

2009 KOICA NGO Project for housing & Sanitation in My Tho.

Building Homes, Changing Lives





Habitat for
Humanity
Vietnam

Project Introduction

Intro

For many families not having a stable or decent place to leave means also not having a venue for potential entrepreneurial ventures to develop. All across Vietnam, families and individuals are notoriously resourceful for turning their living-rooms into convenience stores, barber shops, juice bars, tailor shops, restaurants and storage for crops or tools.



Tien Giang Province



My Tho City

Southern Mekong Delta Province of Tien Giang–Vietnam
75 km South Ho Chi Minh City, is the capital of the Southern Mekong Delta Province of Tien Giang. It extends through an area of about 8,154 km² and has a population of about 204,142.

New home, New hope.

In the Southern Mekong Delta province of Tien Giang HFHV has been working to improve the quality of housing and sanitation for over 2000 households to date, thanks to a successful partnership with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). This has been achieved by providing micro-finance supported home construction and/or renovations often with a water and sanitation component. Furthermore HFHV is planning expansion of KOICA-supported poverty reduction programs to other areas of need in the province as well as more natural disaster-prone ones.





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Project Accomplishment



Background

According to the 2009 Vietnam Population Census of a population of 1,604,165 in Tien Giang province there are 353,854 homes of which 10,494 are permanent. For the poor families who do choose to invest in non-sustainable home improvements, they remain trapped in a cycle of continuous investment for temporary repairs or renovations. Hence sensible, economically sound and sustainable home repairs are an essential budgetary tool for a family's progress towards financial sustainability.

Income rates in Tien Giang province are rather average, however poverty rates are still high at 14.7%¹. For the poor in Tien Giang Province, traditional houses are built on raw soil with no proper flooring. Walls and roofs are made from purchased palm leaves and thatch, untreated wood or and grasses. These houses only last 2–4 years in the tropical equatorial climate and are very susceptible to flooding and other environmental conditions. The building materials also present a high risk for fire hazards during the dry season. These homes quickly deteriorate and require ongoing capital and human resource investments which could quickly deplete a family's already precarious resources.

1. Vietnam statistical office 2007





Building Opportunities

Given the countries infrastructural problems and many people's limited income, home-based businesses and activities abound. Hence, by providing decent housing, Habitat for Humanity and KOICA indirectly contribute to the impetus for vocational and/or entrepreneurial activities. Following completion of needed home repairs, or upon entering a newly built home, many of our partners have been able to initiate income-generating activities which have in turn enabled them to repay their micro-finance loans successfully.



Building Safer Environments

- Inadequate living conditions often equal unsafe living conditions. In addition to the series of potential hazards which sub-standard homes often hide, children who do not have a safe and comfortable home will spend more time outside thus also become prey to environmental hazards. One such hazard is child drowning, especially rampant in communities which live on, or near, river streams. According to the United Nations, drowning is one of the leading causes of death among children above the age of one and according to the Vietnamese Minister of Health child-drowning claims 10 victims a day in Vietnam. Habitat for Humanity strives, through its successful collaboration with KOICA, to create adequate, safe and welcoming living solutions thus in turn contribute to the families' safety and stability. Vietnam has shown tremendous progress in fulfilling its obligations with regards to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The country is on track with all key MDG target indicators except for MDG number 6 (HIV/AIDS) and MDG 7 (Access to clean water and adequate sanitation). Over 38% of the rural population lacks access to clean water while over 50% lacks adequate sanitation. Improved access to clean water and adequate sanitation practices and facilities are essential factors in achieving healthy lifestyles. Thanks to KOICA' support, Habitat for Humanity Vietnam has been able to effectively address water and sanitation needs throughout Tien Giang province.



Home-Partner Story 1. Thanh Thuy's Family

The family had previously received a HFHV-KOICA sponsored micro-finance loan in 2007. Thanks to the loan, and the technical support received, the family was able to acquire a toilet. Upon successfully fulfilling all their loan related obligations, they applied for a new HFHV-KOICA sponsored housing loan in May 2009 to build a new floor. Before receiving the first loan for the toilet, the family members had been using a neighbourhood toilet and had been bathing in a temporary, unsafe, structure.



