

act:onaid



ANNUAL REPORT

2015

WE WORK TOGETHER TO FURTHER HUMAN RIGHTS
AND DEFEAT POVERTY FOR ALL.



LETTER FROM THE COUNTRY DIRECTOR

"Dear supporters, partners, communities and friends!

The year 2015 ended with joys and pride. First of all, ActionAid Vietnam continue to improve the lives of more and more people, from 2,625,778 in 2013 to 4,689,059 in 2014, and 4,442,632 in 2015 in 16 cities and provinces in Vietnam where our local right programs are being implemented. These figures are a great motivation for all of us, in our effort and cooperation with Vietnamese Government to alleviate poverty and bring prosperity and dignity to everyone. I do hope that this report with detailed information about our outcomes and impacts, and future program initiatives will bring you happiness.

I am also very proud to announce that in June this year, the annual meeting of ActionAid International's Membership Committee endorsed ActionAid Vietnam to be the 27th affiliate member of ActionAid International Federation, the second in South East Asia with the approval rating of 100%. This is part of the nationalization strategy by the ActionAid Vietnam culminating from joint effort by AAV management team, staff and partners in the last three years which helps AAV to become independent in management, finance, human resources and resource mobilization.

2015 is also a crucial year in AAV's 5 year national strategy (2011 - 2017). This is an important time to look back and reflect on the first half of the Strategy and draw lessons learnt, realigning the objectives in preparation for a new strategy in the following year, based on the opportunities and challenges in an ever changing national, regional and global context. By focusing on human resource development, I strongly believe that AAV will have a new strategy, which is the most appropriate and effective in the development of Vietnam.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all the colleagues, Board Members and those who are always dedicated to the development work and values of AAV -. In the next stages of our journey, I would like to invite your company simply because your invaluable supports have always been an important element of our success. We highly value and appreciate your support. Together we can make a better life"

Hoàng Phương Thảo

**Country Director
ActionAid Vietnam**

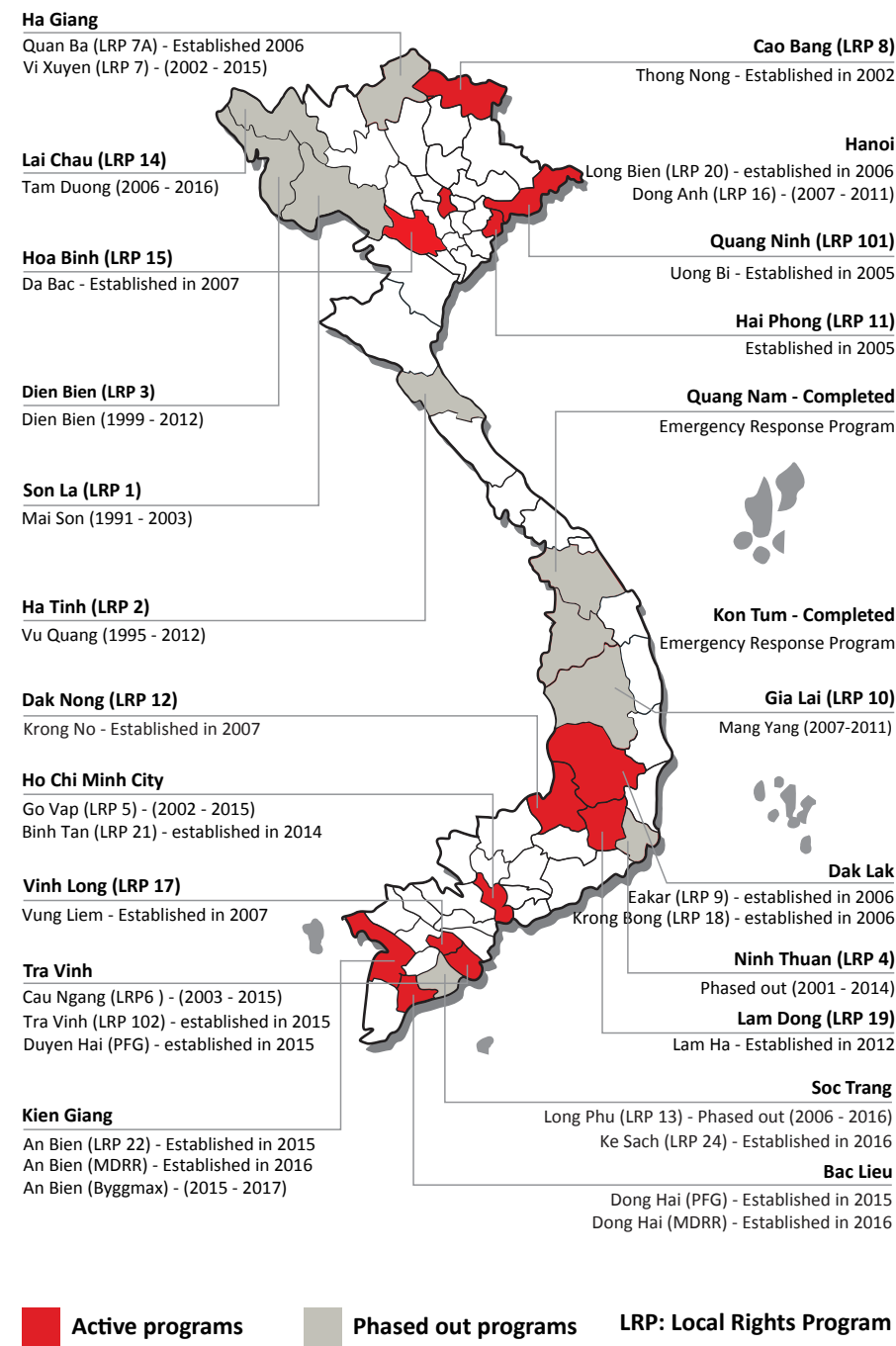
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ABOUT ACTIONAID VIETNAM

