



## THE QII PRINCIPLES IN ACTION

# Vietnam

## Upgrading infrastructure design for universal accessibility



The World Bank’s Vietnam Scaling Up Urban Upgrading Project aimed to develop sustainable urban infrastructure in Vietnam’s Mekong Delta Region. The project focused on universally accessible design principles for infrastructure development and aimed to strengthen planning capacity, improve infrastructure design, increase awareness of universal accessibility, and promote green infrastructure. A QII Partnership grant supported the project by facilitating the application of principles and providing technical advice. These activities will benefit seven urbanizing cities, improve livelihoods, and reach approximately 90,000 individuals in low-income areas with universal accessibility design. It has also informed new World Bank initiatives to improve accessibility regionally and globally.

### THE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGE

Vietnam’s Mekong Delta Region has significantly contributed to the country’s economic growth and is rapidly urbanizing. However, access to infrastructure and basic services in the region has not kept pace with the rapidly growing population. For example, despite the high number of elderly and people with disabilities in Vietnam, facilities to accommodate them are not yet widely available. The government of Vietnam aims to apply the principles of universal accessibility and resilient, green design in urban infrastructure, focusing on low-income areas and planned resettlement sites. To achieve these goals, the need for a strategy to develop long-term, sustainable urban development has become a priority.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

To address these challenges, the World Bank's Vietnam Scaling Up Urban Upgrading Project (SUUP) aims to assist the government in developing high-quality, sustainable urban infrastructure that integrates green, resilience, and accessibility measures. Launched in 2017, the six-year project aimed to bolster the integrated, risk-informed planning capabilities of seven urbanizing cities in Vietnam—Bac Lieu, Ben Tre, Long Xuyen, Soc Trang, Tan An, Vi Thanh, and Vinh Long. These cities serve as economic hubs for trade, services, and industries in the region and have consequently experienced rapid population growth due to in-migration from rural areas.

To achieve its goals, the project focused on improving coordination between different departments, leveraging ICT in data sharing and city planning, implementing green and resilient infrastructure designs, and supporting universal accessibility design for the disabled and elderly.

A QII Partnership grant played a crucial role in supporting the project. It facilitated the application of principles for universally accessible, green, and resilient infrastructure design. It also provided valuable technical advice from Japanese experts to address safety, environmental and social sustainability, economic and social contribution, and resilience against natural disasters in infrastructure design. Capacity building and the wider dissemination of the techniques and concepts complemented these efforts.

## TAPPING INTO JAPANESE EXPERTISE

Japan is a frontrunner in universally accessible infrastructure design, and the operational support enabled the mobilization of Japanese design consultants with extensive experience. The Tokyo Development Learning Center (TDLC) and two infrastructure design consultants, one of whom was physically disabled, provided support for the project on the ground in Vietnam. Their input included a baseline study, technical inputs to feasibility studies, detailed engineering designs to incorporate universal accessibility, development of country-specific guidelines that included accessibility for the disabled and the elderly, and finally, training for national and local governments

for future scale-up as a national program. Experts from Mirario, a Japanese firm facilitated by Nippon Foundation, took part in initiating the dialogue with the World Bank team and provided advisory support.

## APPLYING THE QII PRINCIPLES

Universal accessibility is core to QII Principle 5, which calls for integrating social considerations in infrastructure investment. The grant also supported QII Principle 2, raising economic efficiency in view of life-cycle cost, because early inclusion of universal accessibility principles in the design of infrastructure is more cost-efficient than retrofitting infrastructure to accommodate the disabled and elderly.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The project team anticipates significant benefits resulting from the grant, which include the following:

- Municipal officials in seven urbanizing cities in Vietnam will have the knowledge and capacity necessary for incorporating universal accessibility design in urban infrastructure planning, which will benefit individuals with disabilities and the elderly.
- The public will have a greater awareness of the importance of universal accessibility, at both local and national levels.
- Approximately 90,000 individuals in low-income areas are expected to benefit from better universal accessibility design. Disabled and elderly populations will have better access to basic urban services and employment opportunities.
- This initiative is scalable and has informed World Bank accessibility initiatives in other parts of the world, particularly in Indonesia, Senegal, Sri Lanka, and Yemen.

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*The World Bank Group and the government of Japan established the Quality Infrastructure Investment (QII) Partnership to raise awareness and scale-up quality infrastructure investment aligned to G20 QII Principles in developing countries. The QII Partnership is managed by the Infrastructure Finance, PPPs & Guarantees (IPG) group within the World Bank Group.*

*For more information, visit [www.worldbank.org/QII](http://www.worldbank.org/QII) or follow us on LinkedIn at [www.linkedin.com/company/qii-partnership](http://www.linkedin.com/company/qii-partnership).*