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ANNUAL REPORT

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MESSAGE

from the President

2020 was a remarkably difficult year, not only for the world but also for Vietnam and REACH.

REACH, however, has weathered the circumstances.

Thanks to the consistent and timely support from donors, businesses, partners, alumni, students, and dedicated staff, we were able to carry on our mission to stay alongside the Vietnamese disadvantaged youth and help them change for the better.

We have welcomed the 18,223rd student to our training program, besides rolling out a new program with the collaboration between REACH and businesses in Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Duong and Hanoi. We have initiated several programs for the most vulnerable groups such as Bartending and Hair Dressing courses for the Deaf, Telesales, Massage, Dance and English Communication classes for the Blind.

Aside from that, REACH continued to exploit potential business ideas in order to achieve the sustainable goal. The social enterprise Viewzz made significant steps last year with 100 staff recruited and planned for an expansion into Da Nang in 2021.

All these achievements are the results of the wonderful contribution from members of the REACH family, donors, partners, businesses, alumni, students, and volunteers. I sincerely appreciate their support.

In 2021, REACH will continue to seek and try out new programs. We will enhance the strategic partnership with other organisations and businesses to come up with novel solutions for new issues that Vietnamese youth might face.

I believe that after a year of pandemic, 2021 will be even more challenging, requiring truly sustainable development solutions for our organisation as well as our community. Please stay by our side to create a brighter future for Vietnamese youth!

President



Phạm Thị Thanh Tâm

AN OVERVIEW

TOTAL
18.223 

students were trained
(As of December 2020)

1.088 **STUDENTS**
were trained in 2020



56% Males



43.6% Females



0,4% Others

REACH
in 2020



NEW BUSINESSES

Bring the total number
of business partners
to **1500** enterprises.

63 CLASSES WERE LAUNCHED

- 2D graphic design
- 3D Modelling
- Web Coding
- Video editing
- Food & Beverage
- Cooking
- House-keeping
- Hairdressing
- Beauty Therapy
- Sales & Marketing
- Special programs for the Blind and Deaf: *Bartending, Massage and Acupressure, Telesales, and Hairdressing.*

6 GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

Hanoi, Hai Duong, Hue, Hoi An, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City.

EMPLOYMENT

76% of students reported improvement in quality of life.

74% of students got a job after graduation.

73% of students reported higher income after the training at REACH.

RECRUITMENT

The community recruitment campaigns have approached nearly **16.000** people from more than 20 provinces all over the country.

INTERVIEWS AND HOME VISITS

Interviewed **1188** students
Direct and virtual interviews & home visits

OPENING CEREMONY SKILLS TRAINING

- Life skills
- English skills
- IT skills
- Job interview skills
- Other soft skills



GRADUATION CEREMONY JOB PLACEMENT

74% of students got a job after graduation



VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- 2D graphic design
- 3D Modelling
- Web Coding
- Video editing
- Food & Beverage
- Cooking
- House-keeping
- Hairdressing
- Beauty Therapy
- Sales & Marketing
- Special programs for the Blind and Deaf:
Bartending, Massage and Acupressure,
Telesales, and Hairdressing.



In 2020, not only Vietnam but also our entire world heavily suffered from the COVID pandemic. REACH was stirred by the 3 outbreaks in Hanoi, Da Nang, and Hai Duong.

More than that, when the year came towards the end, Hoi An and Hue had to endure the two severe floods. Under such impacts, REACH has transformed itself, renewed its programs and activities to adapt to the market's changes.



01

Applying technologies into REACH Programs

To practice the compulsory nationwide social distancing and actively ensure safety for both students and teachers/staff, REACH has shifted to online learning since April. A variety of activities from training, ceremonies, recruitment to even home visits were conducted via digital platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Zalo, Messenger, and Skype.

Additionally, REACH has quickly implemented long-term online training programs by producing pre-recorded videos and preparing special training materials for students.



02

Developing new training models

One of the REACH's critical success factors is being a market-oriented training model.

The collaboration between REACH and businesses which was incubated for a long time has been further promoted in 2020.

