



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM REPORT

FY21



OVERVIEW

The year of 2020 witnessed a profound change on Global Villages (GV) of Habitat for Humanity over the world when Global Village builds have been put on hold due to travel restrictions and safety measures.

Since July 2020, although most sectors have re-opened under different local restriction levels, majority has returned to pre-outbreak situation. The COVID-19 pandemic has become a human and development crisis pressuring the lives of people, and particularly pushing the most vulnerable groups - including women working in the hardest-hit sectors e.g., migrant factory workers, informal workers and children, people with disabilities - into potential long-term poverty and deprivations, eroding Viet Nam's hard-won development gains of the past two decades.

Despite the challenges, Habitat for Humanity Vietnam still believes that volunteers, no matter where they are, play a critical role in addressing the housing needs regardless of areas, gender and groups. Habitat Vietnam's revitalized development programs have integrated volunteering as an enabler for families to have improved living conditions, improved health, and have better chances in life.

Although the country suffered under several waves of COVID-19 infection from January 2020 to June 2021, Habitat Vietnam was still able to organize seven (07) in-country build events engaging 201 volunteers in actual house building activities. This is thanks to the successful management of the pandemic by the Vietnam government. The volunteer mobilization was done during allowable times between the pandemic waves.

In addition, compelled to venture into other approaches over the fiscal year FY21, Habitat Vietnam pilot tested three (03) virtual volunteer engagements to allow international volunteers to: remain connected with Vietnam, keep volunteers abreast within target communities and programming developments within Habitat Vietnam and enable them to continue to contribute to supporting vulnerable groups in Vietnam. The virtual engagements were: a Global Village Reunion, which was organized in collaboration with Global Volunteer of HFHI; a learning and sharing session focused on the impacts of the series of disasters that affected the Central region and Habitat Vietnam's interventions, which was organized in partnership with Dang Huy Nguyen, a Vietnamese-American Team Leader, and Tacoma/Pierce County affiliate; and last, an awareness-raising engagement with Oregon State University.

Under the regional movement of Habitat Young Leaders Build, Habitat Vietnam engaged 20 volunteers through construction and non-construction activities to take action together to build homes and communities, speak out for decent shelter, and raise funds and awareness in support of affordable housing to help families achieve strength, stability and self-reliance.



NUMBERS AT A GLANCE



6 

FAMILIES SERVED

201 

VOLUNTEERS

908 

VOLUNTEER HOURS

7 

TEAMS

LOCATIONS



BUILDING STRENGTH, STABILITY, SELF- RELIANCE THROUGH SHELTER



Habitat
for Humanity®
Vietnam



HIGHLIGHTS

WITH TOOLS WE BUILD HOUSES, WITH LOVE WE BUILD HOMES

VOLUNTEERS ENGAGED VIRTUALLY FOR FUNDRAISING AND AWARENESS RAISING

Despite the restriction on travelling, international volunteers still expressed their interest and attention on how they can support the community who were in greater need due to the impact of COVID-19. The virtual engagement, which was initiated by the Sending and Hosting Programs based on the discussion with several team leaders, and through the support of Area Office, aimed to deeply engage volunteers' interest in continuing their support to Habitat Vietnam's mission by storytelling, and raising awareness on housing poverty and inequalities in Vietnam and current integrated programs that address the issues being implemented by Habitat Vietnam.

Habitat Vietnam organized two (02) virtual reunion events with 58 US Volunteers from Tacoma/Pierce County and HFHI, who have travelled to Vietnam within the last 3-4 years, and attained a donation of US\$ 7,300 to support Habitat's program in delivery of solutions to help low-income individuals, households and communities to achieve strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter. Besides, Habitat Vietnam also engaged with a team leader who built in Thai Binh in 2017, a professor at Oregon State University (OSU), to coordinate an e-learning course to provide college students with a simulated Habitat for Humanity International volunteer build experience, and create a virtual platform for awareness raising of housing needs in Vietnam through telling homeowner impact story and updating some specific projects. This engagement brought a donation of US\$ 1,205.95.