ActionAid is a global federation working to end poverty and injustice. Formed in 1972, for over 40 years, we have been growing and expanding to where we are today. We work in 45 countries and territories to help over 15 million poor and less fortunate people around the world. Our head office is in Johannesburg, South Africa.

ActionAid started its program in Vietnam in 1989 and the Representative Office was registered in 1992. Over the past two decades, ActionAid Vietnam (AAV) expanded its presence and programs to more than 21 provinces in the poorest areas of the country in the Northwest, Central Highlands and Mekong regions. AAV directly support millions of people and the organization has been recognized and is well known in the country for its contribution to the development of Vietnam.



OUR VISION

A world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys the right to a life with dignity.

OUR MISSION

To work in solidarity with people living in poverty to eradicate poverty and injustice.

OUR VALUES

- Solidarity with people living in poverty, the powerless, and the excluded
- Transparency and Accountability
- Independence and neutrality from any religious and party political affiliation.





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

1. ENHANCING OUR ADVOCACY EFFORTS

Referendum Law approved by National Assembly - a successful cooperation between AAV and Vietnam Law Association (VLA) on enhancing citizen participation in policy making process

On the 25th of November 2015, 86% of members of the National Assembly voted in favor of the Law on Referendum. The law has 52 articles and takes effect from July 1, 2016. For the first time in legislation history, the right to referendum is stipulated in the Constitution of Vietnam. The law came into being following AAV's project on "Enhancing citizens' participation in policy making process by supporting the Vietnam Lawyers Association in drafting the new law on referendum". During two years from 2013 to 2015, the project built up to its success through a wide range of research and advocacy initiatives including a comparative analysis of international referendum laws to draw lessons for Vietnam, a nation-wide survey to collect citizens' opinions on the law's main contents, a series of consultative workshops in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to get inputs for drafting law, and a validation workshop which gathered opinions on the draft Law of Referendum.

Commenting on the collaboration with AAV Professor Le Minh Tam, Vice President-cum-Secretary General of the Vietnam Lawyers Association expressed: "Referendum is a powerful tool for the people to directly express their will and exercise their power over issues of national importance. It is widely recognized as a true value of democracy in modern society. Trusted by the National Assembly to draft the law, VLA considers this work a great honor as well as a heavy duty. It would be considerably difficult for VLA to carry out this work without support from ActionAid Vietnam. We highly appreciated AAV's innovative human rights based approach that involves citizens, especially people living in poverty and the marginalized to ensure that their voices are heard in the process of developing laws directly affecting their lives".

Youth participation in revising Youth Law 2005

Building on the success registered in 2014, AAV used the 2015 National Youth Forum to amplify the voice of the youth on the Youth Law with a view to making the Youth Law more responsive to the changing context and emerging needs of youth. The National Youth Forum is jointly convened by AAV, National Committee on Youth of Vietnam (NCYV), Plan International Vietnam, and ChildFund. In 2015, the Forum which was hosted in November, focused on enforcement of laws and policies on Youth, and proposed recommendation including review of to the Youth Law of 2005. The forum serves a platform for 800 youth representatives from 13 LRPs across the country.

Vietnam is a youthful nation with a lot of promise and potential. The youth make up approximately 28.3 % of the country's population. The Government of Vietnam always highly values the role of the Youth in national defense and development. By law, Youth has the right "to express one's opinions, wishes and proposals to the relevant agencies and organizations on issues of concern; to contribute inputs on the formulation of policies and laws concerning the youth, and other policies and laws". However in reality they have not been able to do so. There has been limited opportunities youth engagement in the consultation and feedback processes on laws and regulations that directly affect them. This support is part of the broader commitment to mobilize and empower youth in the fight against poverty and injustice.

The establishment of Youth Act to End Poverty Network (YAEP)

In its effort to increasing the role of youth in national development and poverty eradication, AAV established the "Youth Act to End Poverty - (YAEP)" network. The network is a culmination of the gathering of 50 youth representatives from 12 LRPs, students from the National University of Construction and Engineering and AAV staff on 24th November 2015, where YAEP is a platform for youth to share their activities, plans and ambitions, and to exchange knowledge and culture. As of 2015, YAEP has 640 youths a number which is expected to reach 2000 by 2017, mainly from the poor and disadvantaged youths from all the areas where AAV works. Follow YAEP's fan page to get their up-to-date activities and join them in their ambitious plans:

<https://www.facebook.com/yaep.vietnam/>



6 areas of critical importance to the youth, e.g. education, employment, entertainment, information access, reproductive health, and youth participation in the policy making process were identified at the Forum.

