



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION  
AND TRAINING



## SURVEY REPORT

# Actual Situation and Management Mechanism of Independent, Private Child Care Groups in Viet Nam

*(Conducted in densely populated areas,  
industrial zones and ethnic minority areas)*



Ha Noi, October 2016

**VIET NAM NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES  
RESEARCH CENTER FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

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**ACTUAL SITUATION AND MANAGEMENT MECHANISM  
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## INTRODUCTION

This study is conducted by the Research Center for Early Childhood Education, Viet Nam National Institute of Educational Sciences, with technical and financial support from UNICEF Viet Nam within the framework of the Education for Children Project for 2012-2016 between the Ministry of Education and Training and UNICEF Viet Nam.

### **About the Research Centre**

#### *Early Childhood Education Research Centre, Viet Nam National Institute of Educational Sciences*

During its 30 years of development, the Early Childhood Education Research Centre (hereafter referred to as “the Center”) has made significant contributions to the development of early childhood education and the improvement of early childhood education quality, meeting the requirements of national socio-economic development through several research projects (at ministerial and institutional levels) and by implementing projects and tasks at state, ministerial, and institutional levels.

From its foundation to 1995, the Center carried out five state-level projects, tasks and themes, six ministerial-level themes, and 25 institutional-level themes.

From 1995 to 2000, the Center carried out two ministerial-level projects and nine themes.

From 2000 to 2012, the Center carried out seven state-level projects and one theme, 20 ministerial-level themes and 24 institutional-level themes.

Since 2012, the Center has carried out three ministerial-level themes and tasks and four institutional-level tasks, participated in various studies with the support of the UNICEF, PLAN and WB, and participated in the development of guidelines and capacity-strengthening courses for local early childhood teachers and administrators.

The Center's studies have contributed to:

- Providing scientific rationale for the development of a new early childhood curriculum in line with the requirements of renovation and integration. The renovation of methods and forms of educational activities, renovation of educational environments, implementation of child activities, promotion of individual and group activities, all of which have been applied in early childhood education, represent a significant step forwards in the renovation of early childhood education methodology, contributing to improving the quality of early childhood care and education in the first years of the 21st century.

- The studies on strategies, policies/models, and measures for the promotion of rural early childhood education and non-public early childhood education have met the needs for early childhood education development. The proposed solutions to transform semi-public early childhood education institutions to other types (i.e. public, people-funded, and private) pursuant to the 2005 Education Law, have contributed to providing the basis for the transformation of school types suitable to local conditions.

The findings on the actual situation in the field, and the mechanism for private nursery management with the goal of a mainstream and low-cost model for under-36-month-old children in densely-populated, industrial, and ethnic minority areas in this report once again affirm the Center's central role in providing scientific rationale for the steering of Viet Nam early childhood education development in the coming period.

#### **About the research team and participating experts**

Head of the research team: Assoc. Prof. Nguyen Thi My Trinh, Ph.D., Director of the Research Centre for Early Childhood Education

Research team: Members of the Research Centre for Early Childhood Education

Participating experts:

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Finally, we want to extend our sincere appreciation to all individuals and organizations for their sharing of accurate and helpful information. We could not have completed this study without their valuable help. We hope that the research results will make a meaningful contribution to policy development and revision to ensure the best care and education for young children in Viet Nam and help to establish sustainable foundations for their future.

Sincerely,

The Research Team

## GLOSSARY

### 1. Private nursery

According to Article 2 of the Merged Document No.4/VBHN-BGDDT dated January 27, 2014 on the Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions,<sup>1</sup> a private nursery is an early childhood institution under the national education system of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam founded by social organizations, socio-professional organizations, economic organizations or individuals with the permission of competent state authorities. The funding for facilities and operation of private child care groups/centres is from non-state budget sources. Private child care groups/centres carry out child care and education for those between 3 and 36 months old in line with the early childhood education curriculum issued by the Minister of Education and Training. In private child care groups/centres, children are organized by age group with the maximum group size as follows: 15 pupils for 3-to-12-month-old children, 20 pupils for 13-to-24-month-old children and 25 pupils for 25-to-36-month-old children. If the number of children in each group does not meet 50% of the maximum group size, they can be organized into mixed groups.<sup>2</sup> *The number of children in a private nursery shall not exceed 50 pupils.*<sup>3</sup>

### 2. Family group

Family groups are established spontaneously by families to meet the needs for child care and education of family members, relatives or neighboring families. The caregivers and educators are usually the elderly with child-raising experience, who have free time and love children. The family groups usually make communal use of family facilities and food, or sometimes receive voluntary contributions of cash or food from other members. Family groups are not recognized as early childhood education institutions under the national education system.

### 3. Education institution management

*Education institution management* is a set of goal-oriented attempts to influence an institution to operate in line with educational principles to achieve its educational objectives.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Attached to Decision No. 41/2008/QĐ-BGDDT dated July 25, 2008 of the Minister of Education and Training

<sup>2</sup> Articles 13 and 22 - Preschool Charter and Articles 14 and 16 - Organization and Operation of Private Preschools

<sup>3</sup> Article 14 of the Organization and Operation of Private Preschools

<sup>4</sup> Educational management science, Tran Kiem, Education Publisher 2008



Education institutions are thus under internal management (represented by the principal or head of a nursery or kindergarten) as well as under upper-level and external management (represented by sectoral management levels - Ministry, Department and Division - and local government). For effective operation, education institutions need an appropriate management mechanism.

#### **4. Management mechanism**

Mechanism (mécanisme), according to *Le Petit Larousse* (1999), is “the way a group of interdependent elements operates.” Another definition of “mechanism” is a sequence of steps to carry out a certain task. In other words, “mechanism is an arrangement in which a process is carried out”.<sup>5</sup>

Management mechanism is an arrangement to carry out management and administrative responsibilities. state management mechanisms are the collaboration and coordination between relevant ministries and sectors, between ministries and sectors, the Government and government agencies, as well as the people. The National Assembly drafts laws, including legislation on the organization of the National Assembly and Government agencies. The Government issues decrees on the structure, organization, and operation of ministries and sectors. The Minister issues documents and regulations on the management of the relevant ministry and subordinate agencies. Ministries and sectors issue joint circulars on the collaborative mechanisms between those ministries and sectors.

The management mechanism of a given system is the management relationship in that system based on the coordination between upper-level external management and the internal management within the system to ensure effective fulfillment of management objectives.

*Educational management mechanism* includes a system of policies, principles, regulations, and regimes regulating relationships at all levels between the subject and target regarding educational activities.<sup>6</sup> The management mechanism for education institutions is best demonstrated in devolution and delegation between levels of administration.

#### **5. Decentralization**

Decentralization involves the transfer of power to lower levels to carry out actual management duties and to reduce the workload of the upper level. Decentralization must associate responsibility with power clearly and ensure uniformity from the central to grassroots levels. Another viewpoint regards decentralization in two directions: horizontal, based on differences within a level, and vertical, based on ranking between levels.

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<sup>5</sup> Vietnamese Dictionary published by the Institute of Linguistics in 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Educational management science, Tran Kiem, Education Publisher 2008

Currently, on the basis of administrative and geographic division, Viet Nam has the following government levels: central, provincial, district and commune. The decentralization of state management should be understood firstly as the devolution between central and provincial governments and then between local government levels.

The transfer of tasks and powers can only be carried out when the jurisdiction and responsibility of the transferor and transferee have been determined (division of jurisdiction). Division of jurisdiction is a prerequisite for the transfer of tasks and powers (or to be broader, the adjustment of workload and power in line with the capacity and condition of each government level).

The decentralization of state management consists of the division of jurisdiction and responsibility between government levels based on the relations of workload and nature of jurisdiction with the capacity and condition of each level to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of state management.

## **6. Delegation**

Delegation is the granting of decision-making rights from upper-level administrators to lower-level ones on matters within their power, but the upper level is still held responsible for outcomes. Delegation can manifest in two forms:

- Official delegation: Through the chart of apparatus organization (e.g. each section has clear roles and powers).
- Unofficial delegation: Through individual trust (e.g. the Director delegates to a subordinate certain powers and responsibilities).

For delegation to be successful, it must be carried out responsibly by both sides: the grantor and the grantee. The grantor must understand himself and his subordinate, make the delegation appropriate to his roles and tasks, and review his work. The grantee must recognize his responsibility to the superior when he is delegated powers, and know his limitations so as not to overstep them. The grantor must set a clear command system but he should not require blind obedience from the grantee, so that the grantee can have flexibility to handle the work or even revise it if necessary. The grantor should also expect and tolerate some mistakes made by the grantee.

Delegation needs to observe the following principles:

- Principle of inspection limit: Delegation should be within practical inspection limit. Responsibility and power should not be granted to others if their work and decisions cannot be inspected.

- Principle of sole power: Power must be transferred along with responsibility. Each subordinate should be delegated one particular power.

- Principle of dual responsibility: The superior must always be held responsible for the actions of his subordinates even when he has delegated to them.

*Distinction between delegation, devolution and decentralization:*

Devolution is the transfer of power to a lower level. Delegation for a long time will become devolution.

Decentralization is the division of authority among administrators at all levels (high, middle and low levels) so that each management level is assigned certain tasks and powers. Regular control means low decentralization, low control means high decentralization.

## **7. Social organization**

Social organization is a form of voluntary organization for specific objectives. It can be the gathering of individuals with a certain background, employment, age, or sex. Diverse in form and name, social organizations can be classified into socio-political organizations, self-managed organizations, socio-professional organizations and mass organizations, such as the Communist Party of Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour, Viet Nam Women's Union, Economic Tribunal, Writers' Union, Journalists' Union, or Lawyers' Union.

Social organizations organize and operate according to their Charter *developed by their own members or according to state regulations*. The reciprocal relationship between social organizations and state agencies is evidenced in the cooperation in legal enforcement: mutual check from both directions.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

DOET : Department of Education and Training

MOET : Ministry of Education and Training

## SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

In recent years, private child care groups/centres in Viet Nam have expanded in number to meet the demand for under-36-month-old child care, as public early childhood education institutions do not receive children at this age. How to manage the activities of private child care groups/centres to ensure quality child care and education is not only an issue for the sectoral administrators but also for researchers, all levels of government, and social organizations, in order to meet people's expectations, especially those with children in this age range.

In 2015, the Early Childhood Education Research Centre, Viet Nam National Institute of Educational Sciences, with the support of the UNICEF Viet Nam, carried out a study of the actual situation and management mechanism of private child care groups/centres. Based on this study, measures are recommended to address obstacles in management mechanism to move towards a mainstreaming and low-cost model to contribute to improving the quality of under-3-year-old child care and education in Viet Nam.

The study was carried out in densely-populated, industrial, and ethnic minority areas in Viet Nam. Field surveys were limited to six provinces: Lao Cai, Ha Noi, Nghe An, Vinh Phuc, Binh Duong and Gia Lai. The study focuses on 4 issues:

1. Private child care group/centre activities.
2. Private child care group/centre management managers
3. The current mechanism, participation, and collaboration with private child care group/centre management by state management agencies, social organizations, and children's families.
4. Proposal of measures to address obstacles in management mechanism of private child care groups/centres to move towards a mainstreaming and low-cost model.

Research methodology includes: secondary research involving reports and materials of Early childhood Education Divisions under provincial DOETs and local Divisions of Education and Training, in-depth interviews and group discussions, and observation of educational activities, educational environment, child care, and education conditions.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Legal documents related to state management of education and private child care groups/centres show that the Party and state have encouraged and facilitated the establishment of private early childhood education institutions by individuals and organizations, including private child care groups/centres.

- The system of public early childhood education currently cannot meet the demand for under-36-month-old child care, therefore the appearance of private child care groups/centres is inevitable and essential. However, their child care and education quality is very limited. These child care groups/centres focus on child care more than education, but the quality and safety of these institutions are difficult to control. Child education activities in private child care groups/centres have not been carried out in line with the early childhood education curriculum as they lack facilities, funding, and personnel. Furthermore, regimes and policies to attract and maintain teachers and child care group/centre staff are inadequate. As private child care groups/centres try to remain inexpensive to suit people's finances, low budgets are an obstacle to the quality of child care, education, and sustainable development.

- The MOET and provincial/municipal DOETs have issued various directives to localities to improve the management of non-public early childhood education with particular attention to the licensing of local private child care groups/centres. However, most provincial/municipal governments usually assign the whole responsibility of private child care group/centre monitoring and management to the education sector. The sector thus meets many difficulties in the effort to collaborate with local governments and social organizations.

The establishment of private child care groups/centres has received the support and guidance of governments at all levels, especially of district Divisions of Education and Training and ward/commune People's Committees, but the management of such institutions after licensing is not really effective due to the lack of collaboration, decentralization, and delegation between relevant parties. As a matter of fact, the decentralization of tasks is not synchronized with the decentralization of jurisdiction and responsibility of financial and personnel management, hence creating unnecessary confusion.

- Decentralization is not in accordance with the situation of local management and sometimes even exceeds the capacity of local government. The decentralization of tasks takes place too quickly while at lower levels it lacks capacity, in particular there is a lack of quantity and quality of officials, leadership and administrators. In addition, the decentralization has also not taken into account local socio-economic conditions. It is not

coordinated with plans for quality improvement, enhancement of upper level monitoring and inspection, and assignment of responsibility. In addition, self-reporting and self-accountability have not been fully achieved, while there is a lack of mechanisms to enforce upper level management.

## **OBSTACLES IN THE PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUP/CENTRE MANAGEMENT MECHANISM**

The study has identified obstacles in policies, regulations, and legal regimes in private child care group/centre management at both central and local levels. Many documents have not specified roles and tasks of relevant parties involved in child care group/centre management, while some are too general and thus cause difficulties in implementation. Moreover, policies to ensure fairness for children in non-public early childhood education or those under three years old are lacking.

The implementation of existing policies and regulations also faces various difficulties such as a lack of human resources and funding, a lack of awareness among teachers and other staff, administrators, and people, a lack of collaboration and coordination between relevant parties, as well as restrictions which make policies unfeasible in practice.

## **MEASURES TO ADDRESS OBSTACLES IN PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUP/CENTRE MANAGEMENT MECHANISMS TO MOVE TOWARDS A MAINSTREAMING AND LOW-COST MODEL IN VIETNAM**

Based on the findings of the study, we have proposed specific solution groups to reduce and eliminate obstacles in private child care group/centre management mechanisms to move towards a mainstreaming and low-cost model, namely solution groups on administrative organization and policy, solution groups on economic-technical aspects, and solution groups on the societal-individual level.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

From the research results, we have made specific recommendations to the administration from central to local levels in the review and revision of policies and laws, means of implementation, collaboration, and mobilization in all levels of organizations, communities, and individuals in private child care group/centre management to improve child care and education quality.



## **PART A. GENERAL OVERVIEW**

### **1. Research objectives and methodology**

#### **1.1. Research objectives**

The research objectives are to review the management mechanism of different types of private child care groups/centres in Vietnam, to serve as the basis for proposing measures to address challenges in management mechanism, and to move towards a mainstreaming and low-cost model of child care groups/centres, to improve the quality of infant care and education in Viet Nam.

#### **1.2. Research areas**

- Private child care group/centre activities
- Private child care group/centre management managers
- Current mechanism, participation, and collaboration for private child care group/centre management by state management agencies, social organizations and children's families
- Proposal of measures to address obstacles in management mechanism of private child care groups/centres to move towards a mainstreaming and low-cost model

#### **1.3. Research methodology**

- Secondary research and data analysis involved reports and materials of Early childhood Education Divisions under provincial DOETs and local Divisions of Education and Training on early childhood education and private child care group/centre development over the last 3 years.
- In-depth interviews and group discussion with relevant participants.
- Observation of educational activities, educational environment, child care and education conditions to make an objective and comprehensive assessment of child care and education, private child care group/centre management and child care group/centre management mechanism in Viet Nam, which would serve as the basis for recommending measures to address obstacles in existing private child care group/centre management mechanisms.

#### **1.4. Research scope, duration and target**

The field survey was carried out in 6 provinces: Lao Cai, Ha Noi, Nghe An, Vinh Phuc, Binh Duong, and Gia Lai, and represented for three types of areas: highly populated neighborhoods in the Red River Delta and North Central Coast; industrial zones in northern and southern Viet Nam; and ethnic minority areas in the northwestern and southwestern mountains.

**Table 1.1. Areas selected to survey in Viet Nam**

| Type of Area                  | Province   | District  | Ward/Commune    |
|-------------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Highly populated neighborhood | Ha Noi     | Hoang Mai | Linh Nam ward   |
|                               |            |           | Thanh Tri ward  |
|                               | Nghe An    | Vinh      | Quan Bau ward   |
|                               |            |           | Le Loi ward     |
| Industrial zone               | Binh Duong | Ben Cat   | My Phuoc ward   |
|                               |            |           | Thoi Hoa ward   |
|                               | Vinh Phuc  | Phuc Yen  | Trung Nhi ward  |
|                               |            |           | Hung Vuong ward |
| Ethnic minority area          | Lao Cai    | Lao Cai   | Coc Leu ward    |
|                               |            |           | Ta Phoi commune |
|                               | Gia Lai    | Chu Se    | Alba commune    |
|                               |            |           | Iahlop commune  |

**Research period:**

- Developing research framework and survey tools: Quarter I, 2015
- Conducting secondary research and field surveys: Quarter II, 2015
- Processing data and drafting a secondary report on survey results: Quarter III, 2015
- Drafting the general report and inviting experts for comments and revision: Quarter IV, 2015 to Quarter I, 2016
- Organizing a workshop to announce the project's results: Quarter II, 2016

**Table 1.2. Private child care groups/centres selected for survey**

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Private child care group/centre</b> | <b>Type</b> | <b>Location</b>         |
|------------|--|-------------|-------------------------|
| 1          | Cau Vong Child care group/centre       | Licensed    | Hoang Mai, Ha Noi       |
| 2          | Baby Star                              | Licensed    | Hoang Mai, Ha Noi       |
| 3          | Tuoi Tho Cua Be                        | Unlicensed  | Hoang Mai, Ha Noi       |
| 4          | Sao Viet Child care group/centre       | Unlicensed  | Hoang Mai, Ha Noi       |
| 5          | Anh Kim Child care group/centre        | Licensed    | Vinh, Nghe An           |
| 6          | Hong Le                                | Licensed    | Vinh, Nghe An           |
| 7          | Hoa Hong Child care group/centre       | Unlicensed  | Vinh, Nghe An           |
| 8          | Co Ngoc Child care group/centre        | Unlicensed  | Vinh, Nghe An           |
| 9          | Sang Mai Child care group/centre       | Unlicensed  | Ben Cat, Binh Duong     |
| 10         | Hoang Gia Child care group/centre      | Unlicensed  | Ben Cat, Binh Duong     |
| 11         | Tuoi Tho Child care group/centre       | Licensed    | Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc     |
| 12         | Phuong Lien Child care group/centre    | Licensed    | Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc     |
| 13         | Vanh Khuyen Child care group/centre    | Licensed    | Coc Leu, Lao Cai        |
| 14         | Thu Hang Child care group/centre       | Unlicensed  | Pho Moi, Lao Cai        |
| 15         | Hoa Ngoc Lan Child care group/centre   | Licensed    | Alba, Chu Se, Gia Lai   |
| 16         | Tuoi Tho Child care group/centre       | Licensed    | Iahlop, Chu Se, Gia Lai |

**Survey participants in each locality:**

- Administrators at provincial DOET, Early childhood Education Division under provincial DOET, district Division of Education and Training
- Administrators at district and communal People's Committees
- Representatives of district state management agencies (health sector, women's union, etc.)

- Representatives of commune social organizations: neighborhood, women’s union, youth union, etc.

- Principals of public early childhood education institutions assigned the task of private child care group/centre management

- Managers and teachers of participating private child care groups/centres

- Parents with children enrolled or not enrolled in participating private child care groups/centres

**Table 1.3. Survey sampling**

| No. | Source of information  | IDI | GD | Observation |
|-----|--|-----|----|-------------|
| 1   | DOET officials in charge of early childhood education  | 6   |    |             |
| 2   | Officials of Division of Education and Training in charge of early childhood education                               | 6   |    |             |
| 3   | Vice Chairman of provincial People’s Committee in charge of education and information                                | 1   |    |             |
| 4   | Vice Chairmans of district People’s Committee in charge of education and information                                 | 4   |    |             |
| 5   | Vice Chairmans of ward/commune People’s Committee in charge of education and information                             | 12  |    |             |
| 6   | Representatives of district Women’s Union and Health sector  | 6   | 6  |             |
| 7   | Representatives of district Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union  | 6   |    |             |
| 8   | Officials in charge of education, health, Women’s Association, Youth Union and Party Secretary at ward/commune level |     | 12 |             |
| 9   | Principals of public early childhood education institutions  | 12  |    |             |

| No. | Source of information   | IDI       | GD        | Observation |
|-----|---|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 10  | Managers of private child care groups/centres and family groups                         | 6         | 6         |             |
| 11  | Early childhood education teachers in public early childhood education institutions     |           | 5         |             |
| 12  | Early childhood education teachers and babysitters in private child care groups/centres |           | 5         | 6           |
| 13  | Young parents with children enrolled in private child care groups/centres               | 12        | 6         |             |
| 14  | Young parents with children not enrolled in anywhere                                    | 6         |           |             |
|     | <b><i>Total sample size</i></b>   | <b>77</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>6</b>    |

## 2. Code of Research Ethics

Research tools were developed and sent to early childhood education experts and local officials for comments to ensure their suitability to the sources of information before being implemented in the field survey.

