

“1,000 RESTROOMS FOR CHILDREN” PROJECT

A. Summary

In 2020, the Ministry of Education and Training reported that 30.6% of school restrooms in Vietnam do not meet the required standards, with 22.8% lacking sturdy construction. The main reasons behind this situation are the lack of attention from educational institutions, where restrooms are viewed as mere "auxiliary structures," and a shortage of funding for maintenance and new constructions. Additionally, students are not fully aware of proper usage and maintenance of restrooms, leading to rapid deterioration and degradation. Access to clean restrooms, especially in economically and socially disadvantaged areas, is even more challenging.

The "1,000 restrooms for children" project is a long-term initiative led by the For Vietnamese Stature Foundation (VSF) in collaboration with the Vietnam Volunteer Center (under the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union), and the Ministry of Education and Training, with support from TH Group and Bac A Commercial Joint Stock Bank. This project aims to construct new and renovate 1,000 restrooms for schools in underprivileged areas across the country over 10 years, from 2021 to the end of 2030. The goal of this project is to improve school hygiene and enhance the overall health and well-being of students, which aligns with the broader objectives of the School Health Program and other national target programs for the period of 2021-2025.

B. Project Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Construct new and renovate 1,000 school restrooms in economically and socially disadvantaged areas nationwide.
- **Objective 2:** Enhance the awareness, knowledge and skills of students, teachers, and caregivers regarding the proper usage and maintenance of restrooms, sustainable usage and protection of clean water sources, personal hygiene and environmental hygiene practices.
- **Objective 3:** Strengthen opportunities for the community to access to free and high-quality personal hygiene products.

C. Scope of Work

The project activities consist of two main components:

- **Construction component:**
 - Building and upgrading 1,000 school restrooms in economically and socially disadvantaged regions nationwide, particularly in remote regions where infrastructure investment has been lacking and practices of restrooms' proper usage are insufficient.

- **Capacity-enhancing component:**

- Installing 1,000 handwashing instruction signs following the guidelines of the Ministry of Health to ensure that students know how to wash their hands properly, especially after using the restroom.
- Providing handwashing water (or soap) for participating schools to ensure handwashing resources are readily available and easily accessible.
- Organizing at least 60 training/communication sessions and competitions on (1) Proper usage of restrooms, (2) Rational use and protection of clean water, (3) Personal hygiene linked to adolescent reproductive health, and (4) Environmental hygiene. These activities contribute to the promotion of positive behaviors in personal hygiene, environmental hygiene, water protection, and health improvement.
- Organizing at least 15 “School Health and Hygiene Festival” events at participating schools. Through these events, students will learn about clean water and hygiene with fun and sport-based activities. The festivals will also include inauguration ceremonies for new restrooms at participating schools. These ceremonies will be widely covered in the media to promote the project's effectiveness and enhance the community's awareness about the importance of clean water and hygiene. Moreover, the events will have a positive impact on the community by promoting healthy behaviors related to clean water and hygiene.

D. Project Deliverables:

The project will provide students in underprivileged areas with access to clean, friendly, and secure restrooms, which will help them ensure good health conditions and motivate them to attend school regularly and concentrate more on their studies. Additionally, it will raise the awareness and promote knowledge and skills related to the proper use and maintenance of restrooms, protection of clean water, personal hygiene, and environmental hygiene within the community.

Proper personal hygiene among students, which is related to their reproductive health during puberty, is also one of the project's outcomes. Through a variety of activities, the project will help increase awareness and understanding of personal hygiene for students, and equip teachers and caregivers with the knowledge necessary to support students during this pivotal stage of their development.