9 key messages were presented to the leaders of NCYV, Ministry of Home Affairs, and related Government agencies to contribute to the revision of the Youth Law as well as the Vietnamese Youth Development Strategy to 2020

87%
OF WOMEN AND GIRLS
AGED 16 - 50,
WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE
SURVEY EXPERIENCED
SEXUAL HARASSMENT
AT LEAST ONCE

Government installed CCTV cameras in public buses in Ho Chi Minh City

The “**Safe Cities for Women and Girls: Can Dreams Come True**” report stimulated a lot of debate and discussions at the various levels of government. In response to the research findings of the report which was launched in Hanoi on, the National Traffic Safety Committee officially requested local authorities in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City to take proper actions to mitigate acts of sexual harassment against women and girls in public transport. Subsequently, the Management and Administration Centre of Public Transport installed cameras in public buses at the instruction of the Ho Chi Minh City Transport Department.

The research which analysed the various forms of violence faced by women and girls in public areas caught the attention from academia, media, NGOs and especially policy makers. The report established that women and girls are vulnerable to public violence at any place due to inadequate public services and “I don’t care” attitude of bystanders. Approximately 87% of women and girls (migrants and/or students) aged above 16 and below 50 who participated in the survey experienced sexual harassment at least once in their life in the streets or parks of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh.

This immediate policy change is a surprising impact given number of challenges in conducting advocacy activities in Vietnam. This achievement has become an inspiration for other upcoming advocacy activities.



Regional integration Process in the Context of National Development Strategy

AAV in collaboration with Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) brought together over 100 business leaders from various sectors, farmers’ representatives, media fraternity and government officials from key ministries to discuss opportunities and challenges from the FTAs. The dialogue was held under the theme “Policy Space for Industrial Development beyond FTAs”. The dialogues took place in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City in May and June 2015 respectively. The dialogues provided a perfect opportunity for government and the private sector to exchange policy views and ideas on how government can ensure development and sustainability of local enterprises while pursuing wider international economic integration. In the same vein, AAV collaborated with the Central Institute for Economic Management CIEM, a leading social research institute in Vietnam, convened a consultative workshop in Hanoi to present and discuss preliminary results of the national collaborative research on the impact of current & proposed FTAs and BITs on Vietnam’s long term development goals. The meeting which attracted 50 participants from Ministry of Investment and Planning, Ministry of Industry and Trade, business sector, civil society, media and farmers’ associations among others, provided a unique opportunity for intense expert knowledge sharing on the opportunities, challenges and threats of current and future FTAs and BITs on Vietnam’s Food processing and Electronics sector, and the likely impact of international trade commitments on Vietnam’s policy space. Both workshops were organized within the context of AAV’s National Development Strategy project.

In June 2015, AAV and Southern Representative Office (SRO) - Vietnam Union of Friendship Organization (VUFO) signed an MOU to co-organize a workshop on experience exchange among provincial union of friendship organizations (UFO) in the Southwest of Vietnam. The main objectives of the workshop was: (1) to create a forum for Southwest UFOs to exchange difficulties, favorable conditions in operating peace-friendship-solidarity activities, and INGO fund raising for supporting socially marginalized population, increasing socio-economic situation in Southwest provinces; (2) to absorb the experiences shared by Ho Chi Minh UFO, one of premier UFOs; and (3) to create an opportunity for Southwest UFOs to review the situation of Vietnamese public diplomacy, then making recommendations to VUFO, central government relating agencies for better support local public diplomacy activities. This MOU is the basis for a long-run partnership between AAV and VUFO.



MANY RESEARCHES, TACKLING A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES AND HELP RIGHT HOLDERS, PARTICULARLY WOMEN, BETTER PREPARED FOR A CHANGING CONTEXT

2. UPPING THE GAME ON RESEARCH CAPACITY

While the Government of Vietnam successfully lifted millions of people out of poverty, attained the Middle Income Country status in 2010, and became one of the world leading rice exporter, Vietnam is facing new emerging challenges, including making sure that growth momentum is maintained, but at the same time the development is sustainable. It is even more challenging when Vietnam engages much deeper into the world economy. The reality demand high quality researches at macro level to draw out practical, breakthrough recommendations to realize policy reform to address this changing context.

In Response to this growing need, AAV invested in research, and 2015 marked a successful year in this area. Many researches, tackling a wide range of issues that are pivotal to Vietnam and help right holders, particularly women, better prepared for a changing context were concluded. Some outstanding impacts to count include:

- Promoting a “policy space” for business leaders, CSO, and indeed farmers to provide their views and concerns to the national development strategy;
- Outlining both the pros and cons of Vietnam’s deeper integration into the international playing field e.g. Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) or EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (FTA), to ensure an effective response from both enterprises and people, and minimize the possible adverse impacts from such integration.
- Positioning small holder farmers as the main driver agriculture in Vietnam and provoking the Government to provide support and ensure sustainable agriculture for the country. Government support should be both long and short term to ensure the availability and use of public provision, investment prioritization, and support on technologies and training; and
- Fighting for just public service, funded by a healthy State budget, which results from a fair tax system free from tax avoidance and evasion...



3.INTENSIFYING OUR CAMPAIGNS

The Safe City Campaign: Government has taken actions to address violence against women

Based on the “Safe cities for women and girls: can dreams come true?” research AAV initiated the “Purple journey” campaign. Several activities took place in different forms e.g. dissemination workshop to share the findings media conference, street performance and the highlight was a Purple bicycle riding tour to call for actions from concerned agencies to stop violence against women and girls in public area.