The field survey was carried out with the permission of local governments regarding the objectives, content, progress, and targeted groups of the project, so that localities could make arrangements to facilitate the survey.

Before interviews and group discussions, members of the research team clearly stated the objectives of the study, kinds of data to be collected, the way data would be used in the study, and guaranteed participants' confidentiality. During the field survey, photographs for activities relevant to the study were taken with permission. Pictures are only used to illustrate comments in the study.

The data collected are all without personal information such as name, location, workplace, to ensure confidentiality and safety of informants.

### **3. Research limitations**

Due to limited time and resources, the selection of six provinces to represent three areas for the field survey cannot reflect a 100% complete and comprehensive picture of the situation in Viet Nam.

Despite having informed them of our intentions and asked for permission, the research team was only able to meet one out of six provincial People's Committee officials, and four out of six district People's Committee officials. Therefore, the information relevant to private child care group/centre management mechanisms at provincial and district levels was mostly collected through secondary sources.

The survey was conducted in a short time period (5 days per province). Since private child care group/centre management mechanism is a complex issue involving different management levels, time limitations may be a factor in the quality of the field work.

In addition, the research methods are mostly qualitative, which cannot ensure the objectivity of quantitative data which is usually used in studies on educational sciences and early childhood education.

## PART B. RESEARCH FINDINGS

### I. VIET NAM'S POLICIES AND LAWS RELATED TO PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUPS/CENTRES

Based on the study of legal documents related to state management of education and private child care group/centre management (see Appendix), we find that guidelines and policies of the Party and state have encouraged and created favorable conditions for individuals and organizations to found private and people-founded early childhood education, including private child care groups/centres. However, the network of non-public early childhood education, including private child care groups/centres, in each locality, should be planned according to local conditions. In addition, more concrete guidelines should be issued to encourage the development of private early childhood education institutions and private child care groups/centres in areas with high demand for child care.

#### *1. Supportive policies for non-public early childhood education insitutions including private child care groups/centres*

Policies encouraging the socialization of education of the Party and state are stipulated in several legal documents (Constitution 2013) Party documents from the sixth to twelfth Congresses, Education Law 2005 [amended in 2009], Government's Resolution No. 05/20015/NQ-CP on the Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions), which serve as the legal basis for education development and facilitate the establishment and development of non-public early childhood education including private child care groups/centres. Following are some examples:

#### **- Preferential treatment for non-public education institutions:**

The Vietnamese Party and government have issued policies to encourage non-public education institutions.

*For learners:* Article 68 of the 2005 Education Law stipulates that people-founded and private schools *are guaranteed funding by the state to provide policies for learners.* However, to ensure equal treatment between crèche and child care group/centre admission, between disadvantaged children, poor children and handicapped children, etc. in non-public early childhood education institutions, more specific and practical policies are needed.

*For non-public early childhood education institutions:* Government Decree No. 53/2006/ND-CP provides supportive policies regarding facilities and land use: Non-public



early childhood education institutions can obtain long-term, low-rent facilities and housing, or be assigned land to build facilities under various forms: (1) Land assignment with no land-use tax; (2) Land assignment with land-use tax exemption; (3) Land rental with no rent. In addition, there are policies to reduce and exempt taxes, fees and charges for non-public schools and investors to encourage investment in education development. The state also offers preferential credits for development investment. Regarding school fees and charges, the state lets non-public early childhood education institutions set their own. Two documents are of particular interest, namely Decree No. 59/2014/ND-CP (amending and supplementing a number of articles in Decree No. 69/2008/ND-CP) *on policies to encourage socialization of activities in the sector of education, vocational training, health, sports and environment*, and Circular No. 156/2014/TT-BTC guiding the implementation of regulations on equal respect and treatment towards socialized institutions' products and services. Socialized institutions in education, vocational training, health, culture, sports and environment are *free from pre-registration fees* when they register for land-use rights and ownership of land-attached property as well as from *other fees and charges related to the use of land and land-attached property*. Decree No. 218/2013/ND-CP specifying the implementation of the Law amending and supplementing a number of articles in the Law on Business Income Tax stipulates that enterprises investing in socialization of education and training, vocational training, health, culture, sports and environment shall pay reduced tax on income from the socialized activities.

These policies have contributed greatly to the socialization of education and facilitating the foundation and development of non-public education institutions including private child care groups/centres.

**- For non-public early childhood education institutions in different regions and areas, especially in export processing and industrial zones:**

*In urban areas:* The resolution of the 8th Plenum of the 11th Central Committee points out that encouraging the development of non-public school types meets the social demand for high quality education in urban areas. However, at present there are no specific guidelines on the development of high quality early childhood education institutions in these places.

*In export processing and industrial zones:* On March 20, 2014, the Prime Minister issued Decision No. 404/QD-TTg approving the Project "Supporting the development of private child care groups/centres in exporting processing and industrial zones by 2020". This is a

comprehensive project which has considerably assisted the enhancement of all child care groups/centres in the community, strengthened the capacity of administrators, child care group/centre teachers, and babysitters, as well as mothers and caregivers of under-36-month-old children in exporting processing and industrial zones, raised the community awareness, promoted the role of unions and associations in monitoring the implementation. Then on May 22, 2015, the Prime Minister issued another document called Directive No. 09/CT-TTg on promoting the implementation of solutions for early childhood education institutions in exporting processing and industrial zones.

*For disadvantaged and ethnic minority areas*, many supportive policies for children and teachers have been implemented, such as lunch support for 5-year-old children in early childhood education institutions according to Decision No. 239/QD-TTg dated February 9, 2010 of the Prime Minister and Joint Circular No. 29/2011/TTLT-BGDDT-BTC, Decision No. 60/2011/QD-TTg. Decision No. 2123/QD-TTg dated November 22, 2010 on approving the education development project for very-low-population ethnicities for 2010-2015, also sets out specific support for children in these areas in Article 1: “Poor children from very-low-population ethnicities enrolled in public early childhood education institutions shall receive an assistance equivalent to 30% of minimum general salary level per child per month”. However, these only apply to children from very-low-population ethnicities and 5-year-old children enrolled in non-public early childhood education institutions, not those in child care groups/centres.

## ***2. State regulations on the decentralization of private child care group/centre management***

Issues relevant to managing non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres are mostly covered in the 2005 Education Law (amended in 2009), Early childhood Education Charter (attached to Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT dated February 13, 2014), Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions (attached to Merged Document No. 04/VBHN-BGDDT dated January 27, 2014 merging Decision No. 41/2008/QD-BGDDT and Circular No. 28/2011/TT-BGDDT) and some other decrees and circulars. These documents describe the system of education management from central to local levels.

At the central level: Article four to 10 (Decree No. 115/2010/ND-CP) stipulates the responsibility of state management on education of the Ministry of Education and Training and of other ministries and ministerial-level agencies.

At the provincial level: The Chairman of the provincial People's Committee is responsible for deciding on the establishment, permission for establishment, merging, break-up and dissolution of education institutions directly under the DOET (clause 1b, Article 7, Decree No. 115/2010/ND-CP). The DOET is responsible for the education management to the provincial People's Committee.

At the district level: The district People's Committee is responsible to the provincial People's Committee on education development (clause 2, Article 8, Decree No. 115/2010/ND-CP), in particular, *for directing, guiding, inspecting and monitoring education institutions within its jurisdiction in their implementation of legal documents on education and socialization of education (clauses 2, 3, 4, 8), for deciding on the permission for establishment, merging, break-up, suspension and dissolution of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres within the jurisdiction of district People's Committee (clause 6).* Meanwhile, the Division of Education and Training manages local early childhood education, guides the implementation and coordinates with the district People's Committee in permitting educational activities for private child care groups/centres (clauses 1, 2, 8, Article 9).

At the commune level: *The commune People's Committee permits the establishment of private child care groups/centres based on the standards issued by the Ministry of Education and Training, assumes the responsibility of inspecting local private child care groups/centres to ensure their operation in line with laws and regulations (clause 2), carries out the socialization of education (clause 3), and coordinates with the division in charge of early childhood management (clause 6).*

Private child care groups/centres are under the direct management of commune/ward/town People's Committees and Division of Education and Training (Article 5 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions). However, inspection and monitoring does not only fall under the aegis of education management agencies. The private child care groups/centres themselves are responsible for regular self-inspection according to existing regulations (Article 32 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions).

It is thus clear that private child care groups/centres are under the management of several agencies in different respects: their operation under direct management of commune-level People's Committee; their professional work under the education sector, foremost of which is

the division of education and training; their facilities depending on investors; and operation expenditure specified and negotiated between investor and parents. In addition, the particularity of private child care groups/centres and early childhood education institutions is best demonstrated by its association with the community as child care and education require the participation of social organizations, parents and communities as well as coordination between education and health sectors, the women's union, etc. However, the aforementioned documents have not yet specified the role, responsibility and coordination between agencies and organizations within the community in private child care group/centre management.

### ***3. Regulations on private child care group/centre organization and operation***

Private child care groups/centres are founded and operated according to regulations in the Early childhood Education Charter (attached to Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT dated February 13, 2014) and Organization and operation of Private Early childhood education institutions (attached to Merged Document No. 04/VBHN-BGDDT dated January 27, 2014 merging Decision No. 41/2008/QĐ-BGDDT, Circular No. 28/2011/TT-BGDDT and Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT).

***a. Establishment and dissolution:*** The jurisdiction on the establishment and dissolution of private child care groups/centres falls under the commune People's Committee and district Division of Education and Training, with the responsible parties being Chairman of the commune People's Committee and Head of the Division of Education and Training. However, there is no clear regulation on the responsibility to support these institutions from the government at any level.

Article 12 - Early childhood Education Charter and Article 11 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education, stipulates that the jurisdiction of the establishment, permission for establishment, withdrawal of decision for the establishment of private child care groups/centres falls under the Chairman of commune-level People's Committee, who "issues the license based on written comments of the Division of Education and Training regarding independent child care groups/centres and kindergarten classes" (Article 12 - Early childhood Education Charter) and "decides on the merging and break-up of private child care groups/centres and kindergarten classes" (clause 7b, Article 11 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions). Meanwhile, "the Head of the Division of Education and Training allows or suspends educational activities of private child care groups/centres or kindergarten classes" (clause 6b. Article 11 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions).

***b. Age limit for private child care group/centre admission:*** *The Early childhood Education Charter* stipulates that “Children between 3 months old and 6 years old are admissible for enrolment in schools, crèches, independent child care groups/centres and kindergarten class” (Article 42). However, in practice most public schools only accept children from the age of 24 months and up. Non-public early childhood education institutions accept children under 24 months old and private child care groups/centres, which are especially popular in exporting processing and industrial zones and densely-populated neighborhoods, do not accept children under 12 months old.

Therefore, particular policies and assistance on facilities, personnel and medical regimes for early childhood education institutions admitting under-12-month-old children are necessary along with regulations on quality inspection.

***c. Child care and education in private child care groups/centres***

*Regulations on child care and education:*

Based on Merged Document No. 04/VBHN-BGDDT regulating that independent child care groups/centres and kindergarten classes must be semi- or fully-fortified, fulfill safety conditions, ensure enough natural light and not leak, and be ventilated and tidy. They must also have a concrete floor covered with bright-coloured bricks or wood. According to Article 14 of Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT, the childcare room in private child care groups/centres must ensure at least 1.5 m<sup>2</sup>/child. The child care groups/centres must have a playground with fences and gates to ensure child safety. The toilet area ensures at least 0.4 m<sup>2</sup>/child with facilities appropriate for the age group and with high hygienic standards.

If a child care group/centre has one handicapped child then the number of children is allowed to be reduced by 5. Each child care group/centre may not have more than 2 children with the same type of disability (Article 19 of the Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions).

Viewed under these conditions, private child care groups/centres in urban areas are hardly able to meet all requirements, especially regarding the size of classroom and toilet area. Therefore, there should be specific guidelines more suitable to the conditions of private child care groups/centres, especially in disadvantaged areas and densely-populated neighborhoods.

*Regulations on health issues in early childhood education institutions:* The MOET issues the Regulations on health care in early childhood education institutions (attached to Decision No. 58/2008/QĐ-BGDDT dated September 17, 2008 of the Minister of Education and

Training), specifying that “health activities in early childhood education institutions aim to ensure safety, disease prevention and health care for children to promote their physical development.” In addition, ministries/sectors also issue joint circulars guiding the coordination in large-scale vaccination in early childhood education institutions and primary schools (Joint Circular No. 12/2001/TTLT/BHYT-BGDDT dated June 7, 2001 between the Ministry of Health and MOET). These circulars all have regulations to encourage and facilitate early childhood institutions operation.

*Operating hours:* Although the Early childhood education Charter does not specify the time for children’s arrival and departure, most early childhood education institutions require that parents bring children to schools between 7 and 7:30 a.m., and fetch them before five p.m., which is difficult for most parents nowadays. In contrast, non-public early childhood education institutions have very flexible operating hours as they provide pre- and after-school care and weekend child care if needed.

***d. Regulations for independent child care group/centre managers:*** As stipulated in Article 16 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions, independent child care group/centre managers are required to have at least a certificate of lower-secondary education; a certificate for supplemental early childhood education training of at least a period of 30 days or for supplemental administrator training. It can be seen that the competency level required for child care group/centre managers is too low, thus they would face difficulties in managing child care group/centre activities and taking part in child care and education training. In addition, the requirements for “child care group/centre director” as investor and as the Principal are not clearly distinguished (which would require a minimum level of intermediate early childhood education teaching certification, equal to the level required of a early childhood education teacher).

***e. Regulations for teachers and staff:***

*On specialized work:* Article 22 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions stipulates the requirements as follows: The teacher must have an intermediate early childhood education teaching certification, while those with other kinds of intermediate teaching certification must have a certificate for supplemental early childhood education training of at least 30 days. In private child care groups/centres and kindergarten classes with ethnic minority children, the teachers must speak Vietnamese and have the ability to communicate with children through their ethnic language. The staff’s requirements

are also specified: A qualified health staff must have an intermediate specialized certification; the treasurer, librarian, archiver, cook and guard must also receive specialized training.

*On rights:* Article 37 - Early childhood Education Charter and Article 22 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions states clearly the tasks of child care, improvement of teacher ethics and specialized skills, and mobilization of parents' support in work. Teacher rights regarding salary, insurance, and reward regimes are also stipulated.

*On working conditions:* Article 4 of the Circular No. 48/2011/TT/BGD-DT stipulates the working hours of early childhood education teachers. For full-day child care groups/centres, each teacher teaches 6 hours/day, plus class preparation and other work to fulfill the 40-hour-per-week requirement. Thus, on average a teacher would have to work for 8 hours each day. In practice, the working period of early childhood education teachers is much longer as they must arrive early for cleaning and receiving children, cleaning after the students' departure, and preparing visual tools for children. Meanwhile, they also bear high responsibility for child health and safety. Therefore, more specific regulations to support them and/or reduce their workload should be added.

***f. Property and financial management:*** Article 21 - Early childhood education Charter stipulates that: (1) School property management must be conducted according to laws and regulations. All school staff are responsible for maintaining and guarding school property; (2) Income - expenditure management from school financial sources must be conducted according to existing regulations of the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education and Training. In particular, private child care groups/centres manage their own balances and hold responsibility for financial management of their own activities according to Joint Circular No. 44/2000/TTLT/BTC-BGDDT-BLDTBXH on guiding non-public institutions operating in education and training on financial management.

***g. Coordination between individuals, organizations and institutions within the community regarding child care and education in private child care groups/centres:*** Such coordination is stipulated in Article 21 - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions and Articles 46, 47 and 48 - Early childhood Education Charter. However, they only mention the relationship between private child care groups/centres and families and the society without specifying responsibilities of each party in private child care group/centre management.

*h. Inspection, monitoring, rewards, and sanctions:* These are covered in Chapter VI - Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions at Articles 32, 33 and 34. Groups and individuals in private child care groups/centres will be rewarded according to the Law on Competition and Rewarding if they have any noteworthy achievements; or will be sanctioned if they violate laws and regulations.

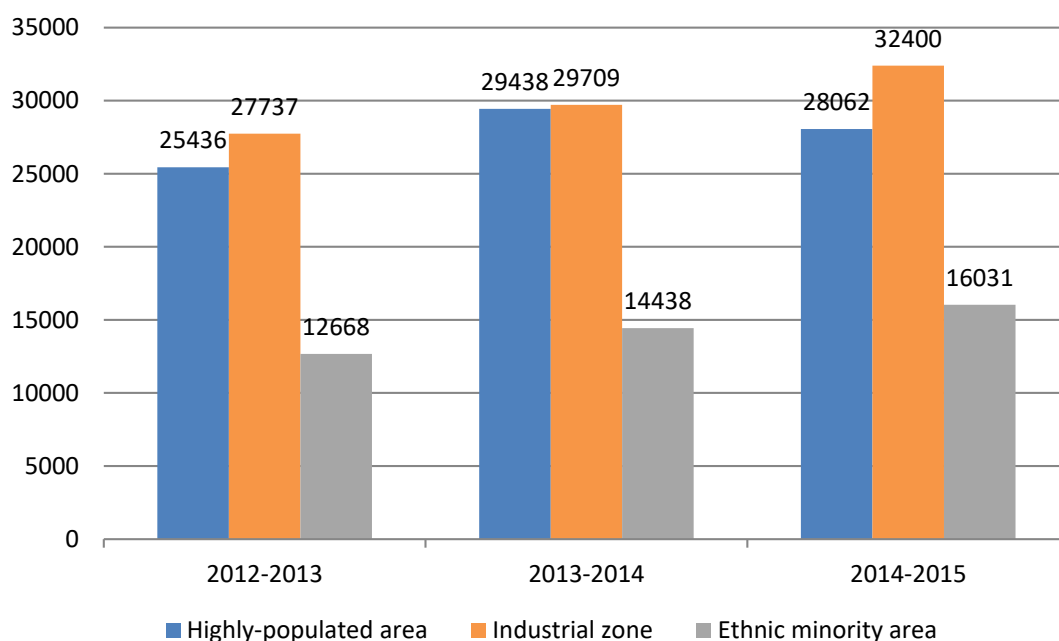
## II. DEMAND FOR UNDER-36-MONTH-OLD CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION, AND CURRENT EARLY CHILDHOOD CAPACITY

### 2.1. Social demand for under-36-month-old child care and education in early childhood education institutions

#### 2.1.1. Number of under-36-month-old children in need of child care and education

*The majority of under-36-month-old children are in need of child care and education*

According to the survey, as of the 2014 - 2015 academic year, there are 76.493 under-36-month-old children in need of child care and education, 32.400 of which were in industrial zones, twice the number of those in ethnic minority areas (16.031).



**Figure 1. Number of under-36-month-old children by area (2012-2015)<sup>7</sup>**

*The local net emigration rate of under-36-month-old children is considerably high*

<sup>7</sup> Source: The data are provided by the Division of Preschool Education under the DOET and district Divisions of Education and Training in the surveyed areas as of the survey period.



According to local statistics, the net emigration rate of under-36-month-old children in the last five academic years averaged over 10%. In particular, ethnic minority areas and industrial zones have seen a gradual increase, while densely-populated neighborhoods have witnessed fluctuation—for instance, in 2013-2014, the number of under-36-month-old children increased by 15,9% compared to 2012-2013, but in 2014-2015 it decreased by 5,05%. Although there is a fluctuation in quantity, the large number of under-3-year-old children still remains a challenge to early childhood education system as it tries to meet the parents' demand for child care and education.

### ***2.1.2. Parents' employment in different areas***

According to the “Report on Labour and Employment” of the Ministry of Planning and Investment,<sup>8</sup> the proportion of labour force and the labour participation rate by area (urban/rural) in Northern midlands and mountains is 13,5%, the Red River Delta is 21,9% (Ha Noi 7,0%), and the southeast is 17,2%.

The distribution of employed labour force by economic sector and ownership shows that the southeast (including Binh Duong in the survey) is the region with the most modernized economic structure with a high proportion of labour force in industry and construction and service (at 86,2% and 97,7% respectively).

In industrial zones (Binh Duong and Vinh Phuc), most factory workers are migrants, with a majority being female (over 80% factory workers are migrants, 60-70% of which are female between 18 and 35 years of age, or in other words, of childbearing age). They come from different provinces to make a living and live temporarily in cramped boarding houses. After maternal leave, they would have to return to work so *the demand for child care in early childhood education institutions (public, private, company or factory early childhood education, private child care groups/centres and family groups) is very high.*

In mountainous and coastal areas, the proportion of labour force in agriculture-forestry-aquaculture is still prevalent. It is the highest in Tay Nguyen (including Gia Lai in the survey) at 76,5%, followed by the northern midlands and mountains at 68,8%, and the north central coast and coastal Centre at 52,7%.

