
REACH Institute

Annual Report 2022



August 2023



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Message from the Director

As I look back on the year 2022, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride for the outstanding journey we have undertaken together at REACH. Year 2022 signifies the 14th anniversary of our founding, showcasing our resilience, determination, and unwavering dedication to our mission.

In 2022, the aftermath of the pandemic brought new hurdles for the communities we serve. The intensified hardships faced by underserved populations have underscored the significance of our mission: to equip underprivileged youth with in-demand skills, facilitate their integration into the workforce, and thus foster enduring income opportunities for these young adults and their families.

The year 2022 saw us welcoming more than 1000 students, everyone representing the great potential of the youth in Vietnam waiting to be unleashed with the right opportunities and support.



Pham Thi Thanh Tam

REACH Executive Director

Message from the Director

Despite the lasting challenges posed by the pandemic, we remained constant in our commitment to our students. Our team worked tirelessly to adapt our training programs to the evolving circumstances, ensuring that our students continued to receive high-quality education and training that would prepare them for the labor market. The dedication and resilience of our students, coupled with the tireless efforts of our staff, are a true testament to the spirit that defines REACH.

Our partnerships and collaborations continued to thrive in 2022, underscoring the power of community in driving change. Through cooperation with various partners, we were able to extend our reach and impact, providing even more opportunities for those who need them most. The bonds we have forged with our partners are a source of strength and inspiration, reminding us that our shared vision transcends challenges and propels us toward a brighter future.

As we celebrate this 14th year of impact and unity, I am filled with a sense of hope and anticipation for what lies ahead. Triumphs and challenges have marked our journey, but our commitment to our students and our mission has remained resolute. The journey ahead may be filled with uncertainties, but with your continued support and the persistence that defines REACH, I am confident that we will continue to make a lasting impact on the lives of countless vulnerable individuals.

Thank you for being a part of our journey, believing in our students' potential, and standing by us through every challenge and triumph. Together, we will continue to light the way toward empowerment, transformation, and a future filled with promise.

Mission & Vision

At the heart of our mission is a commitment to uplifting the most vulnerable youth in Vietnam. Through a comprehensive approach, we empower them by:

- Delivering innovative, practical, and tailored skills training that directly addresses their needs.
- Nurturing their confidence, instilling belief, and fostering self-respect, enabling them to seize new opportunities with determination.
- Facilitating their journey towards dignified employment, while simultaneously supplying our network of business partners with a skilled workforce.
- Extending unwavering support and encouragement to our graduates as they navigate their future pathways.
- Contributing significantly to the national strategy for social and economic development.



We strive to create a brighter future for the disadvantaged youth of Vietnam, unlocking their potential and fostering a positive impact on society.



2022 in Pictures





KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

SINCE 2004



20,239

Youths Trained



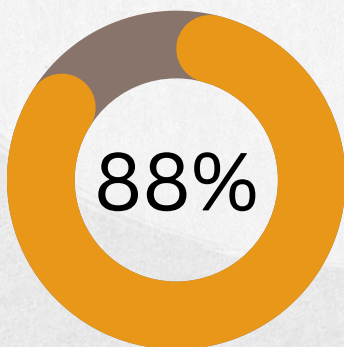
9,949

Female Youths Trained



10,251

Male Youths Trained



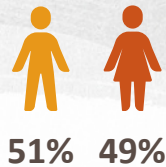
Of Trained Youth
found a Job



1.500+

Business Partners

In 2022



JOB

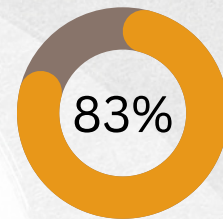
1,010

Youths Trained



20.1 %

Students living in Poverty*



Job Placement Rate



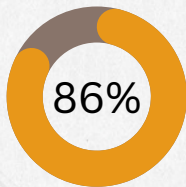
25.6 %

Ethnic Minority Students

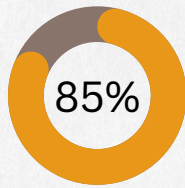


3.6%

Students with disability



Of Trained Youth increased their Income



Of Trained Youth report an improved Quality of Life



5,819,804 VND
(245 USD)

