



REACH Vietnam
Annual Report
2015

**Creating a career path
for today's youth**



Message from REACH Executive Director

If 2014 was a year of change, then 2015 was definitely a year of achievement.

While Vietnam's economy continued to grow, so too did the challenge to help the thousands of young people who are being left behind. These youth are living in difficult circumstances, without decent employment and without access to the opportunities available in Vietnam's rapidly changing economy.

Our vision at REACH is to bridge this gap and provide all young people in Vietnam with the opportunities and support they need to reach their full potential. This year, we continued to apply our simple formula of 3.5 months free vocational training and six months job placement support to Vietnam's most disadvantaged youth - and I am extremely proud of the results.

We provided 1145 students with free vocational training and helped 943 gain suitable employment. We continued to exceed our annual goal of helping 80% of youth achieve employment, with 83% getting a job within six months of graduating. But we also achieved an important milestone, providing training to more than 12,000 youth in need (12,573 to be exact) since we opened our doors in 2004.

These accomplishments earned REACH unprecedented recognition in 2015.

Stars Foundation named REACH one of the 24 global winners of its prestigious Impact Award. The Epic Foundation, started by philanthropist Alexandre Mars, recognised REACH as one of the 20 most impactful organizations, chosen from 1,400 applicants across 80 countries, to join its 2015 investment portfolio. And at home, the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA) named REACH one of the 10 most outstanding organizations contributing to

socio-economic development in Vietnam between 2013 and 2015.

These incredible achievements are a testament to the REACH model, the hard work of our staff and the incredible support of our business partners and stakeholder network, and to them I am extremely grateful. But it is also a testament to our undying commitment to innovation – something that has seen us adapt successfully to Vietnam's ever changing environment and specifically, to new labour market trends.

This year, in partnership with our parent organization Plan International Vietnam, we launched our new Green Skills training module, which trains students to help employers reduce their environmental footprint, save energy and therefore, operating costs.

We also continued to work with different stakeholders to develop exciting social enterprise plans that will come to fruition over the coming 12 months.

We also welcomed new partners across the board. Our partnership with the Youth Career Initiative, welcomed its fifth partner, the JW Marriott Hotel, which alongside the Sheraton, Hilton Hanoi Opera, InterContinental Westlake and Hilton Garden Inn, provided on-the-job training and employment opportunities to disadvantaged youth.

Most importantly, we also saw new additions to our donor network, including the JPMorgan Chase Foundation, Hanoi International Women's Club, Swiss Philanthropy Foundation, HSBC Vietnam and a host of private family foundations. Alongside our existing donors, these invaluable new partnerships helped strengthen our programs and provide much-needed financial stability in 2015.

About REACH

REACH is a local, Vietnamese, non-government organization specializing in vocational training and employment for Vietnam's most disadvantaged youth



But while we have achieved a lot this year, and Vietnam's prospects continue to grow, our challenge remains. With your help, we hope to change the lives of more disadvantaged youth in 2016. With your help, we hope to enable all Vietnamese youth to fulfill their potential.

Pham Thi Thanh Tam



We supported
1,145
 disadvantaged youth
 in need of help

Our Programs

Our core programs are the Livelihood Advancement Business School (LABS) and the Youth Career Initiative (YCI). With both programs, our goal is to ensure that at least 80% of students are in stable employment within six months of graduating from their course. In 2015, we exceeded this target.

Livelihood Advancement Business School (LABS)

LABS model was introduced by Plan International in 2004. LABS aims to fill the gap between the high level of youth unemployment in Vietnam and employers who need workers with skills, that are ready to work. We offer three batches of vocational training each year, across our five training centres, which collectively offer seven training courses:

- Cooking
- Hairdressing and Nail painting
- Food and Beverage

- Sales and Marketing
- Housekeeping
- Beauty Spa and Make Up Artistry
- Web and Graphic Design

Before we commence our 15-week training courses we research the types of jobs that employers need entry level, trained staff for. We train disadvantaged young people for these jobs, and support them for a further 6 months to make sure they find and keep a job. Once employed, they can progress to higher-level positions as many of our graduates have done.