In densely-populated neighborhoods with high net emigration rate, for instance in Hoang Mai district (Ha Noi), the population has nearly doubled in 10 years, with a large number of children in the relevant age range (see table in section A). In these neighborhoods, most are migrants and do unskilled work. Therefore, parents have a high demand for

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<sup>8</sup> General Statistics Office, 2015

enrolling their under-36-month-old children in early childhood education institutions with flexible working hours.

### **2.1.3. Parents' expectations of under-36-month-old child care and education**

#### ***- Places to enroll their children***

***Most participating parents in all the three areas want to enroll their under-36-month-old children in public early childhood education institutions***

The reasons for this are: Facilities of this type of school are supported by state investment; fees are low; teachers and school staff are trained in early childhood education teaching and benefit from stable regimes, so they are devoted to their work.

*"Most parents want to enroll their children in public early childhood education institutions because these schools' facilities are funded by the state; the contribution fee is low; teachers and school staff are trained in early childhood education teaching and benefit from stable regimes so they are devoted to their work."*<sup>9</sup>

*"I want my child to study in public school because of good facilities, high degree of cleanliness, and state's regimes for children and qualified teachers."*<sup>10</sup>

***Parents will enroll their children in private child care groups/centres and family groups in the area even when these groups are unlicensed if they cannot enroll them in public early childhood education institutions.*** However, they are concerned about the quality of child care and education in unlicensed private child care groups/centres.

*"I know that the child care group/centre has been spontaneously established and the director has only learned to take care of them through hands-on experience, without any training in early childhood teaching, so the child care group/centre cannot organize activities for children and is only able to look after them. I have no one to babysit my child so I have to send him there."*<sup>11</sup>

#### ***One group of parents decides to leave their children at home***

The reasons for this are:

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<sup>9</sup> According to the Vice Chairmans of the Thanh Tri and Linh Nam ward People's Committee, Hoang Mai, Ha Noi

<sup>10</sup> According to Parents in Iahnop commune, Chu Se

<sup>11</sup> According to parents' group discussion in Coc Leu ward, Lao Cai

- Their economic conditions are poor (their household income is not high enough to cover child enrolment in early childhood education institutions).

*"We usually work in the field far from home and only make enough for food, not to pay school tuition for our children."*<sup>12</sup>

- There is someone helping to look after their children (for example, grandparents who have child-rearing experience).

- They are concerned about the quality of child care and education in early childhood education institutions (some common questions are: Are the teachers qualified? Do they hit their children or treat them unfairly? Do their children eat and sleep well? Do the teachers pay enough attention to their children? Do their children feel comfortable in school?).

- They think that under-36-month-old children do not need to go to school.

*"I do not let my child go to school because I'm afraid that he is too small to learn and has not yet been able to eat or go to the toilet by himself."*<sup>13</sup>

#### **- Assistance for under-36-month-old child care and education**

*Many parents in industrial zones and ethnic minority areas want to learn knowledge and skills relevant to under-36-month-old child care and education at home.*

More specifically they want:

- Content: how to look after children's health, nutrition, disease prevention, injury prevention, cultivation of good habits, life skills, raised awareness, etc.

- Form: receiving information, training or assistance by socio-political organizations such as the Women's Union, Association of Learning Promotion, or through media outlets.

- Method: speeches, leaflets, advertisements, etc.

*"I do not know how much and which food is good for children so I want to receive guidance on how to cook and care for children."*<sup>14</sup>

*Parents want the Government to provide lunch support for under-36-month-old children as they do for over-3-year-old children and to ensure equality between children in*

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<sup>12</sup> According to Parents in Alba commune, Chu Se, Gia Lai

<sup>13</sup> In-depth interview with parents with preschool children in Coc Leu, Lao Cai and Binh Duong

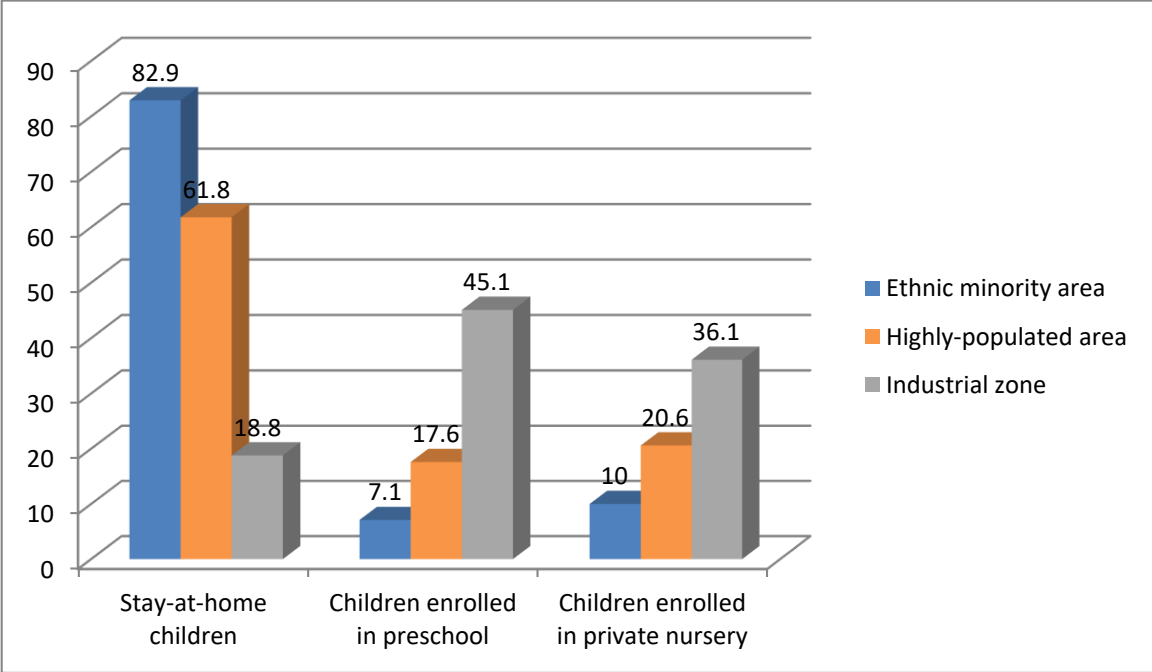
<sup>14</sup> According to Parents with children not enrolled in any place in Alba commune, Chu Se, Gia Lai

*private child care groups/centres and those in public early childhood education institutions.*

This concern is legitimate because currently, children in private child care groups/centres do not receive any supportive policies from the education sector or from local governments and organizations. Child care and education are paid for by children’s parents, including tuition, food, facilities, learning materials, and after-school care. For poor households, these costs are too much, so they want to receive support for lunch and tuition (Lao Cai, Gia Lai, Binh Duong, Vinh Phuc) to ensure equality between under-36-month-old children and over-3-year-old children, between children in private child care groups/centres and those in public early childhood education institutions.

**2.2 Early childhood education institutions’ capacity to meet the demand**

Analyzing local reports over 3 years (2012-2015) provides the following figure:



**Figure 2. Number of children receiving child care and education in early childhood education institutions in the three surveyed areas**

The figures indicate that:

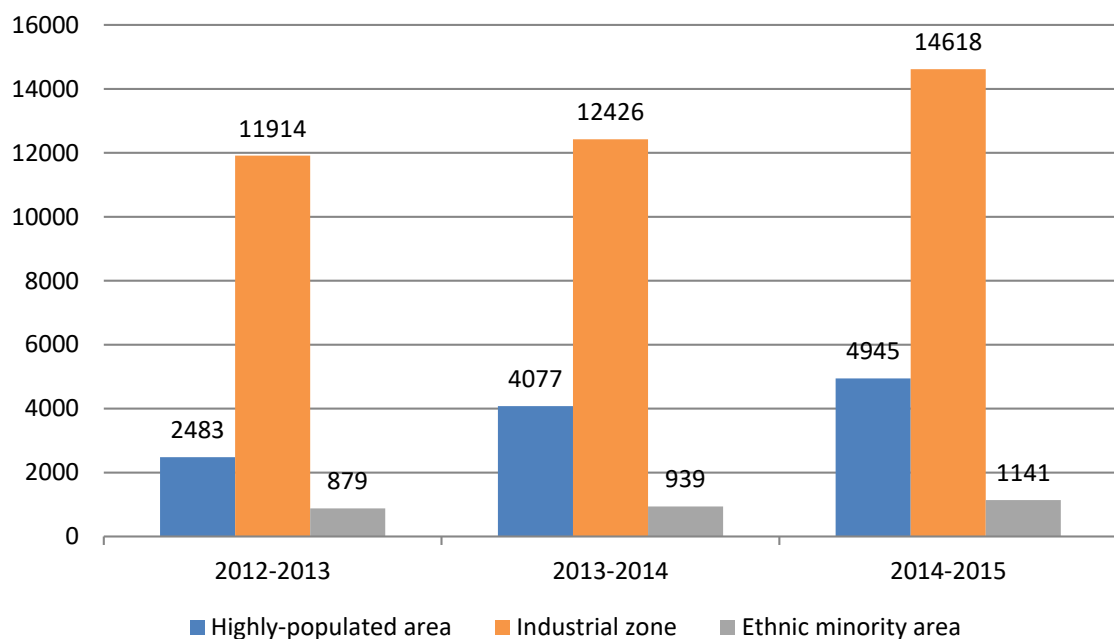
- By early childhood education type: Public early childhood education and private child care groups/centres have only attracted a modest number of under-36-month-old children, while a large number of children stay at home. In addition, the proportion of children in private child care groups/centres is similar to the proportion of those in early

childhood education institutions in densely-populated neighborhoods and ethnic minority areas, except in industrial zones where children in private child care groups/centres account for 36,1% of the relevant age group population, lower than the 45,1% in early childhood education institutions.

- By area: The proportion of under-36-month-old children receiving child care and education at home is the highest in ethnic minority areas and lower in densely-populated neighborhoods. The proportion of under-36-month-old children enrolled in early childhood education institutions and private child care groups/centres is the highest in industrial zones at 81,2% and the lowest in mountainous and ethnic minority areas at 17,1%.

**Public early childhood education institutions are unable to meet the demand for under-36-month-old child care and education**

*The proportion of under-36-month-old children enrolled in early childhood education institutions is low, especially in ethnic minority areas and densely-populated neighborhoods (see Figure 3)*



**Figure 3. Number of under-36-month-old children receiving child care and education in early childhood education institutions**

*The reasons for the low amount of under-36-month-old children receiving child care and education in early childhood education institutions are:*

- Public early childhood education institutions are low in number and small in size (each commune/ward only has 1 public early childhood institution)

- Many public early childhood education institutions do not accept under-36-month-old children or receive only a limited number of children from 24 months old and above. Due to the lack of facilities relative to the demand, schools usually prioritize early childhood children, especially 5-year-old children, to fulfill the objective of universalization. Another issue is the lack of teachers, especially those for under-36-month-old child care and education. Meanwhile, non-public early childhood education institutions do not receive children under 12 months old.

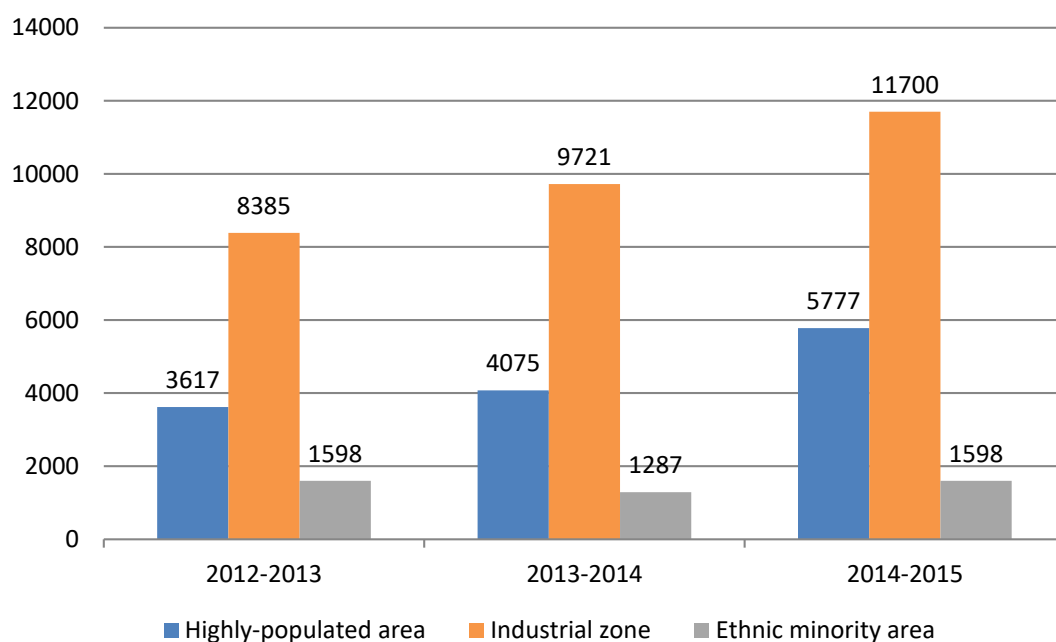
*“No institutions accept children under 12 months old. They do not receive those who have not learnt to walk, to speak and to take care of personal hygiene.”*

- Admission procedures for public early childhood education institutions have some regulations which can be difficult for parents. For example, the primary admission targets are those with permanent residence in the area or temporary residence paper KT2, KT3 affirmed by the local government from two years-old and up. After admitting all these children, if public schools still have “quota”, they will review the applications of those outside the area. This causes difficulty for most parents who are factory workers as they are migrants in companies and factories, and are temporary residents in the area.

- The time for child care in public early childhood education institutions does not suit the work schedules of parents who work in shifts in industrial zones.

***Private child care groups/centres increasingly fulfill their role of under-36-month-old child care and education***

*The proportion of under-36-month-old children receiving child care and education in private child care groups/centres is a little more than those in early childhood education institutions.*



**Figure 4. Number of under-36-month-old children receiving child care and education in private child care groups/centres**

*The number of children receiving child care and education in private child care groups/centres is on the rise in recent years, especially in industrial zones and densely-populated neighborhoods.*

Private child care groups/centres have the following advantages in attracting under-36-month-old children:

- They admit children from 12 months old and above
- Flexible hours
- Teachers are enthusiastic, take good care of children and meet parents' diverse demands
- The number of children in each group is smaller than in public school
- Admission procedures of private child care groups/centres are simple and don't depend on residence.
- Reasonable fees compared to parents' income.

*However, the development of local private child care groups/centres faces many difficulties.*

*Most private child care groups/centres admit children 24 months old and above. Many localities (Hoang Mai, Lao Cai) have a few groups admitting children between 18 and 24 months of age. Other localities have developed mixed child groups (Vinh, Ben Cat, etc.)*

*Some private child care groups/centres currently have enrolled a number of children far exceeding their limit, so they are unable to admit more children. Linh Mai ward, Hoang Mai has 27 licensed private child care groups/centres, each of which has a high number of children with some having exceeded their limit. Ten groups have 50 to 120 children but do not meet the conditions to become a private school.*

*Many localities set a policy not to found more private child care groups/centres, so the capacity to meet the needs of under-36-month-old child care and education in the future is limited.*

*“In the future there will be no new private child care groups/centres, instead the number of classes in these groups will increase to meet people’s needs”<sup>15</sup>.*

*Parents are not really confident in the quality of child care and education for children under 3 years old.*

Public early childhood education institutions have not yet earned parents’ trust to care for their children. Therefore, increasing the number of private child care groups/centres and ensuring their quality of child care and education for under-36-month-old children should be considered as effective measures to achieve the goals of early childhood education development in Viet Nam in the coming period.

### **III. ACTUAL SITUATION OF CHILD CARE AND EDUCATION IN PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUPS/CENTRES**

#### **3.1. Child care**

Early child care (zero to three years old) is particularly important for the comprehensive development of children. Scientific evidence shows positive interactions and supportive relations with parents and caregivers are important to infants and toddlers to develop into socially and emotionally strong adults. (Anda & Brown, 2010, National Scientific Council for developing children, 2007, Zero to Three, 2009).

Through the survey we find that:

***Private child care groups/centres seem to pay more attention to child care and safety***

All 3 surveyed areas show that this is the foremost priority of private child care groups/centres. This is demonstrated by:

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<sup>15</sup> According to the Vice Chairman of Hung Vuong ward People’s Committee, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc



- Daily child activities carried out by most groups the same way as in public early childhood education institutions in the area.
- Publishing daily menus which are suitable to the age range of children in the groups. The number of meals for each child per day is 3 to 4 meals (including 2 main meals and 1 optional meal). Some groups take care of child breakfast if requested by the parents.
- Each child's hygiene is taken care of and examined 2-3 times per year (beginning, middle and end of the academic year). Some groups also hold health examinations for children (once per year). The monthly weight results show that each child in the groups grows gradually. Some teachers mention that the group leaders always remind them to closely monitor the hygiene and cleanliness of the children.
- Health care and safety for children in densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones are given more attention than in ethnic minority areas, such as addressing potential risks to children's safety (netted stairs, barriers at each floor, closed gates and fences). Each group has a medical kit including common medicine (fever, coughing syrup, etc.) and first-aid tools (alcohol, cotton, etc.). Teachers weigh children every month and inform parents of the results or publish them on the notice board.
- The number and length of sleeping periods are generally appropriate for children. In densely-populated neighborhoods, besides adequate sleeping periods, each child has a pillow and mat. In industrial zones and ethnic minority areas, children in the mixed groups sleep together so it affects the sleeping period of each child.
- Food hygiene and safety are given close attention by many group leaders. Food for the children in many groups is supplied from the leaders' family gardens, parents' gardens, or trustworthy local locations (in industrial zones and highly-populated neighborhoods) because contracting clean food providers is difficult since the quantity of food needed is low and there are no agency providers in the localities (in mountainous areas).

*Parents are relatively satisfied with child care in licensed private child care groups/centres.*

Through the survey, we find that most parents express their satisfaction regarding child care in private child care groups/centres and also seem to be informed about the number of meals and food for their children through talking with teachers or reading the notice board.

*“In fact, my child seems to be more obedient, gain weight and get stronger, be less likely to be ill, and eat well. If he is ill I give teachers medicine and they get my child to drink it, in general I feel at ease”<sup>16</sup>*

*“If I send my child till the evening, there are two main meals, lunch and dinner; there are three optional meals at nine in the morning, and two and four o’clock in the afternoon”<sup>17</sup>*

***The quality of health care and safety for children in private independent child groups is difficult to control and still has shortcomings.***

*Nutrition does not meet the needs of the age range:*

- Food quality is not calculated to ensure necessary nutrition and calories for children.
- The food for children in some groups does not have clear origins so it is hard to ensure food hygiene and safety.
- The kitchen does not make the meals according to the menu.
- Kitchen hygiene is not guaranteed. There is a lack of clean furniture and accessories in some groups (tables, chairs, dishes, towels, tissue, etc.)
- The implementation of menus is hard to control. Proper food storing is not taken seriously in some localities (Vinh, Nghe An, and ethnic minority area).

According to an administrator of the Binh Duong DOET:

*“Meal quality is not guaranteed, there is a lack of transparency to the parents in daily food expenditure, there is not enough attention paid to the environment, rooms, and child hygiene (cramped, humid rooms and stinking toilets).”*

*“Some establishments do not guarantee child care quality or nutrition, and have high potential risks”<sup>18</sup>.*

Officials from ward People's Committees in ethnic minority areas also say that: The quality of health care, nutrition, food safety and hygiene for children in private independent groups is limited. Meal quality is not guaranteed.

*The reasons are:*

- Group leaders lack ability to develop meal plans for children.
- Spending for children's meals is low and made by the group director for profit.

<sup>16</sup> According to Parents in Vinh Phuc

<sup>17</sup> According to Parents with children enrolled in SM nursery, Trung Nhi ward, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc

<sup>18</sup> According to an official of Preschool Education Division under Binh Duong DOET

- Most cooks lack necessary certificates to do their work.
- Meal control and quality are mostly controlled by authorities based on inspection of records and published menu boards. The authority does not regularly carry out field inspections and sample tests.
- Groups lack necessary facilities for child care and education.



**Picture 1:** Children having lunch on a floor mat in a private independent group in Alba commune, Chu Se district, Gia Lai

*The groups have not ensured child health care, safety and injury prevention for children in private independent child groups or family child groups, especially in industrial zones.*

- There are few teachers in charge of children of various ages so they cannot properly monitor all the children in the groups.
- Group facilities do not ensure safety and injury prevention because the classrooms are usually rented and upgraded from normal houses.
- Child health monitoring is not carried out according to standard process. Regular health examination for children mostly involves “weighing” and not “measuring.” Many child groups do not carry out health examinations for children, while most do not monitor and evaluate physical growth by development chart, which is a compulsory requirement for health care of under-36-month-old children in early childhood education institutions.

*Environmental and classroom hygiene is not given enough attention:* Many child groups do not pay attention to environmental and classroom hygiene. The Division of Education and Training, communal People's Committee, and other social organizations also do not monitor this issue.

