Q1 - Please tell a bit more about the model of inter-generational self-help clubs and how they contribute to building societies for all ages

The ISHC model was piloted in 2006. Due to its attractiveness and long lasting benefits, ISHC is very much welcome by young and older people, communities and governments. And thus, the no of ISHCs has rapidly increase to nearly 4,000 now in almost of provinces in the country. Through the years, the model has clearly shown to be one of the best way to contribute to enabling environment for all ages. That is why now ISHCs becomes the national target of the government of Vietnam.

So, what is ISHC? It is a community based development organization, established at village/grassroot level. Each ISHC has about 50-70 members, majority (70%) of whom are older persons, women and socially and/or economically disadvantaged. ISHC aims to create opportunities for their members, both young and older, to improve the well-being of themvels and contribute to the community development.

A typical ISHC has at least 8 core areas of activities, based on the top needs of their members and communities. These are: 1) social exchange & cultural performance; 2) food & income security; 3) health; 4) community based care; 5) community development; 6) life long learning; 7) right & entitlements; and 8) resource mobilizations.

How ISHCs contribute to building a society for all ages?

❖ First, the ISHCs is inclusive of young and older, men and women, poor and non poor; people of different background.
❖ 2nd, it creates the platform, where each and every member, regardless of their age, gender and background, can join together, interact with one another, mobilize possible local resources and have opportunities to improve their health status, food and income security and social participation so that they can improve their well being.
❖ 3rd, it promotes understanding and mutual support among community members, thus help strengthen community and social bonding and linkages. It helps address the issues of agisms. Through ISHC activities, many people have changed their mind set about OP, even OP themvels.
❖ 4th, it promotes voice, dialogues and interaction between the ISHCs and local communities and authorities and service providers, relating to the matters of concern to improve their life and community.
So because of all the above, VN gov approved 2 national ISHCs projects to help spread the model more widely.

Q2: How were you able to mobilize support from other stakeholders, including the private sector, at local and international level for intergenerational self-help clubs?

❖ First, the ISHC model need to be strong and attractive. The model should meet the needs and wants of the people, community and country.
❖ 2nd, there should be clear evidence of the model benefits for their members and community. Evidence how it can contribute to realization of gov and other stakeholders priorities such as social protection, health and care, poverty reduction, building new rural community solidarity
❖ 3rd, there should be sufficient investment in branding and marketing the model to the stakeholders

Q3: a tak away – clear message

❖ OPA such as ISHCs can play a huge role in creating enabling environment for all ages. It is worth for government to invest in ISHCs as the most effective and cost effective model