This is an innovative and practical approach that combines both sides' advantages. Businesses often provide training venue, facilities, certain training contents and internship opportunities for students while REACH's role is to help disadvantaged youths to access the program, ensure the program quality & quantity, provide extra soft skills training and support job placements after graduation.

In September 2020, REACH worked with BELGO to implement a new Food & Beverage training course in Ho Chi Minh City.

In December 2020, REACH opened a Food & Beverage training course in Au Co restaurant, Hai Duong.



03

Supporting students and alumni affected by COVID and Central Vietnam flood

In order to help REACH's students and alumni who were affected by the pandemic and the flood, REACH has implemented the following activities:

- Training courses on running an online business: attracted 100 participants.
- The financial investment for students and alumni to develop suitable business models during the COVID: from 40 proposals, REACH picked out and supported 4 alumni to raise chickens in Da Nang.
- Fundraise for victims of the Central Vietnam flood: 176 students and alumni received financial emergency support.



04

Expanding STEP UP project: Support both the blind and the deaf

The 3rd phase of the STEP UP project was kicked off in March 2020, aiming at not only Blind people but also the Deaf. The project continues to provide life skills training, English, physical exercises, movement orientation training, and vocation courses. Besides Hanoi, the project has expanded into Hai Duong, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City.

The goal is to improve people's confidence and provide the necessary skills so that Blind and Deaf

people can integrate well into the community with better access to safe and stable job opportunities.

Last year, the program has trained 96 students in Bartending and Hairdressing for the Deaf; Massage, Telesales, Dancing, IT and English for the Blind.

75% of Telesales students (09 out of 12) have landed a job.

85% of Bartending students (12 out of 14) have been employed.

STUDENTS' *stories*

Follow my dream

Hà Việt Tính is one of the outstanding students of REACH. He has completed the Sales and Marketing course in December 2018. Now he is continuing to follow his dream at RMIT University, a reputable international school that even more privileged people could not even imagine.



Tinh's childhood was floating from the North to the South with his parents, trying to find a stable livelihood. Tinh and his sister loved to learn but they both had to drop out early to work due to their difficult circumstances. Tinh tried out many jobs to help his family. First, he worked on a chicken farm. It was a tough job with a very modest income. Therefore, Tinh changed to sewing. But even with that, *"I got a very low salary. So, I knew I must find a better and more stable path to help my mom and my sister"* – Tinh contemplated.

In 2018, Tinh was referred by his friends to REACH in Hanoi – a non-profit organisation offering vocational training and job placements for disadvantaged youths. With his current health condition, REACH advised him to follow the Sales and Marketing course.

Despite his circumstance, Tinh always aspire to move forward by continuous learning, especially learning English. Not being able to take formal English classes, he took the bus to Hoan Kiem lake every weekend to meet and talk to foreign tourists. Just like that, his English has improved week by week. He finished his training at REACH with excellent results and was introduced to work for Pepsi.

Tinh still remembers when he first started. *"Every day I came to mini marts, games parlours and gyms to introduce new products. The company set a target of 3000 crates sold per month. It was a huge number for me at that time and I felt a lot of pressure"*. But after doing his new job and meeting many people for a while, Tinh has become much more confident and proactive. He reached an income of more than 10 million dong per month. The sudden COVID-19 outbreak affected his work substantially, but Tinh is always positive. *"I am still lucky to have a job. My only concern is that I don't work hard enough."*

Together with the joy of having a proper job, Tinh has become the REACH alumnus who won RMIT's full scholarship that is worth more than 1,5 billion dong. This scholarship was established as a result of the collaboration between RMIT and REACH. Tinh's profile immediately caught the jury's attention. His inspiring story and especially his ambition touched people's hearts and helped him to get this prestigious award. With strong determination, he has mastered his academic English in 3 months to meet the school's requirement. *"This is an international university with a lot of achievements and innovative facilities. I am very happy to be able to pursue my dream here."* – Tinh said.

As a member of the REACH alumni network, Tinh often supports REACH in recruitment campaigns. He also returns to REACH to share what he has learnt with other students.

Tinh is a shining model of overcoming poverty to achieve his dream, changing the lives of the people around him and inspiring many other young people.