*Many child groups do not pay attention to environmental, classroom and child hygiene. Child care and education activities are not closely managed by divisions of education and training and public early childhood education institutions so they are not guaranteed by quality. Communal-level People's Committees also do not have specialized knowledge on this issue.<sup>19</sup>*

Ward People's Committee officials (in ethnic minority areas and industrial zones) also admit that hygiene conditions are not guaranteed in some private child care groups/centres and family child groups. Many have to share cups and towels, and there is no suitable faucet for children to wash their hands.

### **3.2. Child education**

*Private child care groups/centres have carried out child education activities as stipulated by the daily regime. However, educational content and activities (according to the early childhood education curriculum) are not strictly monitored, and in particular learning activities, festival activities, and quality of education are not up to standard.*

The survey finds that in all 3 areas, although current early childhood education curriculum is supposedly applied uniformly in all private child care groups/centres with guidance, its implementation in practice is simplified or not carried out at all.

- *Early childhood education curriculum is not carried out uniformly in all private child care groups/centres:*

+ Most licensed groups carry out early childhood education curriculum according to the guidelines of public early childhood education institutions (some groups are still applying renovated guidelines on forms of activities).

+ Some licensed and unlicensed groups do not carry out the early childhood education curriculum.

+ Many family child groups do not even know about early childhood education curriculum, not to mention implementation.

- *Not all educational activities are carried out to meet the requirements of content, method, form, and quality.*

+ Many education activities in the early childhood education curriculum are not carried out: Most groups do not have any education activities for social-emotional and

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<sup>19</sup> According to Lao Cai and Chu Se People's Committees

aesthetic development, and do not give attention to physical and sensory development activities.

+ Some regular education activities are teaching children to sing or read poetry, but the method and form are not suitable for their capacity (more suitable to preschool age children). In particular, educating children to take care of themselves is not emphasized (in areas such as linguistic development, civilized behavior, self-service, etc.).

*“When applying education activities, teachers seem to be perplexed and do not promote children’s proactiveness; they do not have enough teaching tools; develop their lessons without care; decorate their classroom dully and do not highlight teaching themes; do not pay attention to the learning, playing, and eating/sleeping environment; do not arrange tables and chairs as stipulated; lack toys and do not pay attention to make hand-made toys”<sup>20</sup>*

+ Many groups let children play by themselves or watch TV instead of engaging them in educational activities.

*Education activities are not monitored, most children sit passively in their place and have no or only few toys to play. Teachers do not organize education activities in the early childhood education curriculum. They mostly babysit the children and keep them in one place.<sup>21</sup>*

+ Education activities are developed by child groups with the guidance of public early childhood education institutions, but this is in form only.

+ There is no individual or organization managing or monitoring child education quality in private child care groups/centres. If there is any, it is only for show.

*“The group has 10 children at different ages and in different eating/sleeping schedules, so they are not taught any structured basis, they only see pictures and sing or watch TV”. There is no lesson plan because they are too small, the group mostly babysits them; buys pictures for them or teaches them to sing some songs. Education activities in the group are: let them eat, watch TV, see pictures, and sing. On cool afternoons, they are allowed to go to the yard*

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<sup>20</sup> Report of the Phuc Yen People’s Committee, Vinh Phuc

<sup>21</sup> Report of the Thoi Hoa People’s Committee, Ben Cat, Binh Duong

*to play, but if it's hot they stay inside to look at pictures, watch TV, or learn to sing and dance.*"<sup>22</sup>

In particular, in family child groups (common in Vinh Phuc), although administrators reportedly control education work, proper management is still limited. Many child groups work under the form of "Grandmother babysitting." Each group usually has from 3 to 5 children. Moreover, the groups are not stable, changing day to day. The babysitters are mostly women with an average age of 50, who make use of their free time to baby-sit children due to the demands of other families. Therefore, they mostly baby-sit them, feed them and "teach" them through their own experience. They have little or no knowledge about scientific teaching methods and they do not receive any specialized training.

Although there are many shortcomings as mentioned above, the reports of the Division of Education and Training in the three surveyed areas say that 100% of child groups meet the requirements of early childhood education curriculum implementation, child care, and education. It is thus necessary to review the responsibility of Division of Education and Training and public early childhood education in their task to monitor, inspect, and support private child care groups/centres in the area.

*Shortcomings in the implementation of early childhood education curriculum in private child care groups/centres:*

- Many child care group/centre managers do not have specialized knowledge of early childhood education teaching, do not understand the curriculum thoroughly, and lack managerial experience and up-to-date information. Therefore, they meet many difficulties in child care group/centre management.

- Support from public early childhood education institutions on early childhood education teaching is irregular and ineffective.

- Child care group/centre teachers are lacking in both quantity and quality. They lack experience in teaching mixed groups, do not study the curriculum, and lack devotion to their work.

- Facilities are lacking and do not meet the requirements to carry out educational activities in line with the curriculum.

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<sup>22</sup> According to Parents with children enrolled in SM nursery, Trung Nhi, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc

- The child care groups/centres do not pay attention to the dissemination of knowledge about child nutrition, child care, and education to parents and communities. Most parents do not know about the curriculum and its requirements for under-36-month-old children.

Child care group/centre managers and teachers say that they do not carry out these activities in an active and planned way. The findings also show that parents are most interested in their children getting healthy, gaining weight, knowing how to behave and learning new songs and poems. Other than that, most of them do not care about how their children are educated.

### 3.3. Child care and education conditions

Facilities are very important for the quality of child care and education. Good facilities are considered in two aspects, namely quantity (enough facilities to meet demand) and quality (equipment of adequate standards)

***The facilities, equipment and toys used in private child care groups/centres and family groups are lacking and pose potential risks to child safety.***

- The facilities of private child care groups/centres are renovated from housing structures (renting or making use of family houses) so they are not really appropriate for young children. The size of child care groups/centres in industrial zones usually does not meet the requirement of 1,5m<sup>2</sup> per child.<sup>23</sup> Private child care group/centre classes do not have functional rooms, only a multi-purpose room for studying, playing, eating, and napping.



**Picture 2:** An unlicensed child care group/centre in Vinh Phuc

*The multi-purpose rooms (for studying, playing, eating, and napping) do not have enough toys for children*

According to the Vice Chairman of Linh Nam Ward People's Committee in charge of cultural and social work, representatives of agencies and sectors, social organizations and principals of public early childhood education institutions, most local private child care groups/centres do not meet the infrastructure requirements. For example, in Vinh, although

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<sup>23</sup>Article 28 on Child care and education rooms of Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT - Decision to issue Preschool Charter dated February 13, 2014

76% of child care groups/centres meet the minimum size requirement, each ward only has one private child care group/centre organized rented in the neighborhood cultural center.

According to the Binh Duong DOET, as of March 2015, 18,4% of child care group/centre classrooms are rented from families.

- The toilets in private child care groups/centres are not suitable for children (limited space, combined with hygiene accessories for adults, humid and slippery). In densely-populated neighborhoods, all inspected child care groups/centres have indoor toilets. In contrast, no inspected child care groups/centres in industrial zones and ethnic minority areas have indoor toilets, only a common outside toilet area for the children. Some even have toilets far from the classrooms, making them inconvenient for children (in ethnic minority areas).



**Picture 3:** A private child care group/centre in Vinh Phuc  
A cramped, humid and dark common toilet

According to DOETs, in Binh Duong, 87,3% of child care groups/centres have acceptable toilets (Binh Duong), while in Vinh Phuc only 20% private child care groups/centres have proper toilets.<sup>24</sup>

Notably, in the industrial zones where child care groups/centres rent housing for accommodation, all the floors are renovated into classrooms, and there is only one toilet on the first floor with a size of two to three square meters. The toilet only has a flush toilet for adults and 2 to 3 potties for children. The teachers there said that they let the children on upper floors go to the toilet by themselves or carry younger children to the toilet or let them go on a potty on the corridor, which is not safe or hygienic (Binh Duong).

- Most child care group/centre kitchens do not have a single-use kitchen model. All family groups share kitchens with families.

In densely-populated neighborhoods and ethnic minority areas, most private child care groups/centres do not have a separate kitchen and they share kitchens with families. The kitchens do not have adequate utensils and equipment for child care groups/centres—for

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<sup>24</sup> Report of Vinh Phuc DOET



example, the dish rack may be placed near the toilet. In all family groups, child rooms, toilets and kitchens are shared with families.



**Picture 4:** A private child care group/centre in Vinh Phuc

*Dish racks and kitchen utensils used to cook for children are not hygienic*

In large-scale private child care groups/centres in Vinh Phuc, although kitchens are separate and single-use, their limited area makes the arrangement of space (e.g. dish rack, preparation counter, cooked food counter) unhygienic.

In Binh Duong, the child care group/centre kitchens in general are large and adequately equipped to meet safety and sanitary standards. In particular, kitchens in newly-built large-scale institutions (for 50 children and above) satisfy the safety and sanitary standards for food storage equipment (refrigerator).

- Playground: In all three areas, child care groups/centres have a very small or no outdoor playground. There is almost no outdoor equipment and the existing equipment is usually unusable (in ethnic minority areas). Child care group/centre perimeter fences are mostly made of walls which are not designed for aesthetic value and ventilation. In ethnic minority areas, some child care groups/centres have low fences which children can climb over. In industrial zones, many child care groups/centres do not even have a perimeter fence.

According to Divisions of Education and Training in surveyed areas, around 40% of child care groups/centres in Vinh (Nghe An), 68,8% in Binh Duong, and most private child care groups/centres in Chu Se (Gia Lai) have clean, airy, and open playgrounds with outdoor equipment such as swing sets, slides and seesaws for the children. However, all other private child care groups/centres have no or only a small-size playground (e.g. in Hoang Mai, a densely-populated neighborhood in Ha Noi).



**Picture 5:** Private child care groups/centres in Vinh Phuc

*Poor lighting and outdoor playground space for children*

- Inside the classrooms, areas posing potential risks to children, such as the wide gaps in stairways and low handrailing, have been baby-proofed by child care groups/centres in densely-populated neighborhoods. In addition, they are also well equipped with fire safety equipment. However, the child care groups/centres in selected industrial zones and ethnic minority areas have not met these requirements.

- Equipment, toys, and teaching materials in private child care groups/centres are lacking in both quantity and quality. Basic physical activity, dexterity, and sensory toys such as beads, shape puzzles, balls, gymnastics rods, and hoops are especially inadequate. Learning materials such as hard modeling clay and short crayons are lacking or of low quality, which makes it difficult for children to use them. Personal items for children in private child care groups/centres in industrial zones and densely-populated neighborhoods, such as towels and cups, are relatively adequate but most are old with no personal markings. Meanwhile, in ethnic minority areas, personal items in private child care groups/centres are severely lacking and old.

- Educational environments are not developed due to a lack of interest and knowledge. Family groups and private child care groups/centres in ethnic minority areas do not know how to develop age-appropriate educational environments. In densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones, many child care groups/centres have paid attention to classroom decoration but the decoration does not serve an educational purpose or help child development. Due to limited space, there are not enough areas for the children to exercise, play with toys or do role-play. All classrooms are equipped with minimum toys and equipment, but teachers mostly try to arrange them to maintain tidiness and not in ways that are convenient for children to interact with them.

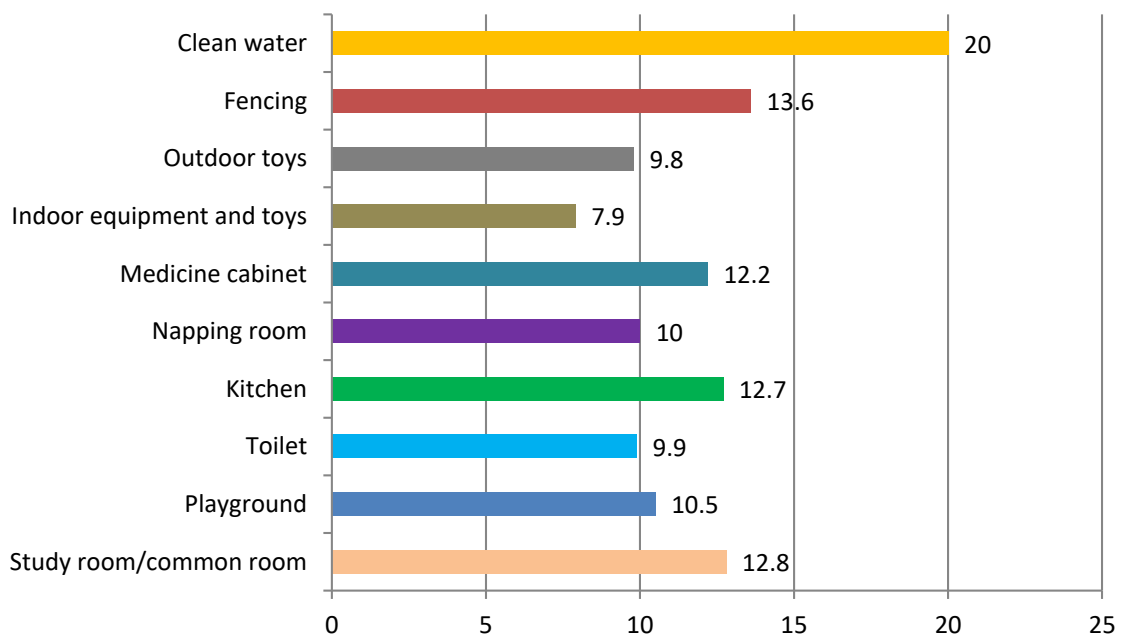
### ***Clean water is guaranteed in all three surveyed areas***

All private child care groups/centres have clean water and use treated tap water, a benefit of the national clean water programme. However, the water tanks in many places are small and of low quality. Some places do not even have water tanks as they use tap water directly, thus they face many problems when water is cut.

### ***Evaluation of private child care group/centre facilities***

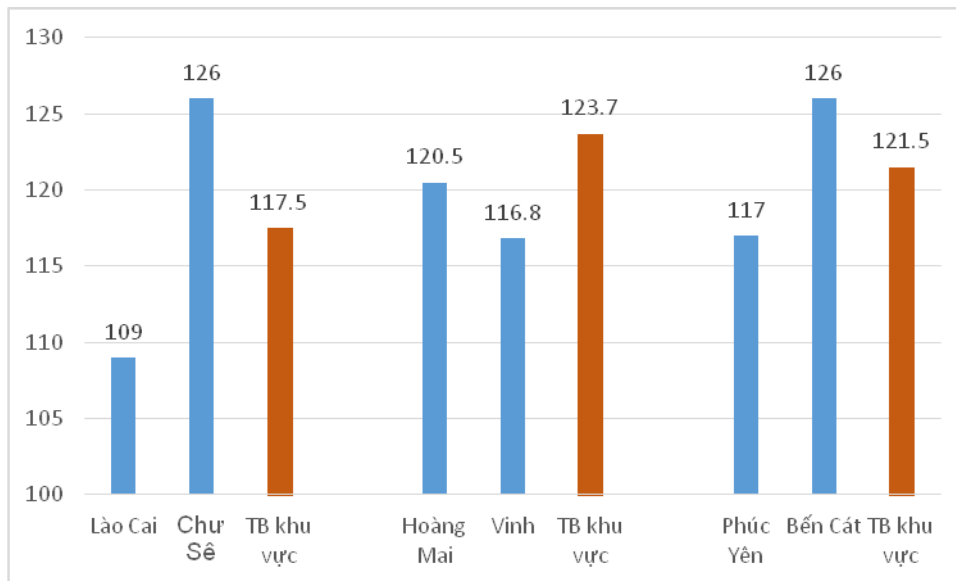
We have applied 5 criteria, namely safety, hygiene, education, aesthetics, scale, and number, to evaluate private child care group/centre facilities in the surveyed areas. Each criterion is assessed against 4 following levels:

Good: 4 points; Relatively good: 3 points; Satisfactory: 2 points; Not satisfactory: 1 point. Each criterion has a possible point total of 20, each child care group/centre a possible point total of 200.



**Figure 5. Ranking private child care group/centre facilities by criteria**

From Figure 5, it can be seen that the criteria for toys and equipment of toilet and playground areas have very low marks as they are lacking in number and diversity as well as not satisfying safety and sanitary standards (with the ranking from 1 to 5 in ascending order). Only the clean water criterion has the maximum point in all three areas. On average, the criteria for child care group/centre facilities only score 119.2/200 points.



**Figure 6. Ranking private child care group/centre facilities by area**

Figure 6 shows that private child care groups/centres in ethnic minority areas have poor facilities which do not meet the safety and sanitary standards. Meanwhile, private child care groups/centres in densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones are quite similar in their ranking. The difference between localities in the same region is remarkable (e.g. Lao Cai at 109 points, Chu Se - Gia Lai at 126 points).

***Reasons leading to the limitations of private child care group/centre facilities***

- The private child care groups/centres are by nature unstable so the child care group/centre managers do not want to invest for the long term.
- Low monthly tuition per child leads to a lack of capital for classroom upgrade and toy and equipment acquisition for children.
- The public early childhood education institutions in charge do not provide any support on toys and equipment.
- Mobilizing parents, organizations and governments for support and assistance is difficult.

*“If I invest a large amount of money, I will have to raise the tuition. High tuition means some workers will not enroll their children here anymore, and then the decreasing number of children will affect my income.”<sup>25</sup>*

<sup>25</sup> According to nursery directors in highly-populated areas and industrial zones

## IV. PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUP/CENTRE MANAGEMENT MANAGERS

### 4.1. Child care and education management

#### 4.1.1. Child care and education planning

Planning child care and education activities is one of the most important requirements for early childhood education and has been stipulated in the tasks of child care group/centre managers and teachers (clause 3, Article 5 and clause 2, Article 17 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT). Professional work of early childhood education will generally be guided by the Division of Education and Training (clause 2, Article 9 of the Decree No. 115/2010/ND-CP).

From holding talks with administrators, child care group/centre managers, early childhood education teachers and studying lesson plans of the private child care groups/centres, we find:

#### ***Advantages:***

- All child care groups/centres have yearly, monthly and weekly plans on child care and education and other educational activities.
- All child care group/centre managers in surveyed areas receive guidance and assistance in professional work by the Division of Education and Training and public early childhood education institutions. Particularly, in industrial zones, close support is provided by the public early childhood education institutions.

*“All activities of the private child care groups/centres are planned and reported to the public early childhood education institutions, then the public early childhood education institutions approves the plan and helps to carry it out.”*

#### ***Shortcomings:***

- Most child care group/centre managers lack the capacity to plan suitable activities for their child care groups/centres: Most plans are simple and only formalities, or similar to early childhood education plans which are inappropriate and unfeasible for private child care groups/centres due to the lack of resources.
- In many child care groups/centres, teachers are not allowed to make their own plans, as they have to follow the plan developed by the child care group/centre director (according to the teachers in densely-populated neighborhoods).

- Some child care groups/centres do not receive effective assistance from public early childhood education due to the following reasons:

+ Public early childhood education institutions are very different from private child care groups/centres, so they also lack experience to consult and give technical assistance to private child care groups/centres. Some noticeable differences are that public early childhood education institutions do not have mixed groups, receive very young children under 24 or 12 months old, or have semi-boarding students.

For example: The public early childhood institution in Thoi Hoa ward, Ben Cat, does not have mixed group or child care group/centre class; the public early childhood education institution in Chu Se district, Gia Lai does not provide meals at school.

+ There are not many public early childhood education institutions but they are put in charge of a large number of local private child care groups/centres, leading to limits in their technical assistance in child care and education monitoring.

For example: In Linh Nam ward (Hoang Mai, Ha Noi), one public early childhood education institution is in charge of 28 private child care groups/centres, while in Le Loi and Quan Bau wards (Vinh), one public early childhood education institution is in charge of only two private child care groups/centres.

#### ***4.1.2. Direction and organization of child care and education***

According to clause 3, Article 15 of Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT, child care group/centre managers are responsible for directing and organizing child care and education in their child care groups/centres as well as for reporting results in line with the regulations of commune-level People's Committee and Division of Education and Training. Through talks with administrators, child care group/centre managers and teachers, some comments can be made regarding the direction and organization of child care and education in private child care groups/centres as follows:

##### ***Advantages:***

- Private child care groups/centres ensure the same timetable as public early childhood education institutions in form.

- Technical issues in the child care groups/centres are all reported to the child care group/centre managers. With those who have early childhood teaching knowledge, child care and education activities for child care group/centre teachers to carry out are based on the contents approved by the public early childhood in charge. Implementation is also monitored and adjusted by the child care group/centre managers if necessary. Some child care group/centre managers who do not have early childhood education teaching knowledge have

hired competent administrators and delegated to them oversight of technical aspects of the child care group/centre. Teachers will then discuss issues directly with them (as in the case in Ben Cat, Binh Duong).

***Shortcomings:***

*The direction, organization and assistance for teachers in child care and education in some private child care groups/centres are problematic, as child care group/centre managers relinquish control or apply the public early childhood education institutions' guidelines rigidly.*

The child care group/centre managers instruct teachers to draft curriculum contents according to the public early childhood education institutions' guidelines and other documents, guidelines and directives of the Division of Education and Training. However, there remain many shortcomings as follows:

- Most child care group/centre managers who do not have early childhood education teaching knowledge let the teachers decide technical issues. They do not understand the curriculum contents so they are unable to assist and control their teachers' curriculum implementation.

