

Vietnam Red Cross Society – Da Nang Chapter

Youth Partnership promoting non-violence

LOCATION: Da Nang, a coastal city located in the central region of Vietnam, is 964 km away from the capital of Vietnam. It is one of the most disaster prone provinces in the country.

THE ISSUE:

With limited volunteer action and low advocacy activities by the Viet Nam Red Cross in Da Nang, the local chapter sought to activate young volunteers to increase its profile and community engagement.

NATIONAL SOCIETY ACTION

The National Society identified *Da Nang Youth Union* as very strong in the city and well known to the population. Therefore, the headquarters of the Viet Nam Red Cross invited two representatives from the Youth Union along with one Red Cross youth, to join the National Red Cross 'Youth as Agents of Behavioural Change (YABC) Peer Educators' Training in Ha Noi, Vietnam. The goal of the training was to develop a joint action plan bringing together Red Cross Youth and the Youth Union to empower and inspire youth to become positively involved in addressing local social issues.

Youth-led joint action with Da Nang Youth Union

After the training, three youths (YABC) developed an action plan to encourage Da Nang youth to be agents of non-violence. In careful assessments, they found that the violence caused from aggressive communication is very common in schools and universities in Da Nang.

They designed a session aimed at non-violent communication with the YABC tool targeting university students studying medicine and



pharmacy, Red Cross Youth and Youth Union members.

Starting with an introduction to the Red Cross Movement, the Viet Nam Red Cross, and the activities carried out by the Youth Union, the YABC Facilitators facilitated a session on non-violent communication for 29 youths (16 Females, 13 males, a mixture of Red Cross youths and Youth Union) and inspired them to be key agents of non-violence.

The participants discussed violent cases personally witnessed in communities and schools and selected the most common cases: 1) family violence, 2) school bullying and 3) harassment against girls. They also discussed root causes of the violence, such as violent communication and misunderstandings. They discussed how to address the issues.

With the facilitation of YABC youth, the participants developed three short plays, based on their experiences, dramatizing the scenarios, root causes and the impacts on society. They designed the banner for the event with the theme of "social inclusion with non-violent communication".

Community Action with the theme of non-violence

The event took place in Hoa Quy Community Hall in Hoa Quy commune, Da Nang City with around 100 community members headed by Mr Nguyen Van Vinh, the community leader and 60 high school students.

The first drama was the story of "**Friendship**" dealing with schoolyard bullying of children of divorced parents and solutions through the





friendship with peers. The second drama was the story of family violence titled “*Awakening Parents*”, addressing the issue of parental violence. The third drama was the story of *school boys’ harassment of girls*, and solving the issue through negotiation, peer education and empathy.

Music and dance were used creatively and feedback were collected from their audience by asking what lessons were learnt and how to improve their behavior.

At the end of event, when the question was raised if the members of the audience understood the meaning of violence and how to prevent it and improve relationships, all present raised their hands as a response and committed to be friendly with peers and to be inclusive of all marginalized people.

The YABC youths were buoyed by the audience’s feedback and commitment that they would apply non-violent communication and empathy and act as agents of change.

After the event, the Youth Union and Red Cross Youth gathered to design their future activities, deciding to go to other communities with different topics and issues on a quarterly basis. They realized they can inspire a change of their peers and their communities, particularly through joint action. All activities were supported by IFRC Bangkok office and IFRC Vietnam office.

OUTCOMES

1. Da Nang Red Cross Chapter has established a connection with the local Youth Union, with the potential to gain the support of the Youth Union for future activities.
2. The confidence of the Da Nang Red Cross Youth volunteers grew with their first

initiative; further they developed a sustainable youth empowerment programme with a small investment of between USD 200-300.

3. Vietnam Red Cross’ Youth Department gained valuable experience from Da Nang Chapter and decided to expand this type of joint programme in other chapters from 2017
4. Da Nang Chapter’s profile in the community is enhanced due to the actions of the active youth promoting non-violence.



LESSONS LEARNED

“For a long time, I wanted to empower our Da Nang youths and engage them in community action with proper capacity and skill building. With the support of Red Cross, I joined the YABC Training and I realized my dream. All youths in our event shared that they will include all other peers, especially friends with special needs, in their school life and play a changing role in schools and family, promoting non-violence and peace. That is the power of Red Cross and power of youth empowerment. I will continue this program in other universities and communities as a key joint action plan between youth union and RC Da Nang Chapter.”

Mr. Le Huu Hai (Youth Union Representative, 32 years old, YABC peer educator)

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This story is available at <https://fednet.ifrc.org/en/resources/youth-and-volunteering/volunteering/resources/volunteering-solutions-bank/>

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