Resilience in the

FACE OF ADVERSITY

“People who consistently face difficult and challenging situations or conditions are often strengthened by those experiences. The story of Ân, a visually impaired student, is an example of a person building such resilience in the face of adversity.”

Ân was born with normal vision, and had aspirations for the future that were supported by her parents. She aspired to become a teacher to help other children like herself to escape from poverty through education.

Unfortunately, her dream never came true.

One day Ân was diagnosed having macular degeneration, an eye disease. Due to the eye disease her vision became blurred very rapidly. Unfortunately, the disease could not be treated and Ân gradually lost her vision completely.

“I had to accept that I would become a blind one day in the future,” Ân remembered from when she was first diagnosed.

This life impacting event changed her pathway forever.

Ân had to give up her dream of becoming a teacher. In Viet Nam, persons with a disability like Ân always struggle to fully engage in economic or social activities. Ân was somewhat more fortunate than many visually impaired people because she has a higher education qualification that allowed her to get a tutoring job at home.

After getting married and having three kids, Ân's was technically blind. As a result, she had to terminate her tutoring job making her family life more difficult.

In March 2020, the Step Up project, an initiative of REACH in partnership with the Hanoi Association of Blind, was launched. The project aims to improve visually impaired people's wellbeing through vocational training and job placement, as well as providing various soft skills.

As a member of the Hanoi Association of Blind, Ân was introduced to the telesales course offered by REACH.

“I always wished to have a job to support my husband and family so when the training and job placement opportunity came I immediately took it up, without any hesitation.”, Ân said.

Along with 10 other young visually impaired people from Hanoi, Ân made up the first vocational course of the Step Up project in 2020.

For Ân and her classmates, just to cross Hanoi's chaotic and crowded streets to come to the class every day was a real challenge. However, Ân was never absent or missed any lessons.



After many years of being self-isolated, Ân, for the first time, found herself re-connected with community. She enjoyed the dynamic and passionate learning atmosphere in the class, where a lot of knowledge and experiences were shared by her teachers and friends.

"We had most curious students at this class," said Hiep Hoang, the telesales teacher at REACH. "When they listened, they listened very carefully. When they asked, they asked a lot."

"Visually impaired people are sensitive and they are truly active listeners. And so they can respond exactly to your questions." Hiep added.

These are important personality traits and skills for a successful salesperson. And, Ân has proven that.

Ân is currently a core salesperson at a Japanese washing machine company. She is assigned to

manage the wholesaler customer sector of the company and to train new sales staff. The job helps Ân earn a decent income that she is now able to better take care of her family.

Thinking about the first days when she entered this new field of work, Ân said:

"I had a number of challenges when I started my job. But I have been so fortunate to have received great support from my manager and my colleagues which I cannot be more grateful."

"I always tell new staffs, like my teacher used to do to me, that to fully understand the products and services being sold is the key to a successful salesperson."



Because **REACH** *is* **HOME**

2020 ended with unexpected events. Strict measures were imposed to immediately curb the two COVID waves with potential complicated development. Furthermore, natural disasters swept through the central regions and created severe impacts.

Nevertheless, REACH students and alumni are not easily defeated by challenges and hardships. They have connected not only within their own regions but also beyond geographical boundaries to help each other. The ties of compassion between Hanoi and Hai Duong, Hue – Da Nang – Hoi An were shown via responsive and meaningful campaigns such as the Saving agriculture products campaign; Helping each other during the COVID-19 campaign; and Support alumni through the central flood campaign.

Alumni clubs in Hanoi, Hai Duong, Hoi An, Hue, and Da Nang have always been there, ready to support each other in both training and other aspects of life. 2020 was a difficult, yet memorable year. It was a year for us to think and be proud of each other. For each alumnus and student, when thinking of REACH, we feel very warm – because REACH is #HOME.

2020 was the first time
the fundraising campaign was
launched among the alumni network.

46.290.000 VNĐ was raised

02



Donating 20 million dong to the family of 2 alumni Nguyễn Văn Thắng - Lê Thị Hương; the alumni club also called for external support to help Thắng finance his back surgery.



01

Visiting and bringing emergency support to alumni/students severely affected by the 1st Covid-19 wave - Photo.