- Many child care group/centre managers are unable to direct activities in line with the actual conditions of personnel or development level of the children in their child care groups/centres, and thus they may rigidly apply the public early childhood education institutions' guidelines.

In some child care groups/centres, teachers follow "whatever schedule is developed by the child care group/centre managers with reference to the curriculum of Thoi Hoa public early childhood education institution"<sup>26</sup>

*The child care groups/centres implement the MOET early childhood education curriculum. They seek advice and guidance of Trung Nhi public early childhood. The child care group/centre managers develop weekly, monthly and yearly plans. Meanwhile, teachers develop the lesson plans or add in particular talent contents such as English or playing organ based on the lesson plans of Trung Nhi public early childhood.<sup>27</sup>*

- Many child care group/centre managers ask teachers to focus only on child care and pay less attention to educational activities or implementation of early childhood education

<sup>26</sup> According to private nursery teachers

<sup>27</sup> Group discussion with private preschool heads in Trung Nhi ward, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc

curriculum. Moreover, the children’s parents are also usually more concerned with child care than education in private child care groups/centres (i.e. parents feel safe and satisfied when seeing friendly and caring teachers or their children being healthy and gaining weight).

#### ***4.1.3. Inspection and evaluation of child care and education***

Clause 1, Article 24 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT stipulates that early childhood education institutions are responsible for regular self-inspection according to current regulations. Through discussions with administrators, private child care group/centre managers and early childhood education teachers on inspection and evaluation of private child care groups/centres, the following comments can be made:

##### ***Advantages:***

- The child care group/centre managers carry out inspection and evaluation in their own child care groups/centres.

- In child care groups/centres with managers capable of early childhood education teaching, the inspection and evaluation of teachers in private child care groups/centres is observed quite strictly. The child care group/centre managers inspect, monitor and review all lesson plans and activities of each teacher. At the beginning of each month, the teachers submit lesson plans to the child care group/centre managers for approval, while child care group/centre managers also come to the classes to observe child care and education and other daily activities).

*“The child care group/centre director participates in child care and education. Therefore, she usually comes to class and observe teachers’ activities in the child care group/centre.”<sup>28</sup>*

If there are kitchen staff available, private child care group/centre managers will directly inspect and evaluate the quality or aesthetics of the meals or review the evaluation of public early childhood education institutions’ leadership when they come for regular inspection.

##### ***Shortcomings:***

- *The evaluation of child care group/centre managers is not based on the criteria issued by the MOET.* The survey finds that child care group/centre managers have not assessed the quality of child care and education based on MOET criteria, but rather on some particular ones which meet the demands of parents, such as the proportion of children gaining weight, being healthy, going to school regularly, to reward or remind the teachers.

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<sup>28</sup> According to a licensed private nursery director, Trung Nhi, Vinh Phuc



*- The inspection quality and follow-up actions of child care group/centre managers depend on their competency and work ethics.*

The child care group/centre managers directly inspect and adjust the implementation of the teaching curriculum. If they have early childhood education teaching knowledge, these activities are relatively effective (as in the case of Pho Moi ward, Lao Cai).

If the child care group/centre managers do not have early childhood education teaching knowledge, they hire an administrator responsible for technical aspects and inspect teachers' activities. The frequency of inspection and class observation is around one time per week for each class. Through the inspection, the records of child care group/centre managers and teachers are adequate. However, when studying teachers' lesson plans in Ben Cat, Binh Duong, we find that they were not thorough and did not include daily, weekly and monthly activity.

In densely-populated neighborhoods, private child care groups/centres have carried out the curriculum, but not as methodically as in public early childhood education institutions. In addition, most child care group/centre managers do not understand the curriculum contents thoroughly, so they are unable to assist or control their teachers. For example, only three out of nine and four out of eight licensed private child care group/centre managers in Hoang Mai and Vinh respectively are able to list all child care and education activities for children. The rest cannot list the name of child care and education activities for under-36-month-old children carried out in their own child care groups/centres, even though their timetables do list them.

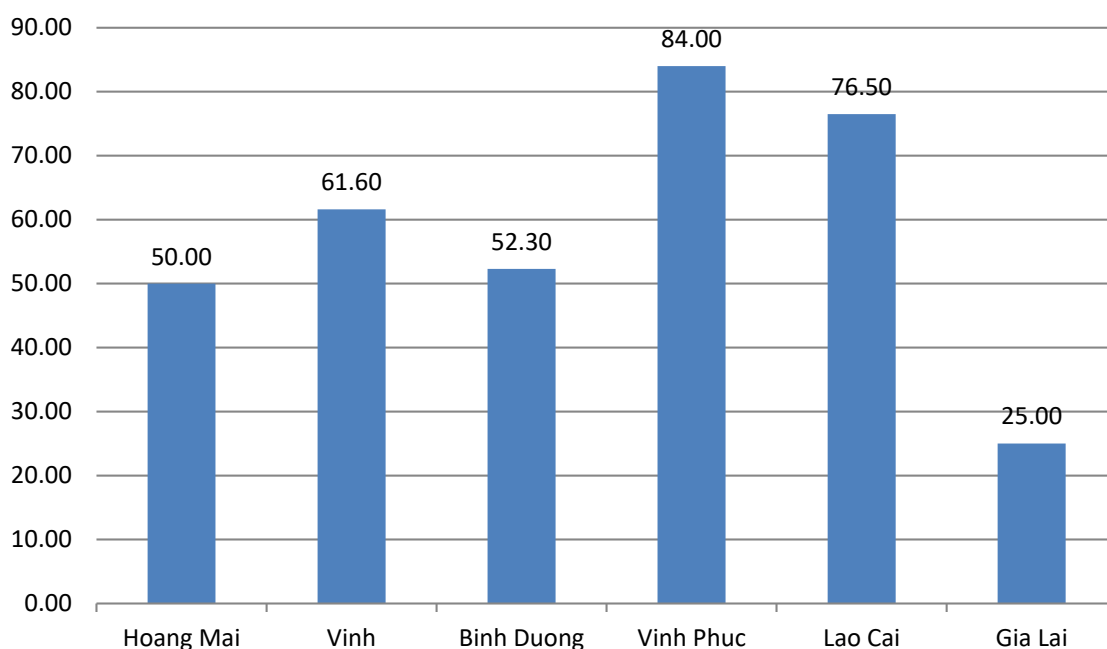
## ***4.2. Personnel management***

### ***4.2.1. Quantity and quality of private child care group/centre managers and teachers***

Cross-referencing the data collected to the regulations on the level of education of child care group/centre managers and teachers in private child care groups/centres (Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT) and the ratio of teacher/pupils in other relevant legal documents, we are able to make the following conclusions:

#### **Regarding child care group/centre managers**

*Many child care group/centre managers have the level of education from intermediate early childhood education teaching level and above, far exceeding the current requirements.* However, the proportion varies across localities.



**Figure 7. Level of education of private child care group/centre managers (intermediate early childhood education teaching level and above)**

Figure 7 shows that the proportion of child care group/centre managers with a level of education of intermediate early childhood education teaching and above is relatively high in all localities, with the highest in Vinh Phuc (84,4%) and Lao Cai (76,5%). Hoang Mai, Vinh and Binh Duong are average, while in Gia Lai, only 25% of child care group/centre managers have a level of education of intermediate early childhood education teaching and above. In this case, the management of child care and education in private child care groups/centres should have been more effective and of higher quality.

However, in reality most child care group/centre managers received patchy training in transition programs from beginner to intermediate and higher levels in part-time and online education. In Gia Lai and Lao Cai, many child care group/centre managers are elderly between 65 and 70 years of age so they face difficulties in updating their knowledge, employing information technology, and renewing child care and education methods.

A large percentage of child care group/centre managers meet the requirements set in Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT but at the level of lower-secondary education with early childhood education teaching or management certification (from training courses lasting at least 30 days), many will find management hard, affecting early childhood education quality. Many administrators in public early childhood education and Divisions of Education and Training under provincial DOET are in agreement that “if the private child care group/centre administrators do not have early childhood education teaching knowledge, they will be

unable to provide good technical management, such as in planning the academic year, and monitoring, assisting and evaluating teachers.”

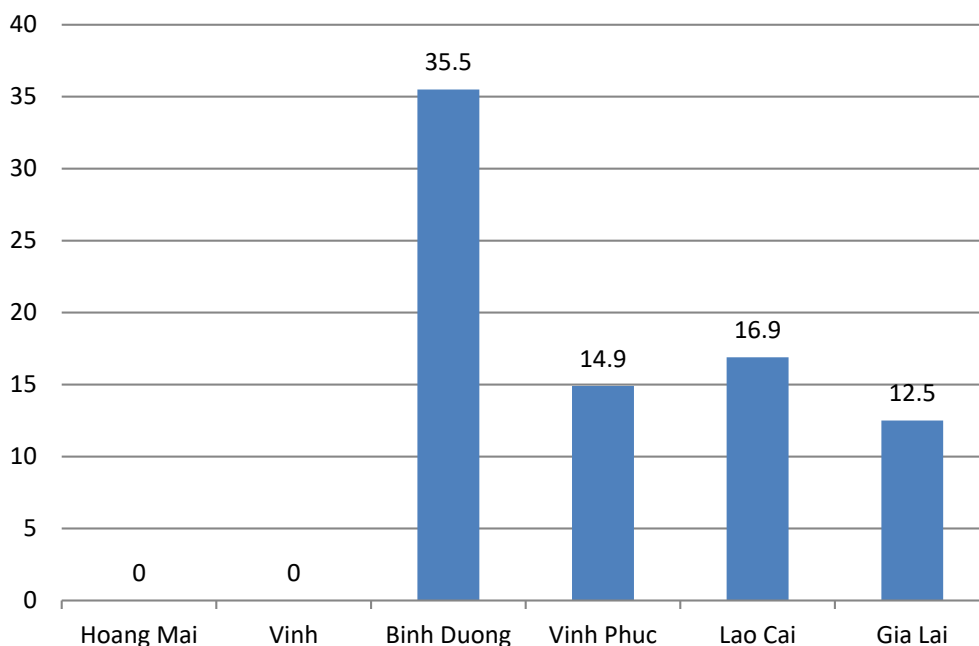
***Many child care group/centre managers have fulfilled their role of child care group/centre management, but there remain some with limitations in technical and personnel management.***

The survey finds that if child care group/centre managers have technical knowledge, they will manage child care and education (as mentioned in previous sections) as well as the personnel in their child care groups/centres effectively. They will know how to assign work and employ personnel appropriately according to the actual situation and the requirements for child care groups/centres. Based on each person’s level of education, competency level and work experience, child care group/centre managers will have different ways to employ their personnel, such as older and experienced teachers/babysitters being put in charge of younger children, while younger, active and creative teachers are assigned to take care of older children. Babysitters and assistants for teachers will also be assigned appropriately to ensure smooth activities in different child groups.

However, many child care group/centre managers with lower-secondary education level and early childhood education teaching certification (according to Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT) will face many difficulties in technical and personnel management. As a matter of fact, they either let their teachers decide how to carry out the early childhood education curriculum or seek guidance from administrators in the Division of Education and Training or public early childhood education institutions’ principals in the area. This kind of assistance is obviously not effective and cannot keep up with the daily situation in private child care group/centre management.

#### **Regarding teachers**

***There is a lack of qualified early childhood education teachers.***



**Figure 8: Proportion of unqualified teachers**

Figure 8 shows that in Hoang Mai and Vinh, 100% of teachers in private child care groups/centres have a qualifying level of education. However, there are some child care group/centre managers and teachers who have not satisfied the required minimum level of education. Hiring qualified teachers is difficult and the cost for hiring is high, so many child care group/centre managers have decided to hire individuals with no early childhood education teaching qualification to assume the teacher's role.<sup>29</sup> Or in other words, a number of qualified teachers put in the official record are replaced by unqualified workers in private child care groups/centres.

Binh Duong is an example of the lack of qualified teachers (35,5%). To address this issue, Binh Duong has proposed to employ babysitters (with secondary education and babysitting certificates) to replace teachers in private child care groups/centres. Through field observations, in Ben Cat, Binh Duong, babysitters are mostly retired officials, workers or their relatives who make use of their free time to open family groups to increase income. Most of them are around 50 years old with low education level. Only some have participated in babysitting courses so child care is mostly done by experience and does not meet the quality standards.

Other localities have a similar proportion of unqualified teachers (Vinh Phuc at 14,9%, Lao Cai at 16,9% and Gia Lai at 12,9%).

<sup>29</sup> In-depth interview with a nursery director in Hoang Mai, Ha Noi

***The ratio of teachers to child care groups/centres does not satisfy the regulations; and most teachers are young and lack working experience.***

On average, there are one to three teachers per child care group/centre at the age of 18 - 30 with working experience between one and five years. In densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones, most teachers are migrants, freshly graduated, and lack experience in under-36-month-old child care and education.

The situation in ethnic minority areas like Gia Lai and Lao Cai has some similarities. In addition to unstable staff, most child care groups/centres only have one teacher, which means a severe shortage of teachers according to the regulations. Training courses for teachers are thus difficult to organize because there would be no one to stand in for them.

*“The staff is inadequate, does not have the education as required and is not up to the standards.”<sup>30</sup>*

#### **4.2.2. Personnel management by the child care group/centre director**

***Child care group/centre managers meet various difficulties in personnel management due to the shortage and instability of the number of teachers in private child care groups/centres***

*“Currently, there is no mechanism or regulation stipulating the legal binding of teachers when they work in private child care groups/centres. Although a work contract has been signed between a child care group/centre director and a teacher with an article on the length of notice if the teacher wants to terminate the contract, in practice teachers (especially babysitters) usually quit without prior notice and yet do not pay any compensation.”<sup>31</sup>*

The reasons for this situation are:

- Public opinions has not recognized the position and importance of teachers working in private child care groups/centres, putting pressure on teachers.

- Teachers usually want to work in public early childhood education institutions or private ones with higher salaries and bonuses as well as employment and health insurance. According to a child care group/centre director, “teachers tend to find the grass greener on the other side of the fence.”<sup>32</sup>

<sup>30</sup> According to the Vice Chairman of Ben Cat People’s Committee của PCT UBND thị xã Bến Cát

<sup>31</sup> According to a nursery director in Binh Duong

<sup>32</sup> According to a nursery director in Hoang Mai, Ha Noi

- Most teachers working in private child care groups/centres are migrants so they may quit work for family reasons (e.g. marriage or pregnancy).

- Most teachers working in private child care groups/centres are young and inexperienced, unable to adapt to and meet the demands of work immediately so they need the close guidance of child care group/centre managers.

- Child care in private child care groups/centres is usually more difficult due to the demands of children's parents, especially as there have been some cases of child abuse in unlicensed child care groups/centres recently.

- The majority of pupils enrolled in private child care groups/centres are children of workers and labourers who have no stable work place, work type and work time. This leads to an unstable number of children in private child care groups/centres, affecting the development plan of the child care group/centre managers.

*“Children are only enrolled for a few months and then move with their parents to other work places or in some cases, after a certain time, their parents want to enroll them in local public early childhood education institutions. If the local enterprises suffer losses or go bankrupt, workers move to another area so the number of children also changes, making it difficult to teach children obedience. Sometimes when teachers manage to do so some move away and others move in, the teachers have to teach it again.”<sup>33</sup>*

- The private child care groups/centres (especially small-scale ones) are also unstable, so many local administrators clearly state their viewpoints that private child care groups/centres are temporary.

For these reasons, teachers are unlikely to be attached to private child care groups/centres. They usually work there to accumulate experience and consider their work “temporary” and “will move when they find better opportunities.”<sup>34</sup>

#### ***4.2.3. Policies and regimes for teachers and child care group/centre staff***

According to clause 2, Article 17 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT, child care group/centre teachers and staff are entitled to a bonus and salary, social, health and employment insurance, have the right to participate in social organizations and receive other benefits in line with legal regulations. However, in practice, these benefits are not guaranteed.

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<sup>33</sup> According to Parents in Binh Duong

<sup>34</sup> According to teachers in Vành Khuyen nursery, Cóc Leu, Lao Cai

***Child care group/centre teachers and staff are put under huge pressure but their salary does not cover their living expenses.***

The salary for teachers and other staff in private child care groups/centres depends on the tuition collected and the number of children. As most child care group/centre managers set low tuitions, the salary for teachers and other staff is usually low.

Following are survey findings in three areas:

- The salaries for teachers and other staff are based on negotiation with the child care group/centre director in the work contract.
- The lowest monthly salary for a teacher is 1,5 million VND; the highest is 5 million VND; the average salary is around 3 million VND.
- The salary for teachers in licensed private child care groups/centres with more than 50 children is higher and more stable than unlicensed and small-scale child care groups/centres.
- The salaries in large-scale private child care groups/centres does not include child care payment in non-business hours (pre- and after-school care, festivals, Tet, etc.). However, in unlicensed or small-scale private child care groups/centres, the monthly salary is the whole income for a teacher.

According to the “Report on Labour and Employment” of the Ministry of Planning and Investment,<sup>35</sup> the median salary for salary workers in urban areas is 5.723.000 VND/month and in rural areas 4.190.000 VND/month. The income of early childhood education teachers is therefore relatively low compared to the average income level in Viet Nam.

***Most child care group/centre managers do not pay social and health insurance premiums or provide maternal leave for teachers and staff.***

Through reports and direct discussion with administrators and child care group/centre managers, most teachers and staff do not have social and health insurance and maternal leave as they should according to legal regulations. Many licensed private child care group/centre managers want to pay social insurance premiums for their teachers and staff make them feel secure with their work. To achieve this, they have to try many things: pay insurance premiums for teachers and staff through enterprises with legal status, ask for the intervention from the ward People’s Committees, or pay insurance premiums through public early

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<sup>35</sup> General Statistics Office, 2015

childhood education institutions. However, they say that there are many obstacles in this issue.

The reasons for this are:

- The current social insurance policy stipulates that only organizations and enterprises with more than 10 members are able to pay for insurance. This regulation causes difficulties for teachers to entitle from their legitimate benefit.
- In some small-scale private child care groups/centres with low incomes, child care group/centre managers do not pay insurance premiums for teachers and staff (the contribution of licensed private child care group/centre managers is usually between 50% and 60% of social insurance premiums for teachers).
- Many teachers do not pay insurance premiums because their income per month is not high enough to cover their living cost.
- Teachers do not want to stay attached to private child care groups/centres for a long term and want to make it easy to move to another better job.

These obstacles greatly affect the stability and attachment of teachers in private child care groups/centres. To put it in perspective, an average teacher in public early childhood education gets an initial salary of around 1,7 million VND per month with insurance benefits, while a teacher in a private early childhood education institution has may get an initial salary of around 3,1 to 3,5 million VND per month with no insurance benefits. Many teachers say that if the child care groups/centres make a contribution to the insurance, they are willing to set aside part of their salary to pay for it (up to 50% of the insurance premiums).

*"If I have a chance, I will apply for a public school because it provides a more stable job with better regimes. If the private school has adequate regimes I will work there for a long term."*<sup>36</sup>

#### **4.2.4. Training courses**

Private child care group/centre managers are entitled to participate in supplemental classes on politics and management (Article 15 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDĐT) while teachers have the right and responsibility to strengthen their capacity (Articles 72 and 73 of the 2009 amended Education Law). According to administrators, child care group/centre managers, and teachers, capacity strengthening for private child care

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<sup>36</sup> According to teachers in Qua Tao Xanh private nursery, Ben Cat, Binh Duong



groups/centres is organized annually by the Division of Education and Training but there remain several shortcomings as follows:

The training courses are usually organized during the working period so few teachers are able to participate (most child care groups/centres provide weekend child care service). Participants from each private child care group/centre are mostly one child care group/centre director and one teacher, then they will share the training material with other teachers and babysitters, which makes limits its effectiveness.

Most child groups are mixed ages but the training courses do not have any contents relating to this issue. The assistance for child care groups/centres in child care and education is thus not very meaningful. According to child care group/centre managers, professional capacity strengthening mostly takes place directly in the classrooms as teachers learn from each other to adapt to work conditions (as shared in the focus group discussion with child care group/centre managers in Hoang Mai).

*They do organize the courses but it is difficult to make arrangements for the teachers to participate in because the courses coincide with our working hours. The classes all have cameras so parents may ask why there are not enough teachers teaching. Therefore we can only have one teacher join in. Otherwise the school cannot ensure the safety of the children. (Focus group discussion with nursery heads in Hoang Mai)*

### **4.3. Financial and administrative management**

#### **4.3.1. Financial management**

*According to the regulations on private child care group/centre finance in Articles 20, 21 and 22, Chapter 4 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT, child care group/centre managers shall decide and assume responsibility for expenditures in line with state regulations. They must submit a quarterly and annual financial report to the sectoral management agency, financial agency, and tax agency at the same level in line with the current accounting regime. They must publish financial activities annually, including tuition and other revenues and expenditures.*

Through discussion with child care group/centre managers, children's parents, and official records, we identify some issues regarding the financial management of private child care groups/centres:

#### **Revenue management**

*Revenue management in private child care groups/centres is carried out by child care group/centre managers in different ways, but in the same locality it is carried out similarly based on negotiation with children's parents.*

The survey finds that most private child care group/centre managers collect fees directly from parents without hiring an accountant or treasurer. Each child care group/centre director manages and sets fees differently.