Average Starting Salary

15% higher
than the national minimum wage**



*1,500,000 VND and 2,000,000 VND/person/month for rural and urban areas, respectively. Additionally, poverty is determined by lacking access to a minimum of three out of six essential social services: employment, healthcare, education, housing, drinking water and sanitation, information (Source: Decree 07/2021/ND-CP on multidimensional poverty line for the 2022-2025 period)

**Minimum Wage in Vietnam as of 2022: 4,6 Mio VND (194 USD)

Recognition from the Community

As one of the most active members of REACH in the Central Vietnam, REACH Hue is honored to receive a reward from the People Council at the center's year-end event. This reward is a sign that the local authority recognized the contribution of REACH Hue, and they also encouraged the center to continue to join hands to support disadvantaged local youth.



Also, at the event, Mr. Dung Tran, the representative of REACH Hue, thanked all partners, organizations, and alumni who supported Hue Center throughout the year 2022. With REACH Hue, the local authority, partners, and alumni, REACH Hue can approach more potential students and find job opportunities in reliable companies. Therefore, the award strongly encourages the center to stick to its visions and missions which support disadvantaged youth.

Also in December, REACH Hue participated in a career counseling and job introduction fair. The event took place at the Youth Activity Center in Hue, with the participation of 1,800 middle and high school students from across Hue. The fair featured 12 booths representing local and external businesses and companies. REACH Hue also took part in one booth, aiming to provide counseling and enrollment information.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Digital Skills for Mountainous Farmers



In the northern mountains of Vietnam, REACH conducted a special training to improve sales practices of youth sellers through digital skills. REACH provided tailored training in response to a request from Plan International Vietnam for young adults in Ha Giang and Lao Cai who are directly engaged in selling local agricultural products, such as dried bananas and broomsticks.

Empowering Farmers Through Digital Skills

In Ha Giang, a group of 15 farmers joined the transformative program, while in Lai Chau, a cohort of 23 embraced the opportunity. By gaining practical digital skills, participants have not only unlocked new avenues for income generation but also demonstrated the power of knowledge and resilience in overcoming challenges.



Recognizing the potential of the region's agricultural products, Hoang Thi Hiep initiated this training program to equip farmers with needs-based digital skills. She shared traditional business strategies, while the external expert guided farmers in crafting compelling e-commerce content for platforms like Shopee, Lazada, and Facebook.

Needs-based Skill Development

Despite initial apprehension, the guidance of the instructor and the assurance of being able to reclaim unsold items encouraged participants to face initial fears head-on. The true success of the program extends beyond the realm of digital skills. It has instilled newfound confidence and empowerment within the farmers. By harnessing technology for marketing and sales, this initiative has paved the way for sustainable livelihoods, effectively transforming their agricultural endeavors into thriving ventures.

Catalyst for Change

Looking ahead, this initiative holds promising prospects. The acquired skills will continue to empower farmers, while the success story could potentially inspire other individuals to embark on similar journeys of growth and transformation. In essence, this initiative has acted as a catalyst, transforming the lives of local farmers. Equipping them with digital skills, it has not only enhanced their confidence but also paved the way for sustainable livelihoods, turning their agricultural efforts into flourishing enterprises.

From mountainous villages to fancy hotels: Jobs for ethnic minority youth



In December 2022, REACH partnered with upscale establishments like Silk Path, PAO's, and De la Coupole in Sapa. Their joint effort facilitated training for approximately 200 students at these hotels, aiming to equip young people from mountainous regions with the necessary skills for quality employment. With limited formal education, these students often face difficulty finding suitable jobs in their local areas. Thus, this program was initiated to benefit both the youth and the hotels, resulting in a mutual saving of time and resources regarding training and hiring.