The success of this campaign so far has inspired AAV and its partners in the effort to fight for the right to safe cities for women and girls. The journey definitely does not end here, but will go on to make our cities safer. Starting with public transportation, we aim to work with the Government to improve the situation of public toilets, lighting system among other services, to make the services more gender responsiveness, so that citizen can all be proud of their cities.

“
I act,
I care,
and
You?”
”

This message from the Safe Cities Campaign was eventually heard and actions have been taken!



Tax Power Campaign: Further empower local people in the fight for a fair tax system

In continuing with the successes registered on the Tax Power Campaign (TPC) in 2014, AAV worked closely with local right-holders in 2015, to help deepen their understanding about tax, empower them to demand for higher quality public services, and encourage them to monitor public projects in their localities.

With our strong LRP network throughout the country, many innovative activities took place in different provinces - ranging from training workshops to introduce effective tools in monitoring public spending to competition on tax understanding, and bike-ride road show to advocate for a fair tax system.

The local youths who actively participated in these events, felt inspired to engage in shaping country's development agenda.

At the national level, AAV collaborated with the media to foster the outreach of the TPC. The launch of the Policy Brief on “Cost of Tax Incentive and Tax Avoidance by FDIs to Vietnam” drew a lot of attention from the media, and raised the need for government authorities to consider reviewing the current tax policies to ensure that they are progressive and they benefit the poor.



4. EMPOWERING LOCAL PEOPLE IN LRPS

The year 2015 saw AAV's continued solidarity with the poor and the excluded in rural, remote, and difficult localities across Vietnam to ensure that their rights are protected and their lives are improved. We maintained the five program priorities in the various LRPs, on one hand developing building and strengthening capacities (i.e. Reflection Classes, sustainable livelihood for the poor and the marginalized) and on the other hand, working closely with the communities to address new challenges in an innovative way (i.e. working with corporations to introduce technology into natural disaster reduction work, providing training directly on the field etc. We also spend more effort to improve the institutional system, working with the grassroots communities to enhance transparency and accountability.

Successfully handed over three LRPs and took on new challenges

After 14 years of operation, in 2015, AAV handed over three Local Right Program (LRP) in Go Vap District, Ho Chi Minh city (LRP5), Cau Ngang District, Tra Vinh province (LRP6), and Vi Xuyen District, Ha Giang province (LRP7) for local authorities and communities. The hand-over demonstrated a huge progress made in the localities in the areas of AAV's intervention, and AAV can be proud of a strong legacy it left behind in these LRPs. High notes to mention, for example, in LRP5 were the **School Counseling Model** - a highly effective model to enhance school children's knowledge about their rights and soft skills and the **Reliable Address Model** to promote women's rights and reduce considerably the gender-based violence cases. In LRP6, it was the significant amount of training courses that helped improve the knowledge of the local farmers on cultivation and husbandry technique, as well as innovative livelihood models. Similarly, in LRP 7, ActionAid's efforts focused on sustainable livelihood models and education support for both children (Rights at School) and adults (illiteracy elimination).

Extended effort to address multidimensional poverty in urban area

In September 2015, AAV launched its 25th Supporting Program for Development in Tra Vinh City, with an ambitious aim of changing the lives of 1,000 poor urban households within 3 years from 2015-2018. In the first years, the program will focus on landlessness, immigrants, youth development, and climate change prevention.

In the longer terms, AAV will not only focus on the traditional issues of livelihood, domestic violence, or natural disasters, but also focus on improving awareness, skills, accessibility, and advanced technology application for local community. We hope to sustainably free poor people from poverty while improving the knowledge of government and program staff on management, socio-economy development, and strategic planning to fulfill the requirements of urban development in Tra Vinh City.



OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS IN HANDED-OVER LRPS

In LRP5:

- Helped reducing GBV by 75.6%
- Established revolving loans for nearly poor women

In LRP6:

- 16,597 poor people benefited from capacity building programs provided by AAV

In LRP 7:

- Reflect Model recognized and awarded by UNESCO as the best method for adult literacy
- 10,000 people benefited from sustainable agriculture livelihood model.
- 12,000 children benefited from education right programs.



"I FEEL MORE SECURED NOW. MY KID CAN GO TO SCHOOL IN COMFORT. I HOPE OTHER FAMILY CAN ACCESS TO THE SAME SUPPORT FROM ACTIONAID VIETNAM AS I DID DO THAT WE ALL CAN ENJOY A BETTER LIFE."

(CASE STUDY 1)

Silkworm rearing on the floor: new technique for old crop

Ms. Nguyen Thi My Hoa is a resident at An Binh village, Dan Phuong commune. For years, the only source of income for her family was the small coffee field they have. The family's financial status became more and more constrained as her child started to go to school.

Ms. Hoa tried different ways to improve the family income, and one of the solutions that seemingly proved possible was growing mulberry and raising silkworms. Nevertheless, the job appeared really challenging at first. Hoa followed the traditional way e.g. raising the silkworm on bamboo trays. This method required a lot of efforts, especially during the silkworms' feeding period, which lasted about 8 consecutive days. "I had to work around the clock to prepare mulberry leaves, feed the silkworms, and clean up, and so on. A slight delay in feeding leads to significant lost in cocoons quantity and quality. Besides, if the cleaning is not done every day, the worm will become infected and die. The cleaning requires moving silkworms from one tray to another, which weigh at least 30kg. This was not an easy job for me. As a result, I had no time to cook or take care of my family" - Hoa recalled. And if things went right, the silkworms could produce between 45-50kg of cocoons, and Hoa could earn an extra income of VND 2 million a month.