Youth Career Initiative

Since 2011, REACH has been a proud partner of the Youth Career Initiative (YCI), a United Kingdom-based program run in tandem with international hotels and local community organisations. The 24-week program is designed to be delivered as part of the regular, day-to-

day operations of a full-service hotel, since it is built on the back of existing training and development courses the hotels regularly offer to their staff.

This year, each YCI student underwent more than 750 training hours of training through a combination of theoretical and practical instruction, including mentoring in life and work skills, with most of the teaching coming from senior managers and highly experienced associates from the hotels.

This year's students were rotated through various functions, ranging from security and housekeeping to cooking and luggage services, working at Hanoi's most prestigious international hotels: the Hilton Garden Inn, Hilton Hanoi Opera, Sheraton Hanoi, InterContinental Hanoi Westlake and the JW Marriott.

943
 (82%) students
 found suitable
 employment after
 completing their course

84%
 of surveyed graduates
 said their quality
 of life had improved
 within 9 months
 of starting at REACH

Our Achievements

In 2015, REACH helped more than 1,000 youth from disadvantaged backgrounds in Vietnam. Our vocational training programs were delivered across five training centers in the north and central regions, helping to change the lives of young people and their communities across the country. This year also saw us increase our total number of graduates to 12,573 students.



570

students were migrant youth, from relocated communities, or from rural farming families

>1000
business partners

50%
were women

313

were school dropouts

605

were from poor families

24

live with a disability

91%

of students who started at REACH finished the program

571 food & beverage students each completed

176 hours of on-the-job training

186

were involved in prostitution or at risk of committing a crime.

Provided with **life**
and
**job-
readiness
skills**



Cuong's Journey

Before coming to REACH, Cuong – who is a member of Vietnam's Muong ethnic minority - lived with his family in a poor mountainous district of Thanh Hoa province. When his father passed away, he left home in search of paid work to support his family, moving to Binh Duong province in southern Vietnam.

Working for three years in harsh conditions, Cuong found himself no closer to achieving his dream of becoming a chef. That was until he randomly came across an article on the Youth Career Initiative (YCI) on Facebook.

He immediately left Binh Duong and travelled to Hanoi to apply for the YCI cooking class. Months later, and much to his surprise, Cuong was a cooking trainee at the Hilton Hanoi Opera Hotel.

"I changed so much over six months, from having no experience in cooking to being able to hold a knife, prepare food and communicate more confidently," he said.

Now, Cuong says he's closer to his dream than he ever imagined he would be. With hard work, he says he is looking forward to working in more challenging environments so that he can refine his cooking skills.

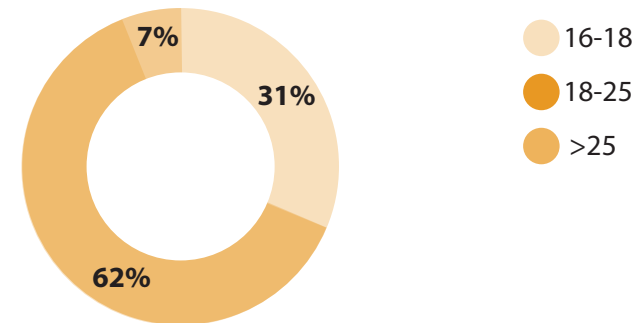
"I have a job now. This program has helped me to develop, take care of myself and support my family better."