From Novelty to Proficiency: Nurturing Talent in Upscale Hospitality

During this brief training period, students acquired various skills required for diverse roles in luxurious hotels, including proper guest service. Initially, these skills felt unfamiliar to them, but hands-on experience in the hotels and interactions with actual customers revealed the potential of hospitality work in Sapa.

According to Mr. Trinh Ngoc Giap, who manages REACH in Hanoi, this training course carried immense significance for young people residing in mountainous regions. These areas, abundant with tourist potential, offer opportunities for local youth to contribute. This underpins REACH's decision to initiate and expand such courses to other locations.

Cultivating Diversity: REACH's Inclusive Approach to Vocational Training

This endeavor held special significance for students representing various ethnic backgrounds. They had the unique opportunity to put their learning into practice within an authentic hotel environment, engaging with real guests and real work. Despite its duration of merely 1 to 1.5 months, the training yielded substantial benefits. Hotel staff and local youth alike gained invaluable skills from REACH trainers, eliminating the need for these young people to leave their homes while simultaneously providing hotels with competent workers. REACH facilitated skill development, while hotels offered their facilities for learning and also monitored the progress of these individuals.

“Dance without borders”

On the morning of April 17th, the second season of the "Passion Assembly of Step and Sway" competition, known as PASS-II, took place at the Vietnam Dance Academy. This event marked the 50th anniversary of the Hanoi Association of the Blind, and a special day dedicated to people with disabilities in Vietnam. After the success of the first season, which had more than 40 participants, this year's competition attracted about 100 athletes.

The PASS II - 2022 competition was a big chance for visually impaired people to show their skills on a bigger stage than usual gyms. This helped them overcome challenges and feel more confident. The competition also aimed to make dance more inclusive for blind people and everyone else, regardless of how they look or their background.

As part of the larger STEP-UP project, the REACH Institute was proud to be one of the sponsors of this special competition in 2022. With strong hope, REACH looked forward to the competition growing in the coming years and reaching even more people. Aside from providing funds, REACH worked together with the Association of the Blind to create classes specially designed for visually impaired people.

When the stage lights lit up the "Passion Assembly of Step and Sway" contest, it brought a feeling of hope, togetherness, and determination. This event wasn't just about dancing; it was also about overcoming difficulties, accepting differences, and creating a community where everyone could shine in 2022.



Bridge Fest 2022: Celebrating Unity and Change



Bridge Fest Music Festival 2022 was a remarkable collaboration between REACH, Hexagon, and Ecue, all united by a shared mission of promoting equality and embracing diversity. The event, hosted in Da Nang this year, provided an exceptional platform for REACH Da Nang to engage with both local and international organizations, fostering new connections and potential partnerships. This collaborative effort also involved the People's Committee of Da Nang City, the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, and other esteemed contributors.

REACH Da Nang's booth at the festival allowed them to introduce their mission, offer beverages, and engage attendees in games with exciting prizes. This interactive approach brought REACH closer to the local community, fostering a sense of togetherness.

The festival centered around the theme "Be the Change Towards a Human Economy," advocating for a model that prioritizes humanity, shared resources, and positive values. This theme strikes a chord, reflecting a desire for positive societal shifts and a deeper connection with cultural heritage and the environment.

BridgeFest 2022 encouraged the youth to become catalysts for change, emphasizing their potential to contribute to reducing social inequality. The resonating message of empowering young people has garnered widespread support from the Vietnamese public.

The festival showcased the participation of 32 social organizations, social enterprises, and youth clubs. Together, they addressed a range of critical social issues, including the environment, education, healthcare, culture, gender, disabilities, and more. Artistic expression took center stage with renowned artists from the United States, Switzerland, and Vietnam. Their diverse musical genres, ensured a vibrant and varied musical experience.