EVERYONE HAS A DECENT PLACE TO LIVE

DOMESTIC VOLUNTEERS PARTICIPATED IN DISABILITY INCLUSION - A PROGRAM THEME-FOCUSED APPROACH TO ENGAGEMENT

Habitat Vietnam conducted COVID-19 response projects especially in the urban North and South. Prior to the outset of the pandemic, Habitat Vietnam has been working on mainstreaming disability inclusion in its programming and has integrated this in several programs. To continue mainstreaming, despite the pandemic, Habitat Vietnam kept PWD as one of the main targets in its COVID-19 response. In synergy, disability inclusion has become one of the two main learning and engagement focus of Habitat Vietnam. A three-year partnership with the Representative office of Japan Tobacco International (JTI) in Vietnam, aimed to build six (06) new houses for PWD in two (02) project locations. The inclusion approach includes participatory housing design consultation to improve the mobility and accessibility of PWD.

In this first year of project, Habitat Vietnam hosted two (02) domestic builds of JTI team to help families with PWD build their disability inclusive homes with appropriate design features helping PWD reach independent living status. Two houses which were scheduled to be built in FY21 were postponed due to the COVID-19 and are planned for the first two quarters of FY22. The prior two builds included JTI Vietnam's executives and staff's active participation in the defined thematic focus i.e., learning about individual accessibility needs, different disabilities aside from the mobility accessibility and how adequate housing can make an impact in other forms of disability, involving themselves in understanding the housing design, among others. These demonstrate Habitat Vietnam's new approach to volunteer engagement, creating a pathway to a more holistic and participatory-issues-based one.



YOUTH VOLUNTEERS TO TAKE ACTION ON HOUSING ISSUES- HABITAT YOUNG LEADERS BUILD



In the effort to engage young people to take action together to build homes and communities, speak out for decent shelter, and raise funds and awareness of the poverty housing situation, Habitat Vietnam partnered with IvyPrep Education, an Education enterprise to establish a IvyPrep for Humanity, a Habitat club. After the Covid-19 was controlled, 18 students of this club run a fundraising campaign in 3 months (from Aug to Oct, 2020) with many diversified activities such as crowdfunding via stories shared on Facebook, Music show, selling hand-made products; and achieved an amount of USD 4,130. Together the contribution from IvyPrep, these young volunteers donated an amount of US\$ 5,000 and joined their hands directly in one day to come and build a house together with the family.

In the regional movement dealing with Covid-19, Habitat Vietnam also engaged a group of 06 young volunteers to join the Youth from Home for Homes campaign, an initiative under the 2021 Habitat Young Leaders Build campaign, to design and develop a project to incorporate knowledge about Water - Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH), Housing Needs, Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate-Change Adaption (DRR-CCA), and Covid-19 Preventative Measures into their Phuc Xa class, one of classes for vulnerable children in Hanoi of Rainbow class.

"YOUTH ARE AMONG THE ONES WHO ARE MOST ACTIVE IN RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC AND HELPING THEIR COMMUNITIES REMAIN SAFE AND DEVELOP COPING STRATEGIES."

- UNESCO REPORT '2020 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT FOR GLOBAL ACTION'

VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT PLAYS A ROLE IN PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND NETWORK BUILDING - ANOTHER THEME-FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT TEST AND DEMONSTRATION

Besides the partnership with corporates for domestic build activities, Habitat Vietnam incorporated with US Embassy this year to organize a women build on March 2021 that was under Federal Women's Program in honor of International Women's Day.

Through this build event, 22 women staff from the US Embassy and USAID joined their hands to help an ethnic minority family dealing with mental disabilities. The location was in Quyet Thang Commune, Lac Son District, Hoa Binh province. It was only one day with some early construction work, but the volunteers gave to the family much more uncountable values. That is the spirit of working together to build a home and hope. Seven-year living in the nearly collapsed house with the roof covered by nylon sheets and the wall assembled by old weathered wood sheets, and the frame made of decayed bamboo beams and wooden columns now ended with beginning a new chapter in this new house.