Home-Partner Story 2. Quyen's Family

Ms. Quyen lives in My Tho City's Ward 3 with her husband, her daughter Vy (7 years old) and her son Nghia (2 years old). She works as a manicurist while her husband is a labourer in a factory. Because of the nature of their work and the lack of resources to pay for child-care they, sometimes, have no choice but to leave the children home alone. Thanks to a KOICA sponsored loan from Habitat for Humanity, the family was able to build a new tile floor with heightened foundations. The parents are now free from worrying about their children safety and the whole family reported much improved health and overall sense of well-being. Thanks to a KOICA sponsored loan from Habitat for Humanity, the family was able to build a new tile floor with heightened foundations. They also received technical support from HFHV construction supervisors and attended training on credit, financial management and low cost construction techniques. The family has begun upgrading the front yard.

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Building Our Future

According to the US based Center for Housing Policy : “Well-constructed, maintained and managed affordable housing can help families address or escape housing-related health hazards (e.g., lead poisoning and asthma) that adversely impact learning”. Due to Viet Nam’s geography and environmental factors, the health hazards related to poor housing, especially in rural areas, can include drowning due to proximity to dangerous waterways and water born illnesses due to inadequate water and sanitation practices. Moreover, one needs not conduct extensive research to realize the extent to which constant flooding, dampness and lack of sufficient lighting can negatively impact a child’s study routine. Habitat’s home partners often report improvements in their children’s academic performance following a new home—build or housing improvements and/or renovations.

Thanks to KOICA’s generous contribution, Habitat for Humanity Vietnam can provide the children of Tien Giang province with adequate environments to focus on their academics.





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Project Effects



Poverty Reduction programs

1. Home building and/or renovations
2. Water and Sanitation interventions
3. Micro-finance loans (to support all home building, renovations and water and sanitation solutions)
4. Capacity building with home partners and government partners
5. Training in, and support with:
 - Personal financial management
 - Low cost and efficient building techniques
 - Water and Sanitation awareness



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- KOICA' supported HFHV Poverty Reduction programs in Tien Giang Province indirectly contribute to :

1. Increased business and income generating opportunities
2. Safer environments
3. Improved water and sanitation practices and facilities
4. Overall healthier environments

More conducive environments for children to study and adults to pursue vocational aspirations



Home-Partner Story 3. Diem's Family

As an HFHV home partner, Ms Diem Thuy(36) received a KOICA sponsored micro-loan of 3,000,000 VND. She also received technical support from HFHV construction supervisors and attended training on credit, financial management and low cost construction techniques. Thanks to the loan and an additional 3,000,000 VND of combined savings and matching contribution by relatives, Ms. Diem Thuy's family was finally able to afford a toilet, a septic tank and a wash room.

Ms. Diem Thuy now feels that she's free from constantly worrying about the health and safety of her daughters and aging mother. She is happy her mother can now live with dignity and access all necessary facilities. She is also relieved to know that her daughters Thuy Vy(23) and Quang Vy(10) can now focus on more productive daily activities rather than constantly worry about safety when taking care of basic needs.



Home-Partner Story 4. Quang's Family

Mr. Quang is 45 years old. He lives in My Tho City's Ward 10 with his wife Ha (40), their daughter Thuy (18), their son Phu (15) and their son Phat (13). Mr. Quang works as a motorbike-taxi driver so his income is not only meagre, but also unstable. The local chapter of the Red Cross expressed some concerns for the family's living conditions and informed Mr. Quang of HFHV programs. The family applied, and was approved, for an HFHV-KOICA sponsored housing renovation micro-loan of 10,000,000 VND. The family was also able to mobilize an additional 15,000,000 VND as a combination of matching contributions from their relatives and their own savings. Ever since the housing renovations were completed, the children have been better able to focus on their academics as they now have a proper environment to study and do their homework. The parents are much less worried for their children's wellbeing and more confident about their academic future. They also feel that the earnings from all their hard-work are no longer sustaining an endless succession of minor repairs which would prove much more costly in the long run.



Photo
Essay

More than a house

Thanks to a very successful partnership between Habitat for Humanity and the Korea International Cooperation Agency, much progress has been made to date and much more is clearly in sight in our mutual goal to improve the lives of Vietnamese families and individuals. Together we aim to assist 6,500 households by the year 2014 and expand our project to other areas of need and to more flood-prone areas in Tien Giang province. Habitat for Humanity Vietnam also aims to increase its revolving fund to 1,000,000 USD in order to support the expansion plans throughout Tien Giang province and further contribute to a successful partnership with KOICA. Habitat for Humanity Vietnam and KOICA do not only build homes. Together Habitat for Humanity Vietnam and KOICA build future.

“A world where everyone has a decent place to live”