BridgeFest 2022 symbolizes a convergence of art, community, and change, a testament to the power of unity and collective action in shaping a more inclusive and equitable society. As the festival continues to evolve, it embodies hope and exemplifies the potential for positive transformation. At REACH, we're already excited about being part of and celebrating Bridge Fest 2023.





STUDENT SUCCESS STORIES

From a remote village to a prestigious university: Hang Thi Ly's inspiring journey



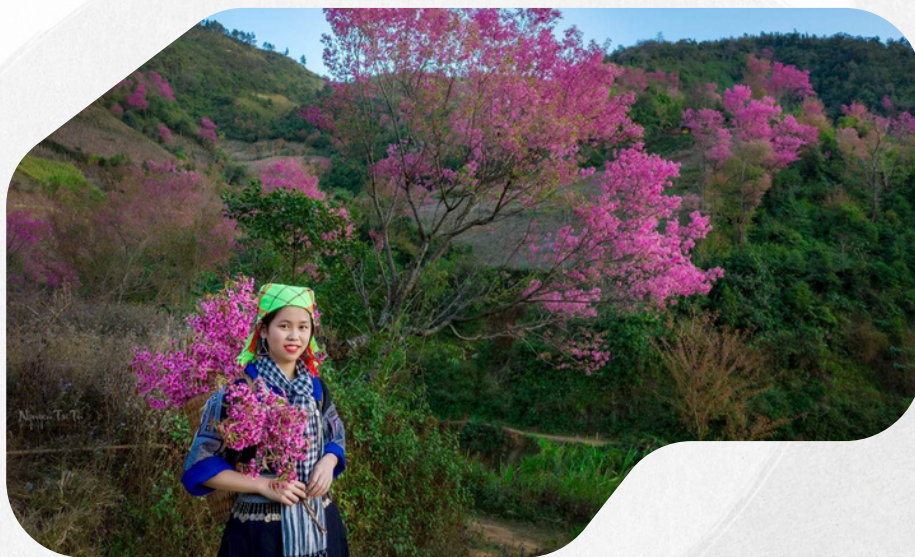
Hang Thi Ly
REACH Sales & Marketing
Graduate & RMIT Scholar

Hi, my name is Ly. I was born into a Hmong family, one out of 53 ethnic minorities in Vietnam. My parents were farmers struggling to care for five kids, including me. Growing up, I knew all too well the tough life that comes with being poor. This made it really hard for a girl like me, from a minority group, to dream big. I wanted to break free and make a better future, but it felt like poverty was holding me back. After finishing high school, money problems meant I had to forget about attending university. I felt like my life had hit a dead end.

But that wasn't the end of my story. My friends told me about REACH, a place that could help me. In Hanoi, I signed up for their Sales & Marketing program. I chose this because I was shy and bad at talking to people. I hoped this would help me get better at communicating and find a job to help my family.

REACH was a special place for kids like me who had a tough start. They taught me lots of useful things, like how to talk to people and feel good about myself. I changed a lot. I not only learned about Sales & Marketing but also gained confidence. This helped me do well in my job and life in general. After I finished at REACH, I got a job as a saleswoman and started building a stable life.

While I was at REACH, I got sick and had to go to the hospital. My family was far away, but my teachers at REACH became like a second family to me. They supported me a lot during that tough time. I felt like REACH was a safe place, and I'm really thankful for that.



Every year, REACH chooses the best students for a special scholarship to RMIT University Vietnam. Even though I had a tough life, I did well in school and helped out as a Volunteer in the Alumni Community at REACH. In 2022, something amazing happened: I got the scholarship! It meant I could study at a big and famous university like RMIT. I never thought this could happen to me.

My story shows that every young person has potential, no matter where they start. With some help from others, we can do great things. REACH helped me a lot, and seeing other students succeed keeps them going.