#### *Revenue sources and levels*

- Fees based on negotiation between child care group/centre managers and children's parents.
- Monthly fees including two main sources: meals (10.000 - 20.000 VND/day) and tuition (300.000 - 400.000 VND).
- Annual fees (which apply in some places): stationery (120.000 VND/year for child care group/centre pupils) and uniform.
- Low level fees, which is enough to cover costs and suits the family finances.

The children's parents say that *"the fees are not high, suiting the finances of parents who mostly are young factory workers with low incomes."*

#### ***Expenditure management***

The survey also finds that most child care group/centre managers directly manage the expenditure and maintain the balance sheet. The current spending in private child care groups/centres is very diverse:

- Monthly expenditure for the salary of teachers and staff (3 million VND per teacher per month and 2 - 2,5 million VND per babysitter and other staff per month) and daily meals for children.
- Facility rentals paid monthly, half-yearly, or annually based on the size and location of the child care groups/centres (9 million VND per month in Binh Duong).
- Electricity, water, telephone, maintenance, etc.
- Business license tax: 1 million VND per year (paid to the ward People's Committee in Binh Duong).
- Monthly or quarterly rewards for teachers in some child care groups/centres, and yearly New Year bonuses.

#### ***Revenue-expenditure balance***

*Many child care groups/centres face difficulties in financial balancing and accounting*

Based on the information provided by the child care group/centre managers, if the revenue collection per child and expenditure in line with the current budget items, with the size of no more than 50 pupils, 2 teachers, 2 babysitters, at least 1 kitchen staff and 1 administrator, the child care group/centre director is likely to receive no profits and even have to lose money on the housing rental fee.

*High spending and low income (as most pupils are children of factory workers) means I have to compensate the business for monthly losses. If I raise the fees, parents may choose to enroll their children in other child care groups/centres with lower fees.<sup>37</sup>*

With the regulated maximum size of 50 pupils/child care group/centre, it is difficult to balance finances and ensure child care and education quality for the sustainable development of the private child care groups/centres.

***Financial transparency has proven to be a mere formality, with no inspection or monitoring of financial management.***

Financial transparency and openness exists when:

- Revenue sources and levels are based on negotiation between the child care group/centre managers and parents.
- Expenditures are clearly recorded.
- Parents are informed through the open financial statements and receipts (with clearly stated monthly fees).

However, as mentioned above, with such low revenues and diverse expenditures, it is clear that child care group/centre managers are likely to suffer losses. Thus on what basis can we be sure that the expenditures are accurate as recorded and publicized by the child care group/centre director? And how can they be willing to suffer losses for such a long time? Without close monitoring of the government, parents and communities on the child care group/centre financial management, we can never answer these two questions.

In an in depth interview in Thoi Hoa, Binh Duong regarding child care and education quality in private child care groups/centres in the area, an enterprise leader mentioned, “...*there is nothing good, healthy and cheap...*”

#### ***4.3.2. Facility and administrative management***

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<sup>37</sup> *In-depth interview with a nursery director in Thoi Hoa, Ben Cat, Binh Duong*

Through the field study of facility and administrative management in private child care groups/centres, some following comments can be drawn:

***Facility management of the private child care group/centre managers is not in line with their applications for licensing***

Many facilities and equipment are not managed according to the license. In drafting the project to submit for license, child care group/centre managers have pointed out supplemental facilities for cycle replacement. However, currently most facilities in the surveyed private child care groups/centres do not meet the requirements of size, classrooms, playground, toys, equipment, kitchen, and toilet (*as analyzed in Section II*). The child care group/centre managers are responsible to manage the facilities, but most have a tendency to “buy only missing items or repair broken items.”

Most child care group/centre managers confirm that there is an annual spending on acquisitions for classes, mostly on teaching materials and stationery for activities. Meanwhile, the spending on maintenance, renovation and equipment is on the whole very low. The survey in private child care groups/centres finds that the reinvestment does not meet their own development scale. If they make a big investment, they will have to raise the tuition fees, some parents will choose not to enroll their children, negatively affecting the business. Therefore, facility renovation and child care and education improvement are hard to carry out.

***Administrative management is ineffective and only a formality. The number and requirement of records are inappropriate to private child care groups/centres:***

The child care group/centre managers maintain 8 documents: a year planner, a month planner, a quality record, a personnel record, a meeting record, a salary payment report, an expenditure report, and a revenue report.

Health records include five documents: a medicine use record, a medicine stock record, an epidemic record, a meeting record, and a food safety and sanitary record.

Food records include six documents: a meal record, a food delivery record, a food stock record, a food sampling record, a cooked food record, and other directive documents.

*“The documentation is the same as in a public preschool. We do not have the same resources as a public preschool and the administrator must do all the records. If you force us to keep all of them, it is certain that we will only do it grudgingly.”<sup>38</sup>*

*Cause:* The Early childhood Education Charter only stipulates the requirements of documentation for schools and teachers with no separate regulations for private child care groups/centres. Therefore, some localities require the same documentation for private child care groups/centres as for public early childhood education.

***Documentation management in private child care groups/centres and family groups is problematic*** as the child care group/centre managers have only limited administrative capacity and experience. All private child care groups/centres *when going into business* say that they find it very difficult to fulfill all the documentation regulations as required by the Division of Education and Training.

Many documentation requirements do not suit the actual situation of many private child care groups/centres:

*“Our child care group/centre only has one medical staffer. You force us to have a medicine record, but we only use saline, eye drops and nasal drops. We also do not have antibiotic medicine so you should consider whether we need to keep two records. In five school health records, we only use the diary book to record medicine the parents give for their children. It is not necessary to establish a school health committee because we only have a few staff.”<sup>39</sup>*

In private child care groups/centres with more than 30 children and stable operation, the documentation is much better. The records have all the necessary information on classes, teachers and number of children, and daily, monthly and yearly attendance. Private child care groups/centres (Binh Duong, Vinh Phuc) with around 10-20 children of mixed age groups between 13 and 30 months do not have a separate report for child education. Notably, family groups usually do not pay attention to the keeping of records on child management.

#### **4.4. Overall evaluation**

- Many child care group/centre managers do not have any early childhood teaching knowledge or managerial experience, and lack updated information. Therefore, the technical management in child care groups/centres faces many difficulties, from planning, implementation, monitoring, direction, and evaluation of activities. The management of professional work depends on the direction of public early childhood education institutions,

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<sup>38</sup> Group discussion with Hoang Mai nursery directors

<sup>39</sup> Group discussion with Hoang Mai nursery directors

but the assistance is not provided regularly and appropriately due to the differences between the two types of early childhood education institution.

- Teachers in child care groups/centres are lacking in quantity and quality, have different competency levels and do not update their curriculums. Due to limitations in treatment policies and regimes (salary, social insurance, promotion opportunity, etc.), the number of teachers is not stable, affecting education quality and child care group/centre management. The teachers also have few opportunities to take part in capacity strengthening courses.

- Low and unstable revenues negatively influence facility maintenance and renovation as well as teachers' welfare. Limited financial management capacity also makes child care group/centre managers unable to make an appropriate calculation for the establishment and development of the child care groups/centres.

- Administrative procedures which are not relevant for private child care groups/centres also cause instability in child care group/centre management.

## **V. MANAGEMENT MECHANISM FOR PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUPS/CENTRES**

### **5.1. Implementation of state, ministerial, and sectoral policies on private child care group/centre management at the local level**

*The localities strictly observe the implementation of state, ministerial and sectoral documents on private child care group/centre management.*

The localities have carried out the state, MOET and sectoral policies and regulations on the management of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres.<sup>40</sup>

- Decentralization of education management at the local level has been observed, while management measures for non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres have been promoted.

- The district Divisions of Education and Training have coordinated with the commune/ward People's Committees to review and inspect the conditions for establishment and operation of local private child care groups/centres, give licenses to child care

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<sup>40</sup> Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT on the Organization and Operation of Private Preschools and devolution of management; Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT on Preschool Charter issued by the MOET on February 13, 2014

groups/centres meeting conditions, assist others to meet the conditions to be licensed, and suspend those below standards according to the regulations.

- Public early childhood education institutions advise the commune/ward People's Committees in the management of local private child care groups/centres and instruct and assist private child care groups/centres in technical aspects.

- Teachers, staff and child care group/centre managers of private child care groups/centres receive support and training on technical aspects and work ethics by local public early childhood education institutions and relevant officials from the district Division of Education and Training.

- There is coordination between relevant organizations and agencies and local governments in inspecting and monitoring (regularly or suddenly) private child care group/centre activities (with special focus on the staff, environment, food safety and hygiene, meal quality, and child safety).

- Responsibility and role of neighborhoods, the Women's Union and other organizations in the commune/ward in monitoring, discovering and preventing bad child care and education practices in private child care groups/centres have been promoted.

- The list of local licensed and unlicensed non-public early childhood education institutions is publicized to help parents to select child care groups/centres with sufficient conditions for their children. Concurrently, community members are encouraged to monitor, discover and report those child care groups/centres which intentionally operate against the regulations and do not ensure child safety to local governments.

- Socialization of education is promoted so that individuals and organizations are encouraged to open non-public early childhood education institutions to meet the needs for child care and increase enrolment rates.

***Each locality receives guidance to carry out state policies on private child care group/centre management in line with their specific conditions.***

*The localities in each area issue specific directives and guidelines to improve the management of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres:*

**In Ha Noi:** Ha Noi DOET advises the municipal People's Committee to issue documents on enhancing the management of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres and on encouraging the socialization of education, such as Directive No. 25/2013/CT-UBND dated November 11, 2013; Resolution No. 06/2009/NQ-HDND dated July 17, 2009 on promoting socialization of education and health care in Ha Noi for the 2009 - 2015 period;

Project 104/DA-UBND dated July 30, 2009 on promoting the socialization of education and training in Ha Noi for the 2009 - 2015 period; Decision No. 11/2015/QĐ-UBND dated May 19, 2015 on supportive policy for the socialization of education; Decision No. 22/2012/QĐ-UBND dated August 28, 2012 on reduction and exemption of tuition, assistance for tuition, revenue collection and expenditure regimes for education institutions under the public education system.

*In Nghe An:* Nghe An DOET issues directives to enhance the management of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres: Document No. 499/SGD dated March 28, 2013, Document No. 1811/SGDDT-GDMN dated September 26, 2013, and Document No. 2546/SGDDT-GDMN dated December 20, 2013. Vinh People's Committee issues documents on: (1) Strengthening non-public early childhood institutions: Document No. 3587/UBND-GD dated August 15, 2013, Document No. 5969/UBND-GD dated December 23, 2013, Document No. 5399/UBND-GD dated October 31, 2014; (2) Supporting private child care groups/centres in technical aspects: Document No. 362/PGDDT-MN dated September 6, 2013, Document No. 656/PGDDT-MN dated October 20, 2014, Document No. 108/PGD&DT-MN dated March 4, 2015, Document No. 375/PGDDT dated September 13, 2013 on guiding public early childhood education institutions to assist private child care groups/centres; Document No. 512/PGDDT-MN on guiding public early childhood education institutions to assist the management of non-public ones in 2014-2015.

*In Binh Duong:* Binh Duong DOET issues specific guidelines to improve the management and inspection of private child care groups/centres, improve education quality of non-public early childhood education institutions in line with realistic conditions such as Document No. 1449/SGDDT-GDMN dated September 20, 2013 on guaranteeing child physical and mental safety in early childhood education institutions, and Document No. 1612/SGDDT-MN dated September 22, 2014 on improving the management of non-public early childhood education.

*In Vinh Phuc:* Vinh Phuc DOET and Division of Education and Training develop directives to strengthen the management of non-public early childhood education institutions such as Document No. 497/GDDT dated December 23, 2013 and Document No. 240/GDDT dated June 10, 2014.

*In Lao Cai:* Lao Cai People's Committee and Division of Education and Training coordinate with each other to issue Document No. 1172/UBND-PGD dated December 27, 2013; Document No. 3015/UBND-PGD dated April 6, 2015; Document No. 763/UBND-PGD dated April 9, 2015 on promoting the management of non-public early childhood education institutions including private child care groups/centres.



*In Gia Lai:* Provincial People’s Committee and Division of Education and Training issue documents related to private child care group/centre management such as: Document No. 1192/SGDDT-GDMN dated September 11, 2013 on ensuring child safety in early childhood education institutions; Document No. 1282/SGDDT-GDMD dated October 14, 2013 on enhancing the inspection of child care and education in private early childhood education institutions; Document No. 1673/SGDDT-GDMN dated December 27, 2013 on strengthening the management of non-public early childhood education institutions; and Document No. 13/UBND-VHXH dated January 2, 2014 on enhancing the management of non-public early childhood education institutions.

***Only Binh Duong and Vinh Phuc have separate policies for private child care groups/centres:***

Based on the project “Supporting and developing private child care groups/centres in industrial and export processing zones to 2020,” approved by the Prime Minister in Decision No. 404/QD-TTg, dated March 20, 2014, Binh Duong and Vinh Phuc governments have developed policies to assist private child care groups/centres in the industrial zones.

*In Binh Duong* a Steering Committee of the Project “Supporting and developing private child care groups/centres in industrial and export processing zones to 2020” has been established.<sup>41</sup>

*In Vinh Phuc*, a provincial project on “Improving the quality of child care and education for children between 3 and 36 months old in 2015 - 2020”

The project has specified the responsibility of each management level from developing coordinating mechanisms in development planning to inspection and evaluation from provincial to district, commune and ward levels and public early childhood education institutions.

The project also stipulates the assistance and sources of funding:

+ Lunch support for children (between 6 and 36 months old in early childhood education institutions including licensed private child care groups/centres and child groups in both public and private early childhood education institutions) in hard-hit communes, support for orphans, poor or handicapped children: 120.000 thousand VND/child/month (equal to the assistance for targeted preschool children). The lunch support for other children in licensed

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<sup>41</sup> The Steering Committee headed by Binh Duong People’s Committee carries out Decision No. 404/QD-TTg dated March 20, 2014 of the Prime Minister

private child care groups/centres and child groups in the early childhood education institutions is 50.000 thousand VND/child/month.

+ Support for teachers' social insurance, health insurance, and unemployment insurance according to their competence level (22%, in which social insurance accounts for 18%, health insurance 3% and unemployment insurance 1%) in private early childhood education institutions (licensed private child care groups/centres and private early childhood education institutions) is funded from the provincial budget; support for the training of child care group/centre managers, teachers, babysitters in private child care groups/centres and family groups with each training course at 60 million VND.

+ Encourage individuals and organizations with sufficient conditions to establish private early childhood education institutions in the area according to the plan. Organizations and individuals founding private child care groups/centres (approved by competent authorities in line with legal regulations) are supported with loans interest free for the first 12 months, with a maximum loan of 200 million VND from the provincial budget which delegates funds to the social policy bank; support for essential equipment and toys in licensed private child care groups/centres at 32 million VND per child care group/centre; other preferential policies vary according to legal regulations.

With the particularities of industrial and export processing zones, Binh Duong and Vinh Phuc have had policies and projects to expand the network of private child care groups/centres to meet the needs for under-36-month-old child care and education in the area.

***Densely-populated neighborhoods and ethnic minority areas do not have separate policies for the development of private child care groups/centres***

Both Lao Cai and Gia Lai do not have any policy or project to improve the quality of under-36-month-old child care and education or to develop private child care groups/centres. In Ha Noi and Nghe An, provincial governments have not developed separate policies for private child care groups/centres. Ha Noi encourages private early childhood education institutions *but not the establishment of private child care groups/centres*. Ha Noi People's Committee even directs district People's Committees *to restrict the establishment of private child care groups/centres*.

***Localities meet difficulties in directing and implementing documents on private child care group/centre management*** such as guiding private child care groups/centres to contribute to teachers' insurance because private child care groups/centres do not have any legal status even if they have been licensed. Teachers must pay for insurance on a voluntary basis.

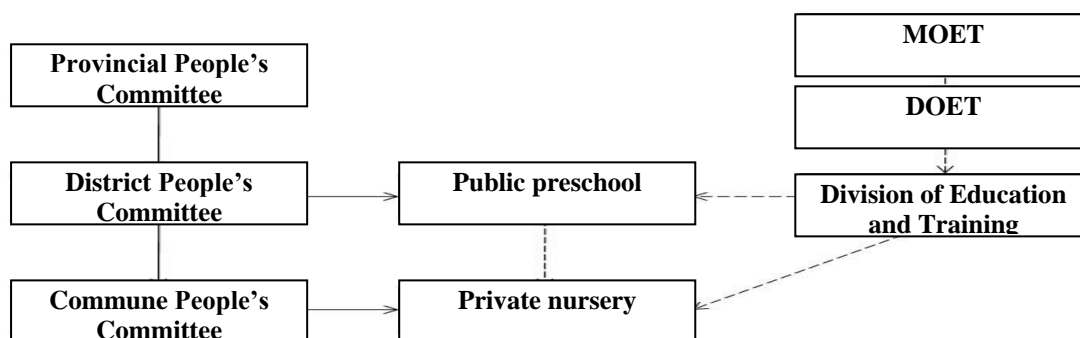
In conclusion: Surveyed localities have observed the implementation of governmental, ministerial, and sectoral regulations on private child care group/centre management. Each locality has then developed specific regulations to complete the documents for the upper level in private child care group/centre management in line with local conditions.

## 5.2. Management mechanism, decentralization and coordination in local private child care group/centre management

### 5.2.1. Management and management decentralization of commune People’s Committee and district Division of Education and Training

Management and management decentralization of commune People’s Committee and district Division of Education and Training regarding private child care groups/centres are appropriate.

Survey results in the three areas show that the management, decentralization, coordination and delegation of administrators with regards to private child care groups/centres have been carried out according to legal regulations as shown in the following chart:



**Chart 5.1. Management mechanism for private child care groups/centres**

#### A. Commune/ward People’s Committee

The commune/ward People’s Committees, under the direction of district People’s Committees, manage the provision/withdrawal of licenses and handle inspection and monitoring of local private child care groups/centres.

According to regulations<sup>42</sup>, commune/ward People’s Committees are responsible for guiding the procedures for license approval, receiving the child care group/centre director’s

<sup>42</sup> Article 5 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT on the Organization and Operation of Private Preschools and devolution of management; Article 4 of the Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT dated February 13, 2014 on Preschool Charter issued by the MOET.

file for child care group/centre establishment, reviewing conditions of the child care groups/centres, submitting the files to district Division of Education and Training, and then approving licenses for establishment and operation of private child care groups/centres based on the evaluation of district Division of Education and Training, coordinating and monitoring the operation of private child care groups/centres.

*However, the survey also shows that implementation also faces the following difficulties:*

- Due to the high number of local private child care groups/centres and limited number of officials from commune and ward People's Committees, private child care group/centre management is not effective in densely-populated areas and industrial zones.

- Most commune and ward People's Committees assign the responsibility of managing and monitoring licensed private child care groups/centres to the local Division of Education and Training and public early childhood education institutions. However, there is a lack of clear regulations on the assignment of rights and responsibilities.

- Localities meet difficulties in managing child care group/centre information due to the lack of monitoring mechanisms and sanctions. Currently some localities, especially in highly-populated areas and industrial zones, witness many cases where a child care group/centre director is in charge of several child care groups/centres in different locations. Once established, the child care groups/centres are then sold to another administrator. In addition, when disbanded due to the lack of children, many child care groups/centres do not inform relevant authorities, so it is difficult to ensure procedures to grant/withdraw licenses and manage child care groups/centres

### ***B. District Division of Education and Training***

The Division of Education and Training under the DOET directs public early childhood education to provide technical assistance to private child care groups/centres and help commune/ward People's Committees in private child care group/centre management.

The Division of Education and Training has observed existing documents<sup>43</sup> on private child care group/centre management, in which the Division assumes the responsibility to evaluate conditions to ensure private child care group/centre operation when receiving files for child care group/centre establishment as requested by commune/ward People's Committees; provides the basis for commune/ward People's Committees to decide on the

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<sup>43</sup> Article 5 of the Circular No. 13/2015/TT-BGDDT on the Organization and Operation of Private Preschools and devolution of management; Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT dated February 13, 2014 on Preschool Charter issued by the MOET.

establishment and dissolution of private child care groups/centres; assists and advises private child care groups/centres regarding necessary conditions for license; participates in monitoring, inspection and evaluation of private child care group/centre operation in a regular or emergency basis during the year; assigns public early childhood education institutions to manage, monitor and give technical assistance to local private child care groups/centres.

*The survey results show that some Divisions of Education and Training have provided good assistance to the relevant DOETs, helping address remaining issues in private child care group/centre management:*

- *In industrial zones:* Binh Duong includes babysitting in the list of 16 rural jobs in the province. As of August 2015, Ben Cat has trained and provided babysitting certification for 80 individuals with preference given to those with provincial residence and those working in private child care groups/centres.