Later on, Hoa joined a training course, which was provided by AAV to introduce a new way to raise worms, such as 'silkworm rearing-on-floor technique' with other poor women in villages. This technique reduced a lot of hard work, as the worms are raised right on the floor, which made the feeding and cleaning work much easier as there was no need to move worms between trays. In addition, the worm ate more and produced more cocoon. However, this method required a separate "house" for the worm, which unfortunately Hoa could not afford.

This obstacle was fortunately solved thanks to the support from AAV. With a support of ten million VND, Hoa was able to build a separate place to apply the modern silkworm raising model. Now she does not have to apply a lot of effort on the daily cleaning work. The worms eat more, grow healthily, and as a result, they produce more cocoon. This season, Hoa gained an extra of 700,000 VND, and more importantly, she has much more time for her child.

Ms. Hoa is only one of 1000 who benefited from AAV's livelihood program which was implemented in Dan Phuong commune, Lam Ha district, Lam Dong province. "I feel more secured now. My kid can go to school in comfort. I hope other family can access to the same support from ActionAid Vietnam as I did do that we all can enjoy a better life."

(CASE STUDY 2)

It is never too old to learn or too late for change

Ms. Trieu Mui Liu is a 40-year-old woman from the Dao ethnic minority in the North of Vietnam. She migrated to Lam Ha district, Lam Dong province in the South a long time ago with her family. The nomadic life style of the Dao people made it very difficult for Liu to have a common life, including going to school and being a literate person. Liu did not even know how to spell her own name. When getting married and started to “settle down”, she had to “sign” all the papers with the local authorities by her finger print. In addition, Liu rarely went anywhere that is a bit far away as “I just could not read any street sign and always got lost” - Liu recalled.

Liu is not a unique case. In Tan Thanh Commune (Lam Ha district, Lam Dong province), there were many other Dao ethnic minorities who are illiterate as Liu. Illiteracy was considered as one of the biggest obstacle for the development of the area, let alone, the advancement of women. To help address the issue, since 2012, following the establishment of Lam Ha LRP, AAV has opened up a series of “Reflect” class (literacy class for adults) in cooperation with local authorities to help adult people able to read and write.

Liu attended the Reflect Class at Village 8, Tan Thanh commune together with more than 20 other “students”, who were middle-aged Dao female. Some of these students have never had a chance to attend school before, some did - but just for a very short period, long time ago and nearly forgotten everything. Now they all enjoyed their class with “teachers” who are officers from the Women’s Union, specifically trained by AAV for these Reflect classes.

“Teaching letters for adults is very difficult. It requires much more time, for example to help them hold the pen properly. In addition, students are very busy with their work and families which makes it difficult to dedicate full time to attending classes. Nevertheless, everyone tries their best. Sometimes the class ran late till over 10 pm as students want to learn more.” - shared Ms. Trieu Mui Chuong, one of the Reflect class teacher.

Liu is very excited with this new challenge. “Over three weeks of learning, now I can spell my own name and my children’s name. Knowing the letters, how to write, how to read is really fun. I don’t have to use my fingerprint to sign ever again”. Ms. Liu is also one of the best students in class with excellent hand-writing.

Liu is not afraid of travelling far away from her place any more. Now that she can read and write, she can join her husband in the trip to the local market and help him in selling their farm products. Or sometimes, their classmates formed a group to go to the market themselves. At their middle age, life has never been that confident and fun.

The Reflect Model created by AAV is considered as one of the most effective illiteracy elimination model, recognized by UNESCO.

LIU AND HER CLASSMATES IN A REFLECT CLASS IN LAM HA



A woman with dark hair, wearing a purple floral patterned shirt and dark purple pants, is sitting cross-legged on a light blue tiled floor. She is holding a white smartphone in her hands and looking at the screen. In the background, there is a large glass door with a metal frame. A red text box is overlaid on the top left of the image.

Ms. Le Thi Hoa, a resident of Chau Khanh Commune, Long Phu District, the Vice Chair of her village's Community Disaster Management Board shared: "Thanks to the project, us villagers now get daily information directly from district departments, which helps us to protect our livelihood and reduce negative impacts of disaster. The MDG tool is very essential to us now."

**MS. LE THI HOA CAN NOW EASILY
AND QUICKLY ACCESS THE INFORMATION SHE NEEDS.**

(CASE STUDY 3)

Bringing technology to community to reduce disaster

Since 2009, AAV became an active member of the Joint Network Advocacy Initiative (JANI) founded in 2009 under a project initiated by the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) towards disaster prevention and relief policy change in Vietnam. Moreover, AAV applies Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) as a tool for developing the capacity of vulnerable community groups to develop resilience and respond to disaster and climate change impacts (PP4).

However, in the context of the current climate change and economic crisis, focusing on disaster risk reduction alone cannot help local communities secure their livelihoods. With regular application of Reflection-Action, the organization realized that in order to improve resilience for community, it is crucial to help communities have access to necessary information on climate, weather, nature disasters, and market.