Cooking Up Dreams: Shattering Gender Norms in the Culinary World



Nguyen Thanh Lanh
Cooking Class Graduate
REACH Hanoi

Hi, my name is Lanh. I grew up in A Luoi, a poor district in the Thua Thien Hue province, I was always surrounded by nature's purity and a slow-paced life. I was fortunate, I had both my parents and grandparents. But life wasn't easy, my grandparents were old and frail, my mother had severe arthritis, so she stayed at home running a small grocery store, and my father was the backbone, supporting us amidst all the struggles.

As the eldest, I knew I had responsibilities. So, I started helping my parents early on, making and selling homemade cakes and working as a delivery person for shops. From that time, a dream sprouted in my heart - to become a professional chef and pull my family out of our tough circumstances.



“My love for the kitchen couldn't be broken.”

When I shared my dream, many opposed. They believed that being a chef was too hard and distressing for a girl. But my love for the kitchen couldn't be quenched. When my high school teacher introduced REACH, I knew I had found my path to becoming a chef. I had just finished my high school entrance exam, and I was ready.

At REACH, I discovered my potential. For the first time, I got to handle professional kitchen tools, work with fresh ingredients, and create dishes after lots of hard work. Yes, it wasn't easy for a girl to be a chef, but I held on to my teacher's words, "You have to work hard before you can enjoy the rewards."

That's why, despite the long distance, I persistently attended my cooking classes every day. Now, having graduated from REACH's cooking course, I am fulfilling my dream. I have been hired as a chef at Taste Vietnam restaurant in Hoi An, Quang Nam province. I specialize in Cold Kitchen dishes like salads, sandwiches, pizzas, burgers, etc. After that, I was lucky to be a member of VOVO Ma Belle Danang as a Commis thanks to my previous experience.

My salary may not be very high, but it's enough to help my family. As I said, "Before studying at REACH, my parents struggled to support my education. Now, I have a stable job and am happy to help them."

I'm so thankful to REACH for giving me the opportunity to live my dream and earn a stable income. I hope they continue to develop more courses to help others like me have a better future.



Alumni Student Activities

Spark of Change: REACH's "Turning Point"-Contest Lights Up Transformation



Imagine going back in time to the moments that transformed you into who you are today. The "Turning Point with REACH" contest is all about that. It's a special competition that asks students to share their stories of change and growth during their time with REACH. Not just about school stuff, but how they've become better people too!

Students in this contest tell their tales of change—those moments that made them think differently, try new things, and become even more awesome. These stories don't just inspire them; they also inspire students who are starting their own journey with REACH.

By sharing their stories, students become mentors, passing on their wisdom to others. It's like they're saying, "Hey, I've been there, and look how far I've come!" These stories spread good vibes throughout the REACH community, showing everyone how education and support can make a big difference.

The pictures show the Top 3 winners of the contest: Xuân Lưu from REACH Huế won the top prize, followed by Đức Hồ from REACH Hải Dương in second place. Duy Huân from REACH Đà Nẵng took third place, and Tuấn Anh from REACH Hải Dương got an encouragement prize.



Staff Story

A super woman fighting for an inclusive society



My path with REACH began unexpectedly. During a phase of career uncertainty, I came across REACH and felt an immediate connection with the organization's vision and mission. Beginning as a teacher, I soon transitioned to the role of a program officer.

Hoang Thi Hiep, Program Officer at REACH Hanoi (standing on the outermost right, top row)

This transition wasn't just a professional shift but a personal milestone as it allowed me to research the market and introduce new courses tailored for our disadvantaged students.

Over the past 7 years, I've seen REACH's transformative effect on underprivileged youths. These young adults, often riddled with challenges, find confidence and strength through the skills and knowledge REACH imparts. However, the journey with REACH hasn't been without its trials. Many times, I encountered students grappling with unclear life objectives, personal issues interfering with their learning, and the tendency to lose hope. Addressing these challenges requires immense patience, understanding, and motivation. Furthermore, navigating the reluctance of certain businesses to employ people with disabilities showcased the importance of perseverance and dedication.

