



FIRST PERSON

Disabled Entrepreneur Helps Others

A disabled woman becomes a successful entrepreneur in Ho Chi Minh City



Photo: VNAH

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Four years ago, Tran Hoang Yen was a timid young disabled woman with no savings who rarely left her church-sponsored shelter in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Today, she is a successful entrepreneur who employs 17 disadvantaged young people — more than half of whom are women with disabilities — at her small sewing shop.

Yen’s vision for her future completely changed after she attended USAID-sponsored leadership training courses, which taught her how to start her own business and provided her with small grants to help it get off the ground.

Now Yen’s products are distributed in markets and department stores in Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi, Hai Phong, Danang and provinces in the Mekong delta. Her annual sales exceed 1 billion dong (around \$70,000) — an especially amazing accomplishment considering that she earned an average of just \$30 a month before entering the USAID program.

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