To bring this innovation into practice, AAV has established partnership with Microsoft Corporation to apply Microsoft Data Gathering Tool (MDG) in AAV DRR work through Microsoft funded project entitled "Connecting people to save lives and improve disaster risk reduction in the Mekong Delta". The project had been implemented for a two - year period, from 2014 to 2015. The project is aimed at enabling local communities to regularly access essential information relating to their livelihood. As of 2015, 27,702 people in Long Phu District were able to get necessary information from district departments via MDG. Such information would also be shared through village meetings, Notice Boards or portable loud speakers supported by the project.

In the "project closing and sharing workshop" organized in Soc Trang province on 29th Jan, 2016, representatives from the Central Red Cross Union and 9 provinces in the Mekong Delta acknowledged AAV's innovation in applying technology to DRR work and creating a model for them to study and apply, as Vietnam now has 120 million mobile users, of which 35 million uses 3G.

(CASE STUDY 4)

Providing Training right on field

Instead of organizing in-door trainings, Supporting Program for Development (SPD) 13 conducted trainings in the field to help visualize the lessons and enable participants to learn to apply agricultural techniques learnt in preventing husbandry diseases and pestilent insects practically. During the trainings, participants could gather in the field and sometimes breeding facilities where trainers explained and illustrated using practical examples on how plants and livestock get affected by various diseases and how to cure/treat and prevent the diseases. Specific focus was on rice, animal husbandry and poultry. While the traditional in-class trainings provided theoretical insights, this innovative training method provided practical knowledge and offered a chance for participants to observe and practice the skills immediately. 484 men and 316 women benefited from the trainings which were aimed at mitigating the diseases and improving yield. This goes a long way in improving livelihoods and bailing households out of poverty.



CULTIVATING SKILL
TRAINING



FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, AN EVALUATION ENTIRELY CARRIED OUT BY THE LOCAL RESIDENTS ON THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

(CASE STUDY 5)

Local people participated in public services evaluation

For the first time ever, an evaluation entirely carried out by the local residents on the quality of public services provided by a randomly selected local primary school and a health station took place in Trung Chanh commune and Tan Quoi Trung Commune, Vinh Long province respectively.

The evaluation was a result of intensive training courses provided by AAV to local communities on effective tools to help monitor public service, e.g. ELBAG (Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability in Governance) and CSC (Community Score Card), in partnership with the local authorities.

Eight community groups were formed in four villages to participate in the evaluation of the Le Van Cu primary school, where villagers sent their kids for studying. The evaluation contents were designed based on the basic criteria and practical needs of a primary school, namely working time, working attitude, hygiene and sanitation, infrastructure facilities and study results. The outcome of the evaluation was used as a basis for a dialogue between the service users (community people) and provider (school authorities). The dialogue also drew participation from Commune People's Committee leaders who shared their satisfaction based on several criteria including the school's working time and teaching attitude and results of the students. At the same time, parents also expressed their concerns on other issues such as hygiene, sanitation and infrastructure facilities. At the end, an action plan was designed to follow up the agreed activities with a strong commitment from the school Head Master, with much pleasure from the parents.

Similarly, an evaluation of a health center in Tan Quoi Trung commune, prompted a dialogue with the Head of the health center, where a list of recommendation on how to improve the quality of the service were presented by the local people's representative and well received by the Head of Health station. He also promised to include all these recommendations into the station's action plan.

Speaking about these events, Ms. Le Thi Lien from Tan Dong village, Tan Quoi Trung commune said: *"This is the first time ever I witness and engage in an evaluation that is entirely done by us, the local villagers. Thanks to the training from ActionAid, we know how to gather evidence to back up our recommendations to the school and the health station. I'm very happy that our feedback on both cases was taken note of by the authorities... My kids now can have more fun at school and whenever we feel sick, the health station can serve us better."*

(CASE STUDY 6)

Civil Society Empowering Rural Communities

AAV with co-funding from the European Commission partnered with the People's Aid Coordinating Committee PACCOM and the Centre for Sustainable Development in Mountainous Areas (CSDM) in the project "Civil Society Empowering Rural Communities" in Thong Nong District, Cao Bang Province and Quan Ba District, Ha Giang Province. The project commenced in January 2013.

The specific objective is to increase the sustainable participation and influence of communities and civil society organizations in policy making for social and economic development. This focuses on 33 communities in two of the poorest districts in Vietnam with high ethnic minority population. The two districts are at the bottom of the 62 poorest localities in Vietnam, listed as priority areas for donor funding.

Under this project, Community Score Cards (CSC) were introduced to help communities and service providers make an assessment on the quality of service provision. An Action Plan for improving public services was developed on the basis of the assessment. In 2015, 10 CSC trainings and 6 assessments were conducted in project areas. From the interface meetings, the facility of 2 centers and 4 schools in Quan Ba and Thong Nong were improved with support from AAV, government, and communities.

CSC has also been designed as the tool for Gender Responsive Public Services Research conducted in September 2015. The same tool will also be employed in the anti-corruption research that is scheduled for February and March 2016.



5. CAPACITY BUILDING

AAV has been known for its quality team and its commitment to building staff capacity. Our Country Strategy Paper V (2012-2017) has emphasized on the necessity to take the team to a new level of expertise, consolidation and commitment by applying Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to development, by addressing new scenarios of poverty, especially with impacts of climate change, urban poverty, as well as possible contributions to the wider ActionAid federation and civil society within the region and internationally. Hence, AAV has been creating a plenty of opportunities for staff to enhance their knowledge and necessary skills and attributes for accomplishing our missions.