While there are countless stories of student triumphs, two stand out. The first concerns a student belonging to both an ethnic minority and the LGBT community. Despite almost quitting because of familial pressures, my encouragement kept them going. They not only completed their course but also secured a managerial role.

Another student, initially weighed down by debts and without a home, embarked on an entrepreneurial journey and eventually became a shareholder in a healthcare equipment store.

In my role as a program officer at REACH, my responsibilities revolve around launching new courses, focusing on soft skills or green skills. Some courses I've been involved with include various courses for the visually impaired like Life Skills training and Online Sales. We also offer specialized courses for youth with hearing impairment in Hairdressing, Bartending, and Cooking. My tenure at REACH has been transformative on a personal and professional level. From a life skills and sales teacher, I evolved into a program officer, coordinating activities of the STEP-UP project and overseeing the online sales training program on a national scale. This growth has imbued me with maturity, optimism, and a deeper appreciation for my profession.

One key insight I've gained from my time at REACH is that overprotecting our students can hinder their growth. While my initial approach was to shield them from harsh realities, I soon realized they needed autonomy to face and overcome challenges. This makes them more resilient and adaptive. Education and skills development for underprivileged youths hold profound importance. Many face risks of human trafficking, domestic violence, or underage marriages due to their backgrounds. They can avoid such pitfalls, secure better job opportunities, and envision a hopeful future through education.

My primary motivation, through the ups and downs at REACH, stems from witnessing the growth, happiness, and success of our students. Observing them secure jobs and derive happiness from them has been a constant source of joy and inspiration for me.

Looking to the future, my ambition is to assist even more children in securing employment, boosting their confidence, and ensuring they lead happier lives. There's also a personal goal of mine to take up a psychology course to enhance my understanding and connection with our students. Reflecting on my journey, working at REACH has been a deeply fulfilling experience. I cherish every moment, and I owe a significant part of my journey to the support from the REACH board of directors and especially Mr. Doan Tuan Dung. Their faith and encouragement have been the pillars of my journey, even during moments of doubt.



Partnership & Collaboration

Renewed Support for Underprivileged Youth

J. P. Morgan has renewed its partnership with REACH, aiming to provide crucial support for underprivileged youth in Vietnam, who are still grappling with the impacts of the COVID-19-induced labor market turmoil. Established in 2015, this strategic collaboration has empowered



2171 disadvantaged through diverse training programs, spanning disciplines from web coding to graphic design.

Advancing Digital Skills for Youth Empowerment

J.P. Morgan has reaffirmed its commitment by extending a grant to realize the "Advancing Digital Skills among Vietnamese Disadvantaged Youth" project. This initiative, operating within a structured framework, will see REACH organize vocational training courses, with a specific focus on graphic design and 3D modeling skills. The primary objective is to equip students with the expertise needed to thrive in the visual design sector, while also adapting adeptly to the novel post-pandemic work landscape.

Inspiring Change Through Recognized Backing

J.P. Morgan, renowned for its philanthropic endeavors, presents a notable grant that stands as a significant impetus for REACH to continue supporting underprivileged youth. This grant underscores J.P. Morgan's commitment and spotlights REACH's global contributions. It symbolizes a milestone in the journey towards empowering disadvantaged communities internationally.

REACH works with Employee Volunteers from Credit Suisse



REACH recently welcomed a team of executives from Credit Suisse (CS) on October 31, 2022, marking the annual volunteering event that has become a tradition for CS. This collaborative initiative bolsters partner organizations' capacities, reinforcing the ongoing commitment to making a positive impact. As the world rebounded from the challenges of the COVID-19 epidemic, this year's volunteering event held special significance. The annual visit by CS executives has been rejuvenated, bringing new opportunities for growth and learning to the forefront.

Effective Communication and Beyond

During the visit, the dedicated CS team extended its support by offering a dynamic and impactful workshop on 'Effective Communication Skills.' This enlightening session was tailored specifically for REACH's Graphic Design & 3D Modeling students. The workshop not only imparted essential communication techniques but also acted as a confidence booster for these aspiring young individuals. It underscored the importance of soft skills in enhancing career prospects, particularly for those facing disadvantaged circumstances.