Name: Cuong
Age: 22
Hometown: Thanh Hoa Province

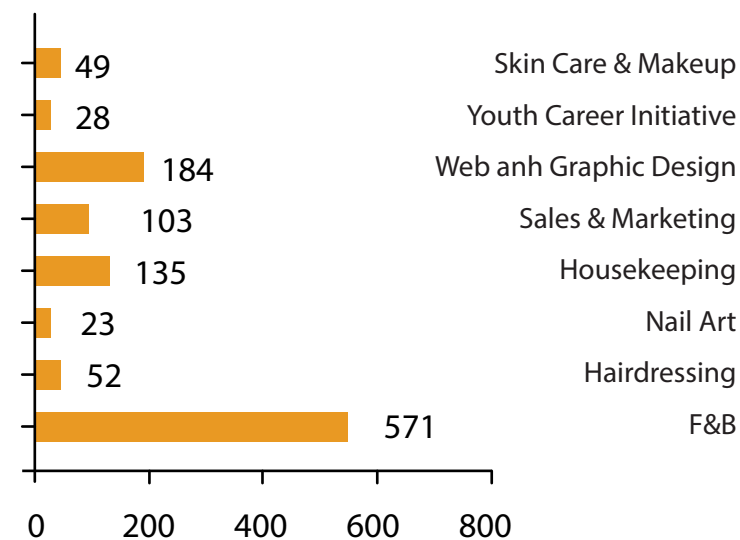
Program: Youth Career Initiative –
 Cooking Trainee at Hilton Hanoi
 Opera Hotel

Current Occupation: Commis Chef -
 Bhaya Cruise

Ages of students trained in 2014



Number of students trained in 2015 by subject



Our Innovations



Green Skills Training

In 2015, REACH worked with Plan International Vietnam to launch a project called “Green Skills for Urban Youth in Vietnam”.

This exciting project aims to create a modern workforce that promotes environmental sustainability by equipping REACH students with environmentally friendly or “green” skills.

At its core, the program focuses on the application of green skills to daily work activities across a range of work environments. These include: the monitoring

and optimization of power usage, garbage disposal and recycling practices to protect the environment and reduce operating costs.

Developed out of the strong linkages between our vocational training programs and our business network, the results have been extremely positive.

After only six months of implementation:

- 263 hospitality students now possess green skills related to their future work
- 52 REACH trainers and staff have the knowledge and teaching methods to teach green skills

Looking ahead, the project will work with and support more businesses in training green skills and to support models to make their operations more environmentally friendly.

True to our ongoing commitment to innovation, we are also hosting an annual competition among REACH alumni and students to come up with additional green skills that can be implemented at our centres and partner businesses.

English Training Improvements

Since 2012, REACH has been working with the British Council to develop an English language curriculum. As a result, a practical English module can now be found in each of our courses: food and beverage, sales and marketing, web and graphic design, house-keeping and the Youth Career Initiative (YCI).

In line with our market-driven approach, British Council designed this module by matching the direct needs of the labour market with the needs of our students. In addition to enhancing the quality of our programs, this new English module has resulted in a higher

level of job readiness amongst REACH graduates.

Besides delivering an improved English training curriculum, British Council has also extended their support to the capacity building of REACH English trainers. British Council representatives were directly involved in all stages of English language training, from course design to course delivery. Regular visits were conducted to observe lessons and provide regular up skilling to REACH teaching staff, which has resulted in better classes, better student assessment and better curriculum development.



Planning For Our Future

Social Enterprise Initiatives

In line with our commitment to become more financially sustainable, 2015 saw a number of exciting developments in the field of Social Enterprise. Thanks to capacity building support and seed funding provided by the Centre for Social Initiatives Promotion (CSIP), and support from our network of international volunteers, REACH is pursuing a number of ventures with a view to:

- Provide practical work experience for REACH students
- Provide new revenue streams to fund the cost of REACH programs

These initiatives include:

- Japanese Bento Box Delivery Service
- REACH Hair Salon
- REACH Fee-Paying Stream for Non-Disadvantaged Students

Thuyet's Journey

Thuyet remembers well the first job she had when she was just 13. "I was a maid for a family in Hue. I had to work because my family was so poor and my parents had five children to look after."

With her family based in a rural district of Thua Thien Hue province, Thuyet moved 16km away to work. Like her siblings, Thuyet didn't continue her education after primary school.

"I remember crying when I saw other children living with their families, going to school and just being a kid. Every night I would dream of going to school," she said.

Three years later, Thuyet left her job in search of higher paying work but her lack of education made it impossible. However, her luck changed when a friend told her about REACH.