In reinforcing the learning practice and sharing of all policies in staff inductions, a series of Friday Surprise Meetings were held on a monthly basis as informal capacity building sessions for staff. Friday Surprise Meetings focused on socio-economic topics that are of great interest and concerns to staff, such as newly-passed law (the Referendum Law, Labor Law etc.). The knowledge and information shared at these meetings helped develop a more comprehensive and solid background for AAV staff, not only provide new angles and thinking to the development work that they are doing every day with right holders in the communities, but also support them in the advocacy efforts to bring about policy changes. These two prongs nicely complement each other to make their work more effective and the changes can be more suitable. As a fruitful outcome, the Friday Surprise Meetings have continuously received positive responses and active participation of all AAV's staff, in addition to frequently job-related training courses.

Throughout the year, highly-concerned topics, e.g. team collaboration using online services or international education platform, as well as Introduction to National Development Strategies or New Child Protection policy, have been brought to this alternative platform for learning and knowledge sharing among AAV staff under the coordination of SEACoMHub.



6. BECOMING AN AFFILIATE MEMBER

In June 2015, at the General Assembly of ActionAid International, AAV became the 27th member of ActionAid International Federation and 2nd associate member in South East Asia with 100% votes in favor. This was an enormous recognition by the Federation of the achievement and maturity of the organization, which opened up both opportunities and new challenges.

FINANCIAL REPORT

AUDITORS' REPORT

Finance support: in 2015, finance team had support to finalize components of new accounting software for partner, which is integrated with M&E online system. In the B&P 2016-2017 process, finance had designed template for budget detail that helps the users develop their budget easier and time saving. With this support, AAV staff and partners will save their time in paper works and be more focused on operating, implementing and fundraising activities. This is foreseen to get the better spending in the coming years.



Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial statements of the Representative Office in Vietnam of ActionAid International for the year ended 31 December 2015 have been prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the accounting policies as described in Note 2 to the financial statements.

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Use

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 2 to the financial statements, which describe the basis of accounting and the accounting policies adopted by the Office. The financial statements are prepared for the information of and use by the Donors and management of the Office. As a result, the financial statements may not be suitable for another purpose. Our audit report is prepared for the information of and use by the Donors and management of the Office and should not be delivered to or used by any other parties.

Other Matter

We draw attention to the fact that we have not audited the Appendix 1 – Revolving loans, as set out on page 23 and, accordingly, we do not express an opinion on this Appendix.

KPMG Limited

Vietnam

Audit Report No.: 16-02-038



Dang Xuan Lam

Practising Auditor Registration

Certificate No.: 0861-2013-007-1

Partner Audit Services

Hanoi, 30 AUG 2016

Representative Office in Vietnam of ActionAid International
Balance sheet as at 31 December 2015

	Note	31/12/2015 GBP'000	31/12/2014 GBP'000
ASSETS			
Current assets		1,179	2,034
Cash	3	475	703
Amount due from other ActionAid members	4	498	1,159
Amount due from Partners	5	85	101
Prepayments		37	22
Deposits		16	23
Prepayments to suppliers		-	2
Other receivables		67	24
Advances to employees		1	-
Non-current assets		-	-
Tangible fixed assets	6	-	-
Cost		38	38
Accumulated depreciation		(38)	(38)
TOTAL ASSETS		1,179	2,034
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE			
Liabilities		170	111
Accrual of Gratuity		64	51
Taxes payables to State Treasury		5	2
Accrued expenses		84	52
Other payables		17	6
Fund balance		1,009	1,923
Accumulated surplus		1,009	1,923
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE		1,179	2,034

Prepared by:


29.8.2016
Tran Lan Huong
Head of Finance and Administration

Approved by:

Hoàng Thị Phương Thảo
Country Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

Representative Office in Vietnam of ActionAid International
Statement of income and expenditure for the year ended 31 December 2015

	Note	2015 GBP'000	2014 GBP'000 Reclassified
Income	7		
Supporter Marketing - Regular Giving		1,327	1,590
Supporter Marketing - Other		38	-
High Value		14	129
Institutional		198	614
Other income		6	8
		1,583	2,341
Net transfer (out to)/in from ActionAid International	8	(39)	121
Total income		1,544	2,462
Expenditure	9, 10		
Program/Project cost		1,848	1,635
Fundraising cost		211	197
Governance cost		57	17
Support cost		342	185
Total expenditure		2,458	2,034
(Deficit)/surplus of income over expenditure		(914)	428

Prepared by:


29.8.2016
Tran Lan Huong
Head of Finance and Administration

Approved by:


Hoàng Thị Phương Thảo
Country Director

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements

FUND RAISING REPORT

In 2015, in the context of instability of global financial situation and significant decrease in official development assistance for Vietnam, AAV continued its strategic investment in fundraising and has successfully strengthened and expanded partnerships with institutional donors, corporate and individual supporters who share the common cause of ending poverty and injustice.

■ Funding from the IrishAid continued, with annual allocation of EUR 169,600 for Women Rights Programme in three LRPs. Beside strategic institutional donors such as European Union, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, IrishAid, Bread for the world, a new donor was identified.