The "housing and health" engagement theme with US Federal Women's group and the way Habitat Vietnam intentionally made the volunteer engagement a key part of the synergies in FOI engagement. The engagement is part of Habitat Vietnam's "all hands-on deck" principle in FOI engagement, which has resulted to increased traction from USAID through their participation.

The thematic focus "housing and health" was articulated through discussions on the impacts and risks of mental health and how adequate housing plays an importantly role in reducing risks and vulnerabilities, especially in remote areas and among ethnic minorities. The thematic focus strongly supplemented the overall build experience of the volunteers. Later helping the increased connection of Habitat Vietnam with the health sector of USAID.

The engagement was also a form of advocacy with USAID and the US Embassy in boldly acknowledging the need to support housing and human settlements programs.



EVERYONE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



FAMILY STORY

Wife: Mai

Husband: Tu

Children: 5 (1 boy, 3 daughters and 1 niece)

Location: Go Cong Town, Tien Giang province

The old house of a 7-member family was only 20m² made of leaves, mixed wooden and concrete frame. The roof was leaking and covered by fibro cement (asbestos) sheets. They suffered from scorching hot during summer and heavy wet due to leaking roof in the rainy season.

Living in this such unhealthy conditions caused children, especially Binh An, who was born with cerebral palsy and mobility disability, and Minh, who has mental impairment, constant illness. The dream to have a new decent house was almost out of reach when total family income burdened on Tu as Mai stayed home to take care of children.



HOME IS A PLACE TO NOURISH YOUR DREAMS

With the support from JTI Vietnam, their dream finally came true when they now have a new house that could accommodate for 7 members and especially include factors of disability inclusion. Spending one-day at the site with the family, JTI volunteers contributed their sweat drops to build not only a small wall, but also a true sharing value.

Children were too happy to sleep on the first night in new house. They would like to gaze up the whole house to feel if it was the truth. They were afraid that the dream would disappear if they closed their eyes. Having a home is truly a way to encourage children to continue their other dreams.



VOLUNTEER TESTIMONIES



"The younger me used to heartfully enjoy the drip-drop sound by the porch whenever it rained. Yet since the moment I saw many homeless people rushing to find a place to sit whenever it started raining, I was no longer in the rain. And I began to think about those people. I felt so bad for them. They deserved a house, didn't they? That's why I decided to be a partner of the Habitat Vietnam organization with the hope that my little but passionate contribution can partly help the poor and the homeless."

Phung, a volunteer of IvyPrep.
Quoted from story shared on Facebook for IvyPrep crowdfunding campaign.



"To me, a home is a place where I live, learn and have cheerful moments with my beloved family. It is the strong foundation that helps me grow up day by day. I couldn't imagine how hard it was to live without a home until I participated in a day build with Habitat Vietnam. The owner of the house, Ruu, is an elderly woman with Parkinson's disease. She and other members had to stay in a tiny, uncomfortable house with a poor roof that leaks every time it rains. At that moment, I realized how meaningful a decent house meant to them."

Giang, a young volunteer of Rainbow class.



"I show my Vietnamese friends profiles of the families that we built for as well as photos of me working on the homes. He beams and smiles and tells that I'm creating much good in this lifetime by helping people. I tell him that a fortune teller up in the north of Vietnam once told me that I come to Vietnam to help the people and that a soul travels with me every time I come here. My monk friend smiles and tells me that he believes in a previous life that I was Vietnamese and then I return in this life to be born in America and come back to help the poor of Vietnam."

From Ông Tây Lou's journal after his build in Thai Nguyen 2019. This quote was sent on Feb 2021 to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Habitat Vietnam.



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**VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT FY21**



OAKRIDGE HOLDINGS

MONTHLY REPORT

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