*Phuc Yen consistently disbands all family groups with inappropriate conditions. However, this causes difficulties in that families with children from 6 to 12 months old will have no one to look after their children. Moreover, child care groups/centres deny they are businesses and say that they only look after relatives or neighbors' children on a short-term basis.<sup>44</sup>*

*In ethnic minority areas, the Division of Education and Training advises the district People's Committee on planning the development of local schools to improve the early childhood education enrolment rate.*

*Each commune will establish a public early childhood education institution. There are existing kindergartens but they are not sufficient to attract child care group/centre-age children. Four communes receiving investment for new rural development will be required to build early childhood education institution.<sup>45</sup>*

*Although district Division of Education and Training in all three areas have organized technical assistance and training for private child care group/centre teachers, the number of teachers and babysitters participating in these activities is limited.*

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<sup>44</sup> According to an administrator of Trung Nhi preschool, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc

<sup>45</sup> According to Ms. A, division of preschool education in Chu Se, Gia Lai

*In two years working at the child care group/centre I have not participated in any technical training classes organized by the district Division of Education and Training or by public early childhood education.<sup>46</sup>*

*There are many teachers who have worked for 2 to 3 years but have only once participated in technical training held by the Division of Education and Training. Many teachers and babysitters have not received any technical training.<sup>47</sup>*

The survey results show that Divisions of Education and Training have not organized supplemental classes on management, especially on financial management, for private child care group/centre managers. Technical assistance and training of Divisions of Education and Training have not been provided regularly.

Common impediments in technical management of the Division of Education and Training are:

- Training contents are not practical in accordance with the actual conditions and needs of private child care groups/centres (in which mixed groups are prevalent).

- The number of themes for teachers and babysitters is limited so the knowledge provided is not comprehensive.

- Inappropriate class time.

*Teachers want to learn how to look after children, how to feed them, make them sleep or change their nappies.<sup>48</sup>*

*Causes:* Divisions of Education and Training have a limited number of officials in charge of large area and there is no official in charge solely of private child care groups/centres. In addition, management levels have not realized the importance of under-36-month-old child care and education quality in private child care groups/centres and family groups.

- **Public early childhood education institutions**

Public early childhood education institutions provide professional support for private child care groups/centres within the communes/wards for which the schools are responsible, under the direct leadership of the Department of Education and Training.

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<sup>46</sup> According to Ms. VPAD in Chu Se, Gia Lai

<sup>47</sup> According to Ms. Nguyen K L in Coc Leu, Lao Cai, 31 years of age

<sup>48</sup> According to Ms. Tran Thi B V, 41 years of age, finishing school at the 10th grade, currently a babysitter with the salary of 3 million VND per month

Survey results indicate that public early childhood education institutions provide guidance on planning, supervision, and inspection in some professional areas of private child care groups/centres' activities such as planning and implementing of the Care and Education Scheme in different groups; sending out the schedule of annual, monthly, and weekly activities and menus to private child care groups/centres; guiding administrative records in groups; checking facilities; participating in examining conditions to ensure child safety and diet quality, etc. These results are clearly shown in Vinh Phuc where all of the professional activities for children in the private child care groups/centres (from child care to education) are designed as in public early childhood education institutions.

Following the training course conducted by the Department of Education and Training, a number of public early childhood education institutions in Vinh Phuc have organized training sessions for teachers of the children in private child care groups/centres and they found these sessions very useful.

*Trung Nhi Preschool in Vinh Phuc has organized retraining courses for private child care group/centre teachers on ensuring food safety, sanitation, children's nutrition, fire prevention, and schedule design for preschool children<sup>49</sup>.*

*However, the professional support from public early childhood education institutions remains unrealistic, and inappropriate for children in private child care groups/centres.*

- The number of managers at public early childhood education institutions is limited while the number of children in private child care groups/centres is high, making it difficult for the management and monitoring of private child care groups/centres on a regular basis (such as in industrial zones or densely-populated areas).

*Thoi Hoa Ward (Ben Cat-Binh Duong) has one public preschool, but it has to support more than 25 private child care groups/centres in the area; Morning Star (in Vinh city, Nghe An) supports 12 private child care groups/centres in Quan Bau and Le Loi Wards, Linh Nam Preschool (in Hoang Mai District, Hanoi) supports 27 private child care groups/centres<sup>50</sup>*

- Most public early childhood education institutions conduct professional training courses infrequently, and these courses are held during working hours which are inconvenient for private child care group/centre teachers.

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<sup>49</sup> Result at the time of survey

<sup>50</sup> Result at the time of survey

Over three years, teachers in Ben Cat, Binh Duong only participated in professional training once, which was held by public early childhood education in the province.

- Most public early childhood education do not have private child care groups/centres, or if they do, they are organized by age, so private child care groups/centres of mixed age still face many difficulties.

- Support mechanisms for the Board of Management at public early childhood education institutions regarding the participation in the professional guidance and management for private child care group/centre are not available (except for Binh Duong province which has support mechanism with a payment of 4 working days each person per month for the Board of management members at public early childhood education insitutions that support private child care groups/centres within the area under the school's responsibility).

Thus, the management of private child care groups/centres at local areas has conformed to guidance documents in theory, but in practice it still faces many difficulties, affecting the children's development and the quality of care and education for private child care groups/centres at the moment.

### ***5.2.2. Coordination mechanism of socio-political organizations at the local level regarding the management of private child care groups/centres***

***The coordination and participation of socio-political organizations in the management of private child care groups/centres depends on the assignment of the People's Committee of wards and communes, with the consultation with public early childhood education institutions and the Bureau of Education and Training.***

*Due to limited expertise regarding private child care groups/centres, while lacking strict regulations on sharing responsibilities, socio-political organizations are not able to enhance the participation and involvement of stakeholders.*

Currently, there is no administrative document specifying the authority and responsibility of socio-political entities and individuals in the community towards the consultation, participation, coordination in the supervision of private child care groups/centres. Nevertheless, the survey results in all three areas demonstrate that under the direction of the People's Committee of wards and communes, socio-political entities in the area participated and coordinated in the management of private child care groups/centres, especially the locality and the Women's Union.



Residential groups are the most actively involved entities in the management of private child care groups/centres in the surveyed areas. Leaders of residential groups are assigned to report to the People's Committee of wards and communes on the activities of private child care groups/centres, family groups coordinate with the Department of Education and Training in forming interdisciplinary inspection teams, checking the conditions of class groups, supporting procedures for creating class groups, and supervising during the course of operation. In addition, residential groups also showcased an active role in mobilizing, organizing and coordinating with the Women's Union and the Youth Union in donating gifts to children while on holiday or as part of the health care activities.

*“The leaders of residential groups encourage donors, combining with the Youth Union to make a list of gift notebooks for disadvantaged children who are about to begin grade one, including 700 notebooks and 100 pencils (five notebooks and one pencil for each child)”.*<sup>51</sup>

*The Women’s Union has demonstrated their coordination and participations adequately in the management of private child care groups/centres.* For example: In Vinh City, Nghe An, the Women’s Union actively participated in the management of private child care groups/centres. They were responsible for monitoring a private child care group/centre in the ward and building a model of supervision regarding nutrition for children, human resources, and the management of the child care group/centre director.

In Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc Province, public preschools are totally responsible for the management of private child care groups/centres, residential groups and socio-political entities do not coordinate in the management of private child care groups/centres.

*Socio-political entities have begun to coordinate in the management of private child care groups/centres at different levels.* For example:

+ The Youth Union participated in the supervision of group’s operation but only played a minor role. "Supporting private child care groups/centres is not the task and mission of the Youth Union, thus it cannot provide any support".<sup>52</sup>

+ The Community Health Center coordinated in inspecting, consulting, and examining care and education for children under 36 months in private child care groups/centres, with 2 health examinations each year. In addition, it also coordinated the comprehensive health examination periodically, inspecting kitchens, facilities and ensuring food safety. Community

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<sup>51</sup> According to Mr. THT – Chief of Executive Board at Street 3, My Phuoc Ward, Ben Cat Commune, Binh Duong

<sup>52</sup> According to the Representative of the Hoang Mai Youth Union, Ha Noi

Health Centers coordinated in the management and supervision of the operation of early childhood education institutions but only when these operations are related to them, and even so, they could only coordinate with several early childhood education institutions due to the high number of non-public ones.

Therefore, socio-political entities began to involve in the management of private child care groups/centres, however, the level of involvement and effectiveness remain uneven. Residential groups participated quite effectively in the supervision but their participation is not available in every area. The Women's Union (in industrial areas and ethnic minority areas), the Association of Former Teachers, Vietnam Association for Promoting Education, etc., only participate when invited. The Youth Unions (especially in industrial areas) have very limited participation. There is no coordination between enterprises and local departments in supporting private child care groups/centres.

Some restrictions impede the participation of socio-political entities and individuals in the community:

- Lack of documents specifying authority and responsibility of socio-political entities and individuals in the community regarding the consultation, participation and coordination in the supervision of private child care groups/centres.

- Socio-political organizations do not have expertise in child care group/centre education and related issues to allow them to participate in supporting, consulting, and monitoring private child care groups/centres. Thus, even if they are invited, their contribution to improving the quality of care and education for children of private child care groups/centres remains limited.

- The level of support and supervision from the authorities and socio-political entities towards the management of private child care groups/centres is very modest, focusing only on several groups with a relatively high number of children, while scattered and small groups have not been attended to.

- Communal People's Committees usually have a high workload and one communal officer is in charge of many duties. The number of staff in socio-political is low and these staff have a high workload.

- Private child care groups/centres themselves have not been proactive in attracting the attention, participation, collaboration and support of local authorities and socio-political entities.

Thus there is a need for clearer mechanisms and policies in order to facilitate social organizations to participate in improving the quality of care and education for children in private child care groups/centres and family groups.

### **5.3. Parents' participation in the management of private child care groups/centres**

***Parents are willing to join private child care groups/centres' operations. However, the majority of parents are not informed of policies of the state, ministries, departments and local authorities for children under 36 months old, and they do not participate in the management and supervision of private child care groups/centres' operations.***

Survey results in all three areas reveal that few parents are informed of the state's policies on health care for children from zero to six years old, such as health insurance schemes, health examination, and the Expanded Programme for Immunization (free) <sup>53</sup>. Children receive gifts on holidays such as Mid-Autumn Festival or International Children's Day (cookies and candies) <sup>54</sup>. Parents are unaware of and do not care about the state's policies for children under 36 months of age enrolled in preschools.

*I know nothing about policies. My children are not entitled to any policy. I paid the full cost for my children's education at school.*<sup>55</sup>

***Parents have not played their role in the management and supervision of private child care groups/centres' operations.***

Article 48 of the Decision on the Issuance of Early childhood Education Charter No.05/VBHN-BGDĐT by the Ministry of Education and Training dated 13th February, 2014 states that: "[...]Private child care groups/centres shall have their own Parents Representative Council...the Parents Representative Council is organized and governed by the Charter of Parents Representative Council issued by the Minister of Education and Training". Nevertheless, the survey in all three areas had one common result, as the Parents Representative Councils of private child care groups/centres are not organized and governed properly by the stated functions, duties and authorities.

Many private child care groups/centres and all private child care groups/centres in the ethnic minorities area are without Parents Representative Council.

*The school does not have a Parents Representative Council* <sup>56</sup>

<sup>53</sup> According to Parents at My Phuoc Ward, Binh Duong

<sup>54</sup> According to Parents at Hung Vuong Ward, Vinh Phuc

<sup>55</sup> Interview with Parents at My Phuoc Ward, Binh Duong

<sup>56</sup> According to Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at Le Loi Ward, Vinh City, Nghe An

*The school does not have a Parents Representative Council since it has just been opened recently.*<sup>57</sup>

Only a small number of private child care groups/centres that have operated effectively and continuously for many years in densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones in Nghe An, Ha Noi, Binh Duong has established Parents Representative Council to act as the channel to convey opinions of parents to the child care group/centre managers and teachers, thus adjusting the group's operations. For these private child care groups/centres, the participation of Parents Representative Council is mainly helping teachers celebrate holidays and birthdays, or asking about the health of teachers and children in the class. The Parents Representative Council is absolutely uninvolved in the Supervisory Board in accordance with regulations.<sup>58</sup>

*There are representatives of Parents Council for each age group. Parents Representative Councils are in charge of recognizing and celebrating holidays and birthdays, and making visits when teachers and children are sick.*<sup>59</sup>

*Every year, a number of private child care groups/centres held a parental meeting in order to seek parents' opinions on care, education and other school operations thus making appropriate adjustments.*<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, a number of private child care groups/centres have a Parent Representative Council but it is a formality<sup>61</sup>. Parents with children studying in private child care groups/centres (in Vinh City - Nghe An and Ben Cat - Binh Duong) do not contact each other or exchange opinions on issues related to care and education for children. Parents do not think they have any responsibility in the management and supervision of private child care groups/centres.

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<sup>57</sup> According to Parents that have children studying at unlicensed private nurseries at Phuc Yen Commune, Vinh Phuc

<sup>58</sup> Article 48 of the Decision on the Issuance of Preschool Charter No.05/VBHN-BGDĐT; Merged Document No.05/VBHN-BGDĐT dated 13th February, 2014; Article 12 of the Organization and Operation of Private Preschools

<sup>59</sup> According to Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at Le Loi Ward, Vinh City, Nghe An

<sup>60</sup> According to Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at Thanh Tri Ward, Hoang Mai, Hanoi

<sup>61</sup> Interview with Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at Le Loi Ward, Vinh City, Nghe An

*The school has a Parent Representative Council but I know nothing of its operations. Also, I have never received any information from this council. Parents have never had contact with each other.*<sup>62</sup>

***Parents' interest and aspiration towards the management of private child care groups/centres***

- Some parents having children studying at private child care groups/centres in Binh Duong desired to establish a Parent Representative Council in order to coordinate with the child care group/centre managers and/or teachers in organizing class activities and care and education for children on behalf of parents.

*I wish the Parents Representative Council would achieve efficiency in information exchange, coordination among parents in activities related to child care group/centre groups which their children are attending. Currently, parents do not work in collaboration with the Parents Representative Council.*<sup>63</sup>

- Parents are mainly concerned about the quality of teachers and care, pick-up and drop-off place and time, and the amount of pay suitable. They only send their children to private child care groups/centres “with good teachers, good quality of care (children behave well at school and gain weight) and convenience of pick-up and drop-off.”<sup>64</sup>

- Parents are only concerned about children’s daily diet and education, without any interest in the private child care groups/centres’ financial disclosure of income and expenditure.

*I do not pay much attention to the financial disclosure of the school, but I often ask my child about his diet and education at school, and he will show me what he has studied.*<sup>65</sup>

- The majority of parents know, though not precisely, of the authorities which are responsible for the management of private child care groups/centres’ operations. Most parents in the surveyed areas said that if any problem occurs with their children (especially related to ensuring child’s safety both mentally and physically), they will directly contact teachers and

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<sup>62</sup> Interview with Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at My Phuoc Ward, Ben Cat, Binh Duong

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Parents that have children studying at licensed private nurseries at My Phuoc Ward, Ben Cat, Binh Duong

<sup>65</sup> According to Parents that have children studying at private nurseries at Hung Vuong Ward – Vinh Phuc

school owners. In the meantime, very few parents decide to contact the local authorities.

Thus, the survey showed that Parents Representative Councils have not performed their functions, duties, and responsibilities as stipulated. Parents have not participated in the inspection and monitoring the operation of private child care groups/centres. Management issues such as the legal conditions for the operation of private child care groups/centres, financial issues and financial disclosure have not been paid attention to and taken into consideration by parents. Nonetheless, some parents also expressed interest in better collaboration with teachers and child care group/centre managers through the Parents Representative Council with the view to improving the quality of care and education for their children.

## **5.4. General evaluation**

### **5.4.1. Successes**

- The issued documents on the management of private child care groups/centres serve as a legal basis for the management of private child care groups/centres. On that basis, the local education sector advises local authorities on strengthening the management of non-public early childhood education institutions in general, and private child care groups/centres in particular.

- The local education sector has worked in close collaboration with ward and commune authorities managing private child care groups/centres regarding specific issues. Public early childhood education institutions actively support private child care groups/centres in the area.

- Socio-political entities have been collaborated with each other in the management of private child care groups/centres in the area at different levels.

### **5.4.2. Drawbacks**

- The authorities at provincial/municipal and rural/urban district levels have not been involved in the management of private child care groups/centres, which is now mainly conducted by the Department of Education and Training, the People's Committees at wards and communes, and the Bureau of Education and Training at rural/urban district level and public early childhood education institutions. The role of local authorities (especially social organizations) in the management and supervision remains very limited.

- Legal normative documents, circulars, correspondences of the public administrative bodies are usually single-issue, which means they shall be used only once, for the purpose of reminding, examining and coordinating, thus not providing broader guidance and instructions.

- There is lack of specific regulations of the state on the coordination mechanism between departments, socio-political entities, and the community towards enhancing the participation of those in the management of private child care groups/centres.

- Individuals, social organizations, and the People's Committees in wards and communes have not actively participated in the consultation for and supervision of private child care groups/centres.

- Staff of the People's Committees at wards and communes have been facing difficulties in the management of private child care groups/centres due to the insufficiency of staff and expertise on child care group/centre education, while officials in charge of cultural and social issues have been overloaded.

- The number of the Bureau of Education and Training's experts in rural/urban districts/towns is small while the management areas are large. As a result, the inspection and collaboration with departments and local authorities in the management of school and private child care groups/centres remain limited.

- Regulations and policies are inadequate to meet the demand for professional support and management of public early childhood education institutions. There is no support mechanism for public ones in the management of private child care groups/centres in the area. Additionally, in many areas, one public early childhood education institutions has to be responsible for too many private child care groups/centres, thus leading to the irregular and delayed support and restricting the quality and effectiveness of the support.

**PART C. IMPEDIMENTS AND MEASURES TO ADDRESS  
IMPEDIMENTS TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE CHILD CARE  
GROUPS/CENTRES TOWARDS A MAINSTREAMING AND LOW-  
COST MODEL**

**I. IMPEDIMENTS TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE CHILD  
CARE GROUPS/CENTRES IN VIETNAM**

**1.1. Policies and regulations on the management of private child care groups/centres**

*1.1.1. Central government*

*- The management of early childhood education in general and private child care groups/centres in particular has been decentralized, and the responsibilities and authorities of each level have also been specified. Nonetheless, the top-down management can be seen easily from the central government to the local level.*

For example, Article 12 of the Early childhood education Charter and Article 11 of the Organization and Operation of Private institutions specify that the authority over establishment and dissolution of private child care groups/centres belongs to the Communal People's Committee, and the person with accountability is Chairman of the Communal People's Committee and Head of the Bureau of Education and Training. Nevertheless, there is no clear regulation on the responsibility of the authorities to support these institutions.

*- State management of interdisciplinary education has also been specified. However, responsibilities and the rules of collaboration between the stakeholders remain ambiguous.*

Under the current decentralized management, private child care groups/centres are governed by different organs. To be precise, their operation is under the management of the Communal People's Committee; their professional capability is administered by the Bureau of Education and Training; their facilities depend on the investors, while budget for operation is agreed upon between investors and parents. Therefore, the impact of the decentralization on one area will differ from other areas. What is more, the distinctiveness of private child care groups/centres is evident as its existence and development are bound by the community's activities, the cooperation with social organizations, families and communities, and the interdisciplinary ties between education sector, health sector, the Women's Union, etc., in the care and education for children. Without a mechanism to ensure the effective coordination between the government, local authorities, educational institutions, public early



childhood education institutions and private child care groups/centres, the management of private child care groups/centres shall be faced with many difficulties, especially with unlicensed groups.

*- There is a lack of normative documents, which should be used multiple times, serving as the basis for private child care groups/centres in order to be proactive in self-evaluation and inspection during the establishment and operation of the groups.*

*Many provisions in legal documents are abstruse and ambiguous, which results in difficulties in the implementation process:*

+ Using vague phrases such as “minimum equipment for children is sufficient [...]”

+ Regulations on the teacher-child ratio in class groups: Clause dd, Article 13, Early childhood Education Charter No.04-VBHN-BGDDT dated December, 2015 stipulates that "each group of children and each child care group/centre class shall have sufficient number of teachers in accordance with current regulations. If any group and class has two teachers or more, there must be one form teacher." According to Circular 06/2015/TTLT-BGDDT-BNV stipulating the teacher-child ratio, "Institutions with sufficient number of children for each specified group shall have 2.5 teachers per group. If institutions have insufficient number of children for each specified group, the number of teachers will be calculated on the average number of children by age groups, i.e. one teacher per six children aged 3-12 months or per eight children aged 13-24 months, or per ten children aged 25-36 months." Accordingly, small-sized groups of children will be allowed with only one teacher are unable to ensure children's safety.

