



Vietnam–U.S. Disaster Business Continuity Initiative

This 2013-2016 Initiative focused on increasing business resilience and improving public-private coordination on disaster planning within the City of Hai Phong. **Sister Cities--Seattle and Hai Phong** worked together with PWA and government and business representatives to strengthen disaster planning, risk reduction, and recovery. Public-private cooperation and coordination were the results of this successful Initiative. The Cities of Hai Phong and Seattle, the Vietnam and U.S. Government (USAID), and the business communities of Seattle and Hai Phong financially supported this three-year Initiative.

Peace Winds America partnered with the Hai Phong People's Committee, the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Hai Phong business organizations and communities. PWA conducted risk assessments, preparedness planning, hazard mapping, and business continuity trainings and consultations. Nearly 1,000 businesses engaged with civil authorities in substantive planning and training activities. Sustainable partnerships, increased operational capacity, and enhanced planning tools are now leading to a more disaster resilient Hai Phong.

Why Vietnam—Why Hai Phong?

Vietnam loses nearly two percent of GDP per year due to weather related events. An estimated 70 percent of Vietnamese people are exposed to risk from natural hazards. The OECD has ranked Hai Phong specifically as one of the ten cities in the world that is most exposed to coastal flooding. As the third largest city in Vietnam and the primary port city of the north, Hai Phong is vital to the regional economy. The city's role as an industrial center is only expected to increase with inflows of foreign direct investment totaling \$1.2 billion in 2014. This expanding economic activity coupled with increasing disaster risk made Hai Phong the ideal target for Initiative.

Why Seattle?

The port city of Seattle is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters—floods, mudslides, earthquakes. Disaster managers within the City of Seattle, King/Piece/Snohomish Counties, and the Washington State Emergency Management Department work closely with the private sector in planning, response, and recovery. Government, university, and business experts were willing to share best practices and experiences and eager to partner with Peace Winds America to learn from other cities and nations how to better plan, prepare, respond, and recover from disasters. Seattle City Hall and Office of Emergency Management lauded the lessons learned.

Why Business Continuity and Public-Private Partnerships?

The ability of businesses to quickly recover after disasters is critical to the overall recovery of the communities in which they operate. Direct economic losses from damaged facilities and infrastructure will inevitably be experienced during a major disaster, but the indirect losses suffered due to business interruption can be lessened through effective planning and preparedness. Indirect losses come in the form of decreased productivity and profits for individual businesses as well as lost wages for workers and the unavailability of vital goods and services to surrounding communities. These effects can be even further reaching through disruptions to supply chains, potentially affecting entire industries and resulting in impacts that are not only local but global.

The port cities of Seattle and Hai Phong can prepare and recover from disasters which requires close coordination with the government agencies--the primary responders. Recovery is contingent on the reestablishment of critical services including water, electricity, and telecommunications, which in Vietnam are largely controlled by the public sector, and in Seattle which are the responsibility of the public and private sectors. Joint preparedness efforts and well defined public-private partnerships are necessary for a appropriate plan and quick recovery that utilizes all the community's resources efficiently.