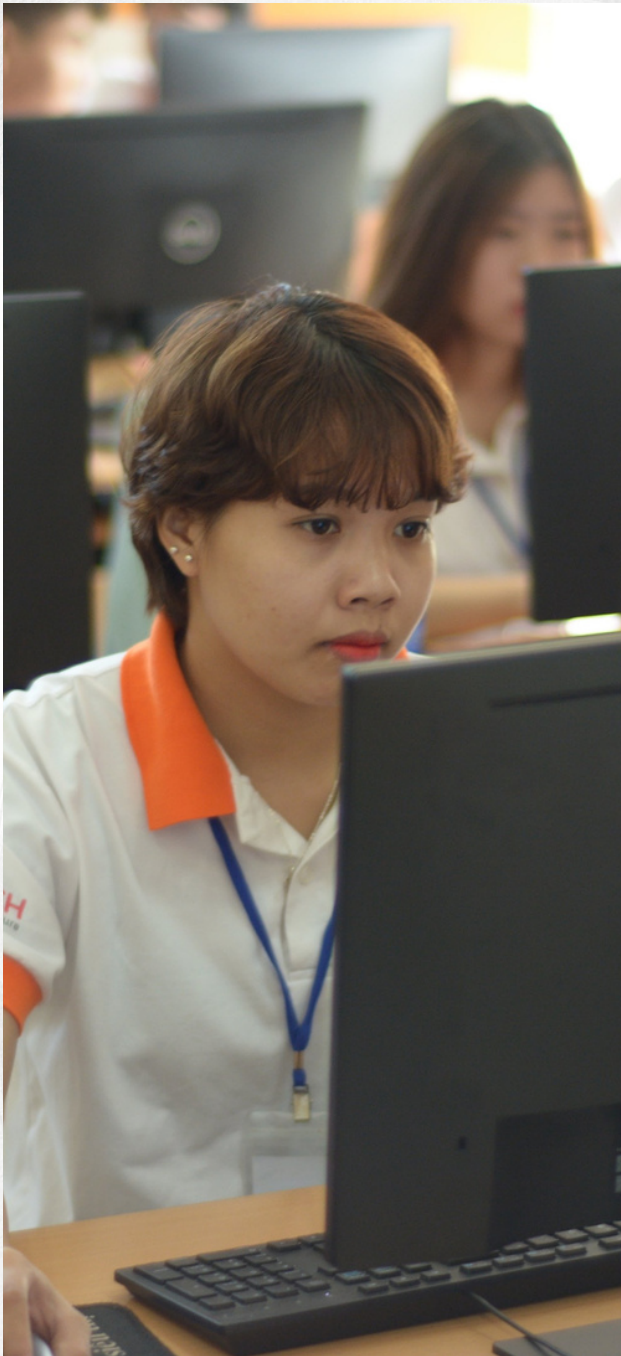
During the visit, volunteers engaged in hands-on learning within REACH's Food and Beverage class. This immersive experience allowed them to craft beverages, offering insight into REACH's practical skill delivery in the Hospitality industry. The CS team also inspired Hair Dressing students by sharing insights into the "Hair Salon in Singapore." This interaction ignited passion and reinforced students' commitment to excellence in their chosen fields.



Building on Years of Success: A Continuous Journey

The success of the 2022 Corporate Volunteering builds upon the strong foundation laid by previous capacity-building activities delivered by the CS team. These collaborations have consistently yielded positive outcomes for both REACH students and staff. A notable mention goes to the extraordinary support extended during the challenging year of 2021, which proved especially valuable during the pandemic. The collaboration between the REACH Institute and Credit Suisse signifies the power of partnership in driving positive change. Thank you, Credit Suisse!

Stay Connected



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