+ Regulations on the files and records of private child care groups/centres remain unclear: Clause 2, Article 16 of Circular No.13/2015TT- BGDDT, Regulation on the Organization and Operation of Private Early childhood education institutions, states that “The file and records system regarding the organization, operation and evaluation on nurturing, care and education for children must comply with the provisions in the Early childhood Education Charter.” However, the Charter only adopts regulations on files and records of preschools and teachers at preschools (Article 25).

Some provisions regarding the establishment and operation of the private child care groups/centres are inappropriate:

+ Regulations introduced in legal documents indicate that a child care group/centre director must have expertise in child care group/centre education, causing certain difficulties and restraining the development of class groups, especially in areas of high demand such as

industrial zones and export processing zones. An investor (or child care group/centre director) is, sometimes, merely a person with financial capacity to invest in this field, but he/she can work with professionals having the expertise of child care group/centre education who will be responsible in terms of professional issues.

- + Regulation on the low requirements for child care group/centre managers or management has limited the ability to manage, monitor and support groups professionally.

- + Some of the requirements for authorising the operation of private child care groups/centres are also difficult to satisfy, for example, the provisions on the classroom area or restroom-child ratio.

- + Private child care groups/centres, especially those with mixed age groups, encounter difficulty in implementing the existing child care group/centre educational programme.

- *The lack of preferential policies for children under 3 years old impedes the equality of education for all children.*

- *The provisions on working schemes for child care group/centre teachers have not taken into account the characteristics of the job: Article 4 of the Circular No.48/2011/TTBGDDT states that "Regarding teaching hours of child care group/centre teachers for groups of children with 2 sessions per day, every teacher needs to teach in class 6 hours per day, prepare for teaching and other works to ensure the total of 40 working hours per week." Therefore, on average, teachers will work 8 hours per day. In fact, the number of teachers' working hours is higher than that as they have to arrive early to clean up and prepare to welcome children, then clean up once again after children leave, and prepare for teaching materials. On the other hand, the child care group/centre teachers' heavy responsibility for ensuring the health and safety of children has not been taken into consideration. Regulations on supporting, encouraging, or reducing the workload for child care group/centre teachers have not been implemented.*

- *Policies on budget allocation have not ensured equality for children of different early childhood education institutions as the budget is only allocated for public ones, but not for non-public institutions.*

### ***1.1.2. Localities***

- Many local industrial zones and export processing zones have specific regulations to support private child care groups/centres in accordance with Decision 404/QĐ-TTg, such as tax exemption and financial support, professional training, financial support of food for

children of workers, and financial support for public early childhood education institutions to assist private child care groups/centres. Nevertheless, densely-populated neighborhoods and ethnic minority areas do not have policies or specific provisions in order to support or develop private child care groups/centres.

- Inappropriate planning has led to the fact that the number of groups of children grows with high density, affecting the ability to develop, attract children and increase the income of the groups. Many groups in heavily populated areas are operating without effectiveness.

- Immigrant children experience disadvantages: Some industrial zones such as Binh Duong, Vinh Phuc support the costs of lunch and education for children but only those with family registration, thus immigrant children are not entitled to any support.

- The policy on universalization of education for 5-year-old children is implemented properly, using all resources of teachers, facilities for children of this age, while children under 36 months of age have not been given much attention, causing inequality among children in different age groups.

- Regulations on the number of children per group and requirements for the establishment of private child care group/centre school have caused difficulties in planning and management since many groups in densely-populated neighborhoods exceed the stipulated number, while conditions for facilities have not been met. If these groups reduced the number of children, some children would have no place to study.

- Lack of management guidelines in following issues which are relatively common in industrial zones and densely-populated neighborhoods: Transference of management; one child care group/centre director managing multiple groups of children in various rural/urban district; child care group/centre managers dissolving groups without notifying local authorities; family groups operating with the view to addressing occasional needs of parents, or operating in residential areas in the form of "looking after descendants," thus therefore being very difficult to administer.

### ***1.2. Implementation of policies and regulations on the management of private child care groups/centres***

#### ***- Difficulties in specifying the state regulations in local areas***

- + Industrial zones and densely-populated neighborhoods have a limited amount of land for early childhood education institutions.

+ Policies on financial support for private child care groups/centres (for example, support for land renting, house renting, deferred payment, long-term loans at low interest rate, etc.) have encountered difficulties and have not been implemented consistently. The binding conditions of regulations make these policies unfeasible. Many child care group/centre managers are desperate for capital loans but do not satisfy financial requirements. As a result, private child care groups/centres are facing a financial conflict between profitable business and quality of care and education for children.

+ Policies on financial support for securing salaries and social welfare, social insurance, health insurance and other funds for the development of resources to improve pedagogical skills, and reward schemes for teachers, have not been implemented consistently. This affects the personnel stability of private child care groups/centres, thus impacting the quality of care and education.

+ The implementation of policies on recognizing and honoring members of management boards, teachers, and other staff at private child care groups/centres is inconsistent with that for members of management board and teachers at public schools.

+ Due to the small number of teachers/baby-sitters with unstable schedules throughout the week, the local authorities are faced with difficulties in the organization of professional training courses ensuring the participation of all. And, after the training course, staff may move to another place of employment.

+ The propagation to draw public interest, support and participation in the education policies of non-public early childhood education institutions, and to acquire the proper understanding of its role and make contribution to private child care groups/centres, have yet to be implemented effectively.

+ Professional support of public kindergartens for private child care groups/centres in the area DLTT is infrequent and difficult to achieve effectively.

***- Inappropriate conditions for the implementation of the state's policies and regulations on the management of private child care groups/centres***

+ Human resources

The number of specialized staff of the Bureau of Education and Training, and People's Committees at communes and wards is limited. They have to undertake many duties in a large area, thus supervision and support for private child care groups/centres are not effective.

The duties and responsibilities of staff who are in charge of monitoring non-public early childhood education belong to social organizations are not clearly defined. If they are

assigned, the inspection is merely a formality, as the inspectors do not have expertise in child care group/centre education.

Professional capability of child care group/centre managers and teachers/baby-sitters is limited, thus the implementation of regulations on the management and operation of private child care groups/centres have been ineffective.

The inequity in working scheme, salary, social insurance for teaching staff of private child care groups/centres makes them always unstable and unable to focus on work.

+ Finance

Difficulties in attracting financial investment make many child care group/centre director unable to upgrade facilities for class groups.

There is no funding for individuals or organizations participating in the management and support of private child care groups/centres such as public early childhood education, officers of People's Committees or staff of social organizations)

- ***Child care group/centre managers are not aware of the legal documents stipulating the responsibilities of stakeholders, and requirements for authorization and management of operation.*** Therefore, they are often lack of confidence when meeting with administrative bodies. They are not proactive in giving suggestions, advice on how to collaborate with authorities, social organizations, and parents to improve the quality of care and education.

- ***Limitations on the awareness of the authorities, social organizations, and parents towards management of private child care groups/centres.***

The management of private child care groups/centres in many localities has not been given much attention by local authorities and social organizations. This responsibility is assigned entirely to the Bureau of Education and Training at wards and communes.

Parents are not aware of their responsibilities and their right to participate in the management of care and education for children.

Residential communities in some areas are not aware of their responsibilities, or may even fear the detecting and of private child care groups/centres, violence, hazardous and unsanitary conditions, etc. This partly stems from the lack of propagation to raise public awareness, along with the fact that the local authorities have not imposed policies to encourage, protect, and reward denouncers.

## **II. MEASURES TO ADDRESS IMPEDIMENTS TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PRIVATE CHILD CARE GROUPS/CENTRES TOWARDS A MAINSTREAMING AND LOW-COST MODEL**

### **2.1. Package of measures regarding policies and administrative organization**

- Focus on the revision, amendment and improvement of related legal documents:
  - + The state should review and amend a number of regulations on responsibilities and authorities of each administrative body with the view to ensuring both the appropriate decentralization and the practical evaluation, examination and supervision. This can be achieved by the formulation of specific standards, criteria, and regulations on performing tasks for each body.
  - + The state's administrative bodies at all levels should have regulations on the management mechanisms, decentralization, coordination and authorization by the state's administrative bodies at central level, which clarify responsibilities in the management of private child care groups/centres.
  - + Issue documents regarding the coordination mechanism at local level, specifying the role, authorities and responsibilities of each organization in the management of private child care groups/centres, strengthening the role of site management and supervision for individuals and organizations in the area.
  - + Avoid single-issue documents. Promulgate documents that can be used many times, such as evaluation criteria of class groups in terms of infrastructure, care, education, human resources; guidance on files and records; the educational programme for classes with mixed age groups, etc. Legal guidance documents help children become proactive in self-evaluation, thus maintaining the group's operation.
  - + Remove the mechanism of agreement, approval or opinion regarding matters that are regulated by standards, procedures, conditions and decentralization.
  - + Periodically evaluate the decentralization of state management in sectors in order to make timely adjustments where necessary; revising, amending and supplementing legal documents to match realistic conditions of decentralization.
- Local authorities need careful planning for both public and non-public early childhood education institutions. Publicizing the number of early childhood education institutions and the required scale in order for individuals who intend to open schools/groups/classes to have a basis for implementation.

- Establish a Center for Independent Quality Assessment in to undertake examination and authorization of early childhood education institutions which apply for authorization. The results obtained by the Center for Independent Quality Assessment will be the basis for the People's Committees and the Bureau of Education and to issue permits. Meanwhile, there will be an annual inspection, evaluation and grading of the groups' quality of education. This will serve as the basis for administrative bodies to make decisions on commendation, reward or penalty, or even withdrawal of operation permit of the groups.

- Impose more demanding requirements for the expertise of child care group/centre managers as the manager of private child care groups/centres.

+ Differentiate and separate the two roles of a child care group/centre director as an investor (currently only lower secondary qualification is required) and a child care group/centre director as a professional managers of the group (currently only child care group/centre pedagogical certificate is required, with a minimum training course of 30 days). By separating the role of an investor (child care group/centre director), it will be possible to attract people who have the financial ability but not the expertise on child care group/centre education to establish private child care groups/centres.

+ Impose more demanding requirements for professional qualifications of the child care group/centre director as a person in charge of professional knowledge at private child care groups/centres. The child care group/centre director should at least have a qualification of early childhood education pedagogy at the intermediate level.

- Satisfy the needs of trainees by enhancing the inspection, examination, and supervision to assess and classify private child care groups/centres; identify prioritised issues during the inspection, monitoring, and consulting for private child care groups/centres in order to operate effectively; determine appropriate training time and contents to meet the needs of each group, do not impose any personal opinions, and deliver a fixed content for all training courses.

- Develop policies and regulations to ensure that the salaries and social insurance of teachers and staff at private child care groups/centres have the same minimum as teachers and staff at public early childhood education. Provide guidance documents supporting child care group/centre managers in addressing issues regarding health insurance and social insurance for teachers and staff at private child care groups/centres.

- Develop policies to provide support for children under 3 years old to ensure the equity with children above 3 years old, regardless of which early childhood education

institutions they are studying at. Provide preferential education mechanism for immigrant children to ensure equity with children having family registration.

### ***2.2. Package of economic and technological measures***

- Develop policies to provide support regarding capital (for example, land leasing, house renting, deferred payment, long-term loans at low interest rate) for private child care groups/centres to solve the biggest problem at the moment, which is the insufficiency of facilities at private child care groups/centres.

- Support teachers to obtain social and health insurance in order for them to be able to feel secure, enhancing their commitment to child care, ensuring the stability in personnel of private child care groups/centres, and thus contributing to reducing the cost that parents have to cover, and improving efficiency of care and education for children=.

- Support training and retraining courses to improve pedagogical skills of teachers and staff at non-public early childhood education institutions. Provide training on professional management for child care group/centre managers, especially financial management.

- Carry out annual commendation and reward schemes for child care group/centre managers and excellent teachers of non-public early childhood education institutions equal to those for members of management board and teachers at public ones.

- Develop resources for professional training (via websites, Facebook, etc.) in remote areas through up-to-date topics that are necessary to help members of management boards and teachers to manage and utilize information, interact with each other, and exchange views on issues of interest.

- Promote the application of information technology in the management of private child care groups/centres.

### ***2.3. Package of measures regarding human resources and society***

- Conduct targeted propagation to attract public attention, support, and participation in developing education policy for private child care groups/centres and gain an understanding of their role and contribution.

- Organize training courses for community and social organizations on care and education for children under 36 months.

- Encourage pedagogical schools, early childhood education institutions, and high quality private child care groups/centres to participate in training and retraining for teachers and staff at private child care groups/centres.



- Develop associations of non-public early childhood education institutions with the view to establish connection, provide consultation, professional support, and personnel sharing to its members for the development of non-public ones.

## **PART D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **I. CONCLUSION**

1.1. The need to send children to early childhood education institutions exists in localities, especially in densely-populated neighborhoods and industrial zones. Nevertheless, public and non-public institutions reflect different levels of satisfaction of that need. Private child care groups/centres play a significant role in contributing to reducing and satisfying the high demand for child care group/centre care, while public schools cannot (especially for children under 24 months of age). The majority of the private child care groups/centres successfully performed care and education tasks, ensuring safety for children. Nonetheless, the quality of education for children has not been focused, especially issues such as facilities, quality of personnel, policies and regulations applied to teachers and staff at private child care groups/centres. Ensuring a suitable cost for private child care groups/centres is a difficult task as the rate deemed affordable for people may not meet the requirements for the sustainable development of the groups.

1.2. The management of private child care groups/centres have been considered, supported, and administered by authorities during the course of group establishment, especially the Bureau of Education and Training at districts and the People's Committee at wards and communes. However, the management of these groups remains ineffective, especially the coordination, decentralization, and authorization of management. In fact, the decentralization of tasks is not consistent with the decentralization of authority, financial management responsibility, or human resources, among other things. Recently, the decentralization of tasks have mostly been implemented, but there is a lack of regulation on the conditions for task performance. This it has led to unnecessary confusion, especially in lower-level authorities.

1.3. Ministry of Education and Training and the Department of Education and Training at provincial and city levels have much correspondence requesting localities to enhance the management quality of non-public institutions, and to pay special attention the authorization for private child care groups/centres in the area. However, most of the authorities at

provincial and city levels often assign the responsibility for supervision and management of private child care groups/centres to the education sector, causing many difficulties for the education sector in the coordination with the local authorities and social organizations.

1.4. Decentralization is inappropriate to the situation in localities, and particularly incommensurate with the capacity of lower-level authorities. It is the fact that in many areas, decentralization of tasks is implemented too quickly, while the lower-level authorities are not capable, especially the management officials lack in both quantity and quality (for example, at district Bureaus of Education and Training, the People's Committee ward levels, and public early childhood education institutions). Decentralization has not taken into consideration local conditions and the socio-economic situations. In fact, decentralization can not be implemented simultaneously and identically between localities, but needs to take into account local conditions in order to ensure effectiveness.

1.5. Decentralization has not been coupled with improvement of planning quality, strengthening inspection, and supervision from the higher authorities, or attached authority to specific responsibilities. The authorities have not been serious about self-reporting or self-explanation, and a mechanism to ensure consistent management of the higher authorities are not available. For example, a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation is vital in order to make timely decision on necessary adjustments, while a mechanism for processing the reports of the lower level authorities is fundamental to ensuring effective decentralization. Promoting decentralization and the responsibility for self-determination will only be carried out effectively when the mechanisms for coordinating information between management, supervision, and evaluation have been designed.

## **II. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***2.1. For the central government:***

- The state should provide guidance on the state management for province, district, and commune levels, from operational management to the support of private child care groups/centres. In addition, the state should impose regulations on the coordination between departments and social organizations in this field, attaching the responsibility of local authorities to the management of private child care groups/centres, thus allocating joint responsibilities in the operational management of private child care groups/centres. The rate of children mobilized to enjoy care and education at early childhood education institutions needs to be included in the criteria for local

competition (at province/district/commune levels), thus increasing the rate of children studying at non-public institutions.

- The state should revise and amend regulations on the responsibilities and authority of each administrative level to ensure the decentralization of management, while guaranteeing two-way inspection and supervision.

- State and local administrative bodies should increase control and make periodic inspections, especially surprise inspections of private child care groups/centres' operation, to detect and penalize any violation, and to suspend the operation of private child care groups/centres which do not guarantee proper conditions for care and education. They should publicize the quality of private child care groups/centres via loudspeakers at ward meetings, residential groups, villages, or hamlets. Corresponding to periodic inspections by the higher authorities, the state should also request local leaders to undertake assessments and seek opinions of child care group/centre managers, and of the management and support of care and education.

- The state should adopt policies and schemes in order to provide support regarding financial and human resources for private child care groups/centres with decentralized and shared responsibilities and resources from all levels of administration and social entities, to an appropriate extent for each region.

- The state should provide interdisciplinary coordination mechanisms to adjust the regulations and conditions for loans and land leases in line with the capability of child care group/centre managers in order for the state's support policies to be implemented.

- The state should adjust the work schedule and subsidies for teachers at public and non-public early childhood education institutions.

- Develop appropriate education programs and guidance documents regarding care and education at private child care groups/centres with mixed age groups, and also regarding care and education in family groups.

## **2.2. For localities**

- Localities should research and analyze their own situation to select pilot models of implementation to remove impediments to the management of private child care groups/centres (with an appropriate schedule).

- Every locality should promote the role of residential groups, families, and residents in monitoring private groups and classes violating regulations or committing violence towards children, or not being able to ensure children's safety

- People's Committees at the ward and commune levels should assign more specific responsibilities for departments and social organizations, increasing their autonomy and inspecting the operation of the groups of children on a regular basis. In weekly ward meetings, departments and social organizations need to report on the current operation of private child care groups/centres.

- Wards/communes must promote child rights advocacy, and disseminate information on child care, education, and safety to parents and the community.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres in Chu Se, Gia Lai of Chu Se Division of Education, July 2015.

2. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres in Lao Cai of Lao Cai Division of Education, July 2015.

3. Report on the situation and results of under-36-old child care and education in early childhood education institutions in Binh Duong, March 2015.

4. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres in Ben Cat, Binh Duong.

5. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres of Thoi Hoa ward People's Committee, Binh Duong.

6. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres of My Phuoc ward People's Committee, Binh Duong.

7. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres in Phuc Yen, Binh Duong, July 30, 2015.

8. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres (as of August 2015), Trung Nhi ward People's Committee, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc.

9. Report on the situation and management mechanism for private child care groups/centres, Hung Vuong ward People's Committee, Phuc Yen, Vinh Phuc (2015).

10. Directive No. 09/CT-TTg dated May 22, 2015 of the Prime Minister on promoting measures to address early childhood education institutions and classes in industrial zones.

11. Action plan to carry out Conclusion No. 29-KL/TW of the 8th plenum of the 9th Party Central Committee on "Fundamental and comprehensive renovation of education and training to meet the requirements of industrialization and modernization in the context of socialist-oriented market economy and international integration", Lao Cai Party Committee, 2013.

12. (10th) Draft of the Project "Improving the quality of child care and education for children between 6 and 36 months old in 2015-2020", Vinh Phuc People's Committee, April 2014.

**13.** Overall plan to carry out the Project “Supporting and developing private child care groups/centres in industrial zones and export processing zones to 2020”, Binh Duong People’s Committee.

**14.** Conference planning the development of education and training in Gia Lai in the 2012-2020 period towards 2030.

**15.** Early Childhood Education Charter, attached to Decision No. 14/2008/QD-BGDDT dated April 7, 2008 of the Minister of Education and Training.

**16.** Decree No. 29/2008/ND-CP dated March 14, 2008 of the Government on industrial zones, export processing zones and economic zones.

**17.** Decree No. 115/2010/ND-CP dated December 24, 2010 stipulating the responsibility of state management on education.

**18.** Decree No. 36/1997/ND-CP and Decree No. 29/2008/ND-CP of the Government.

**19.** Decision No. 4040/QD-TTg dated March 20, 2014 of the Prime Minister on Supporting and developing private child care groups/centres in industrial and export processing zones to 2020.

**20.** Decision No. 41/2008/QD-BGDDT dated July 25, 2008 of the MOET on the standards of private child care group/centre managers.

**21.** Decision No. 41/2008/QD-BGDDT dated July 25, 2008 of the MOET on the Organization and Operation of Private early childhood education institutions.

**22.** Circular No. 28/2011/TT-BGDDT dated July 15, 2011 of the Minister of MOET on amending and supplementing a number of articles in the Regulations on the Organization and Operation of Private early childhood education institutions.

**23.** Circular No. 32/2012/TT-BGDDT dated September 14, 2012 on the list of outdoor equipment and toys for early childhood education institutions.

**24.** Circular No. 02/2010/TT-BGDDT dated February 11, 2010 on the list of minimum equipment, toys and teaching materials for early childhood education institutions.

**25.** Circular No. 13/2010/TT-BG on the regulations for child safety and prevention of injury in early childhood education institutions.

**26.** Joint Circular No. 22/2013/TTLT-BGDDT-BYT dated June 18, 2013 on the evaluation of health care in early childhood education institutions.

**27.** Circular No. 09/2009/TT-BGDDT dated May 7, 2009 of the MOET on the public regulations for education institutions under the public education system.

**28.** Merged Document No. 05/VBHN-BGDDT, dated February 13, 2014 on the Early Childhood Education Charter.