■ A highlight of the year is the new partnership with Byggmax, Sweden Corporation with strong market position in the building materials trade in the Nordic region. A three year project "ByggMax - ActionAid Partnership village" kicked off with total funding of SEK1, 250,000 (equivalent to EUR 131,745) to ensure quality education for 403 poor and disadvantaged children in Kien Giang province. The project is a new fundraising initiative which connects a poor community in Vietnam with a corporate in Europe in a transformative partnership and solidarity model.

■ In our continuous effort to mobilize diversified funding, AAV has given significant priority to engage corporate sector not only in term of financial support, but also in expertise contribution to support the poor and marginalized community. Partnership with Honeywell was established to build Multi-media Learning Center in three schools in Dak Lak province and Ho Chi Minh City. The project has funding of USD 18,500 (EUR 16,514) and benefits 1,800 children.

■ Local Supporter Development Programme has been progressive with completion of legal registration process to raise fund in the country. Local fundraising system has been well established with fundraising team, prospect database, fundraising products, and marketing materials for the programme to bear fruits. In the long term, success in raising funds in Vietnam will significantly contribute to AAV's diversified and sustainable funding income, enable self-fund of programmes as well as contribute to enhancing southern support to the formulation and development of the AAI Federation.

■ Child Sponsorship remains AAV's core funding mechanism contributing about 80% of AAV's annual income. By end of the year, our supporter base was reported with 9,291 financial supporters coming from UK, Italy, Spain, Ireland, Greece, and Sweden.





FORWARD LOOK

MOVING INTO A NEW PHASE AS A LOCAL ORGANISATION

In 2016, AAV plans the following key areas of focus and deliverables:

Program Focus:

■ Forest Governance

To support poor and ethnic minority people to Participation in improvement of forest governance and poverty alleviation in Vietnam, focusing on the forest based livelihood models (tree plantation for carbon exchange and mangrove plantation for eco-tourism)

■ Land and Agriculture

To promote the CRSA models (Climate Resilience Sustainable Agriculture), peer to peer support group including grounded work on gender sensitive value chains

- To increase women's access to and control over land; governments respect and facilitate "free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC)" for all communities; to ensure agriculture and livelihoods programmes interrogate tenure regimes for sustainability and rights realization

■ Democratic Governance

To advance the political influence of people living in poverty to hold governments and corporates accountable

■ Education

- To apply PRS to deepen people's engagement with local schools and their understanding of the right to education, producing citizens' reports that channel grassroots voices into national education processes.
- To deepen our work on violence against girls in schools, learning from our extensive practice and linking this to the Safe Cities campaign.
- To support education campaigns to highlight and address issues of discrimination with regard to all excluded groups, providing positive alternatives of quality inclusive and equity-focused education.
- To enhance the participation of children in decision-making process at schools, contributing to improve local education quality.

■ Humanitarian and Resilience

- To cooperate with local partners in disaster prone contexts to build preparedness and response capacity
- To build capacity for women to lead our emergency response and embed this in our work.
- To conducted survey and research on climate change impact.

■ Women's Rights

- To conduct research and advocacy on GRPS, drawing on national programmes in our political and legal demands
- To highlight safe cities campaign and unpaid care work

Policy and campaign focus

■ Regional integration process

As the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region advances its regional integration agenda through the recently launched Free Trade Area (FTA), Vietnam should be alive to the opportunities and threats of integrating into the regional and global economy. The net benefits accruing to Vietnam needs further interrogation. AAV's policy advocacy efforts in the coming year will be targeted at strengthening economic cooperation and ensuring that the country benefits from this regional integration process.

■ Agricultural land use for ethnic minority groups

Ethnic Minorities remain a vulnerable group whose needs are seldom recognised let alone addressed. Unless the concerns of ethnic minorities are addressed at policy level, the challenges they face today will persist for more generations to come. The coming years starting with 2016 will see AAV blending humanitarian assistance to these groups, working with them to address their needs and developing alternatives to building scientific evident for policy advocacy with the responsible departments of government starting with the Ministry of Agriculture to ensure that they have access to land.

■ Safe City Campaign: joint effort towards safety for women and girls in public areas and services

The brand new National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016 - 2020 approved by Prime Minister in October 2015 presents both opportunities for AAV. Investment in knowledge generation, empowering women, influencing behavior of men and women and policy advocacy remains a priority for 2016.

Resource Mobilization Focus

In 2016, AAV will continue giving a high level of priority to diversifying our funding resources with specific focus on:

- Successfully launching the Local Supporter Development programme and developing a strategic base of regular supporters from both outside and inside the country;
- Establish an efficient system for the supporter development programme with a focus on building a competent fundraising team and prospect database;
- Develop and maintain transformative channels for acquisition of local supporters for sustainable funding income;
- Enhance quality of child sponsorship and supporter care to maximize supporters' satisfaction and sustain supporter base;
- Strengthening and expanding partnership with high value donors and corporates;
- Set up database system for different types of high value donors and corporates;
- Based on donor scoping results we will provide technical advices to program and policy team for development of fundable proposals;
- Establish, maintain and coordinate strong relations with high value donors and corporates;
- Seeking new institutional donors and maintaining strategic relationship with the current donors;
- Undertake regular donor scoping for updated new calls for proposals and tenders;
- Coordinate with different stakeholders and partners to develop concept notes/ proposals and tenders, submit proposals and follow up with contract management;
- Develop partnership and relationship with strategic donors.

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