"I visited the centre and spoke with the teachers. I wanted to apply for beauty therapy but I was worried about my low education. The teachers encouraged me to apply, so I did."

A week later, Thuyet received a letter offering her a fully funded place at REACH's Skin Care and Makeup Artistry course in Hue. "I couldn't believe it - my dream was coming true - I was going back to school."

After graduation, REACH secured a job for Thuyet at a small spa shop in Hue. Thanks to her hard work and determination, she was soon offered a job at the prestigious 4-star Eldora Hotel.

So how did she celebrate the news? "The first person I called was my teacher at REACH. She was so excited and we both cried. She changed my life. REACH changed my life."



Name: Thuyet
Age: 21
Hometown: Hue
Program: Beauty Spa and Makeup Artistry

Centre: Hue

Current Occupation: Spa Therapist – Eldora Hotel

"I remember crying when I saw other children living with their families, going to school and just being a kid. Every night I would dream of going to school,"



F&B Class - REACH Hue

Our Supporters

On behalf of the entire REACH team, we would like to express our sincere heartfelt thanks to all of our donors (both public and anonymous), partners and supporters, without whom we would not have been able to change the lives of Vietnam's most disadvantaged youth in 2015. In alphabetical order

Donors



Our Awards

"The best thing about REACH alumni is their willingness to work hard. When they start working at our company, their technical skills are basic level. They meet the job requirements but do not perform outstandingly at first. However, their eagerness to learn and good attitude at work help them improve very quickly."

Ms Nguyen Thanh Thuy - Human Resource Manager at Pixelz



Training Partners



Most Innovative Use of Technology for social development



One of ten most outstanding organizations in carrying out socio-economic development projects in Vietnam from 2013 to 2015.



Our Opportunity

The Challenge

Figures from the General Statistics Office this year indicated that while the country's economy continued to grow at around 6.5% and unemployment was just over 2%, the youth unemployment rate was more than triple that, at 6.75%.

According to the Ministry of Education and Training, nearly 500,000 students will graduate from universities and colleges in 2015, a 9% gain on the previous year, but nearly 38% of degree holders will struggle to find a job, a figure that has doubled since 2010.

While most well-educated workers will be able to access expanding opportunities in the private sector, especially in urban areas, for less educated workers, and particularly those in rural areas, it is more difficult.

Many struggle to gain employment due to their lack of education, skills and business connections. This leaves them with few options, other than to work in the agricultural sector or in informal jobs, trading on the street or doing low paid manual work. These jobs don't have proper labor contracts, health insurance or protection under labor law, making them more vulnerable to exploitation.

What We Do?

It is the future of these marginalized young people that drives REACH and our passionate network of trainers, support staff, volunteers, alumni, donors, employers and partner organizations.

We believe that the gap between supply and demand in Vietnam's high-growth industries such as sales, marketing, retail, IT, hospital-

ity and services provides a unique opportunity to connect the dots: providing disadvantaged youth with market-driven, practical vocational training to give employers the skilled, confident workers they need.

In doing so, we hope to contribute to the development of a modern workforce that can meet the demands of Vietnam's rapidly changing economy, whilst empowering Vietnam's most disadvantaged youth and their communities.

What You Can Do?

The youth of Vietnam and REACH need your continued support to make this happen. There are many ways you can get involved with REACH and support our work. Whether you are an individual, an organisation, a foundation or a company. Remember that every little bit counts and together we can build a brighter future for the youth of Vietnam.

Become a Corporate Partner

- Provide financial support
- Donate surplus / used equipment
- Employ our graduates
- Pro bono work

Give Us Feedback

We are a learning organization and we want to improve. Please send email to contact@reach.org.vn

Volunteer With Us

We welcome volunteers at REACH to help our students and our organization.

Make an Individual Contribution

To make a contribution, visit Global Giving <http://goo.gl/UCMOH2>

To find out how you can help disadvantaged youth in Vietnam visit our website <http://reach.org.vn/en-US/Get-Involved/How-you-can-help.htm>

Or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/REACHVietnam



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