - Some teachers have not been trained and equipped with sufficient teaching methods to teach deaf students. They had better use sign language more often instead of using verbal communication.
 - For difficult subjects (with long contents such as History, Literature, Biology, ...) teachers have not made summaries to help students understand the overall content. Literature has too many new words with abstract meanings. Because of this, deaf students often do not fully understand the true meaning of these words.
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- It seems that there is less sharing and communication between students and teachers. Since there is no space in school for them to talk, communicate and share secrets, both teachers and students lack understanding each other and show no compassion for one another.

Strengths of students:

- During class time some students are proactive in communicating and asking questions about lessons to teachers.
- Students help friends of lower achievement to improve sign language and knowledge.
- Expand the vocabulary through self-study in the learning material.

Things to be improved:

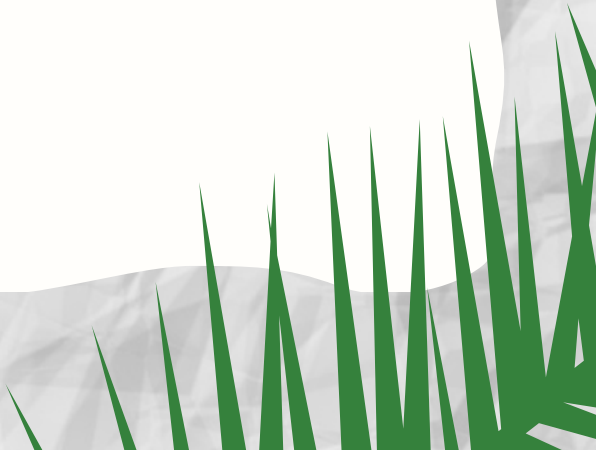
- Some students are still passive in learning and do not focus during class. They often feel ashamed and less confident.
 - Students have limited vocabulary.
 - The sense of self-discipline of some students is not high with misbehavior /indiscipline in class room.
 - Poor households often face more difficulties. Due to a far distance from home to school, many deaf students find it challenging to commute and drop out of school.
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EXPECTATIONS TO EDUCATION IN THE FUTURE

Both groups of Hanoi Queer and Deaf students expressed their desire to reduce lesson time in a class room and increase extra-curricular/ outdoor activities. To support students to gain more experience with subjects or activities of their interests and/or abilities both groups suggested development of students' clubs in school. Communication among teachers - students, students - students of disadvantaged groups should be improved leading to increase in sharing and understanding among each other.

Parents and caregivers need to listen, share, motivate and energize children both in school years and lifelong learning. They should avoid imposing and should provide support to the youth who identify themselves as LGBTIQ and want to come out. They need to promote/empower the youth by enabling them to make decisions for their own lives.



- **Hanoi Queer:**

- The provision school psychology and its quality of services should be strengthened: In fact, in schools the position of psychology counselor is currently held by a teacher who are providing teaching and counselling at the same time. It is necessary to have separate counselor with psychology expertise as there will be no misconceptions and biases. The counselor should be able to listen and advice LGBTIQ students attentively and provide counselling in a dignified manner with high level of confidence.
- Education is expected to be more open to the issue of sexual orientation, issues of the SOGIE (sexual orientation and gender identity and expression) are integrated into school curriculum.



Picture 4: My safe and friendly school in the future (Hanoi Queer group)

- Schools and families need to collaborate to protect students from physical and mental bullying and avoid neglecting, victim blaming or stigma.

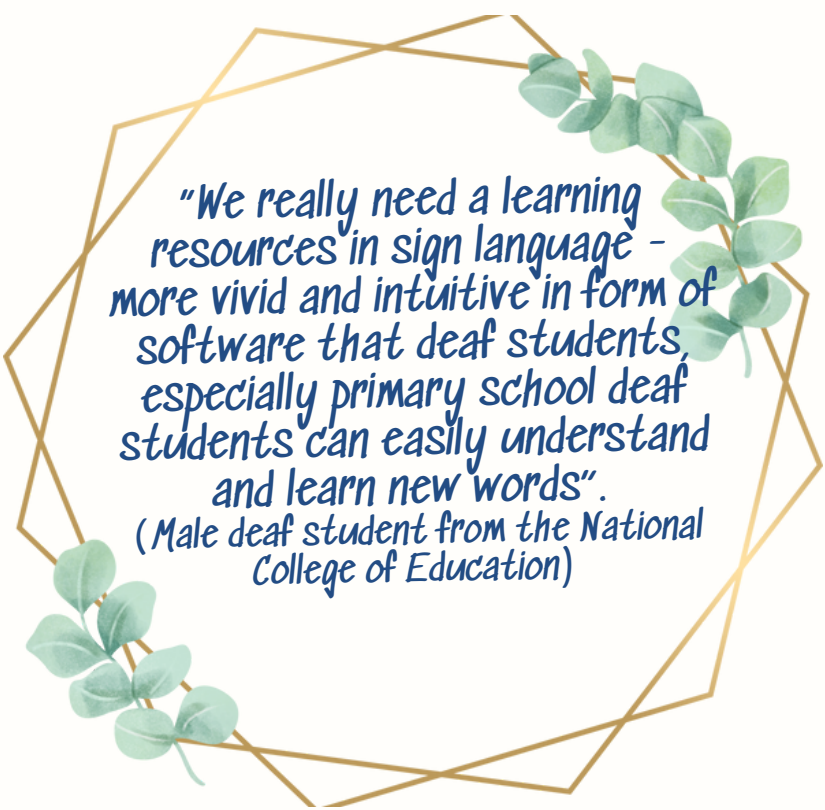
- Pupils with low academic achievement should be supported by school and teachers, and should not be a subject to judgment or comparison.

- **Deaf students group:**



Picture 5: Expectations on the education in the future by deaf student group

- For most deaf students, limited vocabulary is a challenge. They really expect to have software applications (running on smartphone, tablet, laptop, ...) that can explain words and terminologies in sign language with illustration, to help deaf students learn fast and understand them with ease. It will be more applicable than current book-based text document.



*"We really need a learning resources in sign language - more vivid and intuitive in form of software that deaf students, especially primary school deaf students can easily understand and learn new words".
(Male deaf student from the National College of Education)*

- Allocate funding for Sign Language Interpreters to support deaf students at school.
- In Vietnam, only the Research Centre for Promotion of Deaf Culture of Dong Nai University (located in Southern Vietnam) has university education that teaches deaf students using sign language.
- Many deaf students could not study up to colleges and/or universities. Therefore, it is necessary to develop and issue appropriate legal regulations and policies for letting college and universities in Vietnam to open higher education courses for deaf students using sign language.
- Opportunities for friendship building among hearing students and deaf students should be increased to strengthen solidarity and intimacy.

Vietnam Association for Education for All (VAEFA) is a network of local non-governmental organizations, research centres, community groups and experts who are working towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on education (SDG4) and protection of the rights of people with disability, ethnic minority, migrants, vulnerable groups living in remote or mountainous areas, women, children, LGBTIQ,...To date, VAEFA has 49 members who have come together to sustain the coalition as a platform for civil society organizations in Vietnam to pursue policy and budget advocacy for inclusive, gender-responsive and equitable quality education for all./.

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