

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION



Known as a development success story, Vietnam has lifted more than 35 million people out of poverty since the early 1990s due to rapid economic growth and reforms. According to the World Bank, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty dropped from more than 50 percent in the early 1990s to 3 percent today. Ethnic minority groups account for more than half of the poor.

According to a 2009 government census, nearly 6.7 million Vietnamese, or 7.8 percent of the population, are living in temporary or sub-standard housing. Poor housing conditions mean they are trapped in annual cycles of repairs. More than half of rural dwellers lack adequate sanitation while more than one third does not have access to clean water. Every seven in 10 persons also face the risk of typhoons, torrential storms and flooding which hit Vietnam annually.

Marking World Habitat Day in October 2016, international volunteers will work together with low-income families in Phu Tho province to improve their lives through the Vietnam Big Build. During the weeklong build from October 3 to 7, between 25 and 30 decent homes with attached toilets will be constructed. Durable materials such as sun-dried bricks, and concrete and tiles will be used. An indicative itinerary is as follows:

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|-------------|---|---|
| Oct 1 (Sat) | — | Arrival in Hanoi. |
| Oct 2 (Sun) | — | Travel to Phu Tho by bus. Welcome dinner. |
| Oct 3 (Mon) | — | First day of build. |
| Oct 4 (Tue) | — | Second day of build. |
| Oct 5 (Wed) | — | Third day of build. |
| Oct 6 (Thu) | — | Fourth day of build. |
| Oct 7 (Fri) | — | Build for half a day. Home dedication. Farewell dinner. |
| Oct 8 (Sat) | — | Depart for Hanoi. |

COUNTRY FACTS

Capital: Hanoi

Area: 331,210 sq km

Population: more than 94 million

Life expectancy: 73 years

Population below poverty line:
11.3 percent (2012)



Phu Tho province

Phu Tho is closely associated with the Hung kings (or “brave kings”) who established the Van Lang state, a predecessor to present-day Vietnam. The historic Hung Temple is located in Phu Tho and draws thousands of people who mark the Hung King Temple Festival each year.

Despite their heritage, the people of Phu Tho are among the poorest in the country with 10 percent of the population still living below the national poverty line. Tea is the mainstay of the province’s agriculture economy with other major crops being rice, cassava and palm oil. People typically build their houses with wood and thatch with corrugated tin sheets for roofing.

Habitat for Humanity Vietnam

Habitat for Humanity began working in Vietnam in January 2001 with its first project in Danang City in the central coastal region. As of end of June 2015, Habitat has enabled more than 12,800 low-income Vietnamese families to improve their living conditions through decent homes, clean water and safe sanitation. HFH Vietnam has also provided training in areas such as disaster preparedness, financial education, and hygiene practices to more than 62,700 individuals. HFH Vietnam partners with low-income families to build, repair or upgrade their homes with families contributing “sweat equity” or their own labor, and typically repaying the costs through microfinance loans. International volunteers provide a hand-up by building alongside the families. Vietnam is among the top five destinations for Global Village volunteer teams.

For more information, please contact:

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