03

Hà Viết Tĩnh - Sales & Marketing REACH Hà Nội batch 42 honoured to receive RMIT scholarship* with a value of 1,5 billion dong.

Tĩnh could not hide his happiness. *"Thank you REACH for being by my side. Thank Mrs. Phạm Thanh Tâm for opening a wonderful new study path for me and other REACH alumni".*

(*) This is a Bachelor degree scholarship within the framework of the strategic partnership between REACH & RMIT University.

04

Fair club and English club at REACH Hue have 20 core members. Not only alumni but current students also join this club to practice English from basic to advanced level with foreign volunteers.



05



Mid-autumn festival 2020 for blind children in Hai Duong: 3 students and 20 alumni organized the event, offering 7 million Dong gift to blind children.

Tan Suu Tet for poor people in Hai Duong: 2 teachers and 10 alumni together with Hai Duong charity clubs including **"Thiện nhân tâm"** club and **"Trái tim sao vàng"** club organized the event.



06

2020 marked a sustained strategic partnership of Digital platform 4.0 – a program initiated by Google and organized by DNES. 130 students and alumni of Da Nang and Hoi An participated in a series of digital skills.

Alumni together with REACH offer new opportunities to new friends

62,4

new students came to REACH via alumni referral



"I have visited REACH many times as a guest speaker to share some advanced technical knowledge with REACH students. REACH students were very attentive and eager to learn. The classroom was interactive. The teacher is dedicated and friendly. I think REACH is a very good environment for young people to nurture their passion.

Currently, I am employing two REACH students. I highly value their discipline, proactiveness, friendliness and willingness to adapt to my salon's culture."

Mr. Nguyễn Văn Hiếu - Owner of OA HOUSE salon.





"Among the REACH graduates working at The Books Coffee, I was most impressed by Đồng Thuận (Batch 40th alumnus). Thuận is hard working and has a very good attitude. These are the important criteria for me to choose who to work with. Thuận is always proactive, listening to other colleagues, not insecure about his condition, and ready to support others. Therefore, Thuận is loved by other colleagues.

I also came from a poor family in Quảng Ngãi and I was lucky to get a scholarship to study, too. Thanks to that opportunity, I can follow my passion in Food & Beverage sector. Therefore, I feel that REACH is a very meaningful and practical program. I hope to be able to support REACH more in the future. I wish all REACH staff good health to carry on their mission"

Mr. Nguyễn Thanh Khiết – Manager of The Books Coffee in Da Nang.

“17 years ago, REACH was just a part of the LABS project of Plan in Vietnam with only 5 staff. In 2008, REACH became an independent local NGO to sustain the LABS project.”

From the very first steps, TAKING OVER and MERGING with LABS project in central Vietnam, REACH continued to maintain and expand its COLLABORATION with other organisations to implement suitable training programs.

From 2012 – 2015, REACH focused on INCREASING the EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY of the programs. In this period, REACH ACHIEVED several domestic and international awards and recognition.

EXPANSION and DEVELOPMENT are the two words that described REACH's accomplishments in the period from 2016 to 2019. REACH expanded into 6 geographical regions with 11 different vocational courses while starting up some social enterprises. REACH was recognized by many domestic and international awards.

In 2020 -2021, the COVID pandemic has changed the world completely. REACH is in this swirl. TRANSFORMATION and DEVELOPMENT are vital.

In the coming time, REACH will continue to DEVELOP new programs and come up with new INITIATIVES to meet the youths' new demands under the impact of Covid-19, making REACH FLEXIBLY ADAPT to the pandemic and future events.

REACH still COMMITS TO IMPROVING QUALITY of the training, EXPANDING the partners' network, GROWING the national alumni network into a strong organization with meaningful support to their members and the society.

BEYOND THAT, we will foster STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS with other organisations and enterprises to actualize REACH's sustainable goal and better protect the most vulnerable groups in the society.

DEVELOP REACH'S ECO-SYSTEM

REACH will continue building an ecosystem including training models and financially sustainable startups, in responding to youths' vocational skills demand and employment issues.



THANKS ALL OUR DONORS AND PARTNERS WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TOWARDS MAKING 2020 A SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR REACH





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