

# Post Assignment Report



**Name:** Lee Wing

**Assignment:** United Nations University Volunteer in Communication and Partnership

**Agency:** Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

**Location:** Viet Nam

I served as United Nations University Volunteer in Communication and Partnership with Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in Viet Nam. The six-month journey was rewarding and life-changing. From research and reports compilation to communication, policy advocacy and multilateral partnership facilitation, everything was challenging and interesting under international setting. I was grateful to have this opportunity for volunteering, learning and enriching my global vision.



## Viet Nam HIV Law Consultation

Researching and compiling the international legal references for Viet Nam Law on HIV Prevention and Control (HIV Law) Amendment and Supplementation consultation was the first and one of my main tasks.

The first challenge was “the United Nations language”. Every report, meeting and agency in the United Nations always uses a certain set of language, abbreviation and terminology. At the beginning, I felt like I have started everything all over again, like a toddler learning how to speak.

As my understanding towards the terminologies increased, I agree firmly that language acts as an important medium to transmit value. Language is the first step to alter people’s perception towards things, that’s why the United Nations and especially UNAIDS have high awareness on that. That equipped me a higher sensitivity when articulating the issues regarding HIV key population or other marginalized population.

Before the official Law Consultation Workshop, UNAIDS held a consultation workshop with the community representatives to collect and summarize their viewpoints. Representatives of sex workers, LGBT+ community, people living with HIV, people who use drugs have attended the meeting. The HIV key population understand very well the current loopholes of the existing legal and policy framework. I really appreciate the idea of “putting the communities at the center”, implying that we should always focus on and work with the services target audience. The communities know their needs and their voices should never be neglected.

That was also a brand new experiences for me to join the official law consultation workshop organized by the Viet Nam Ministry of Health. When my report was presented and discuss in the workshop, I gained a great sense of satisfaction.

UNAIDS brings in a lot of sensitive topics to the country. Using HIV and AIDS as entry point to advocate the equality and rights for LGBT+ community, drug users, sex workers, prisoners, who are usually the forgotten or marginalized population. I learnt that adopting the angle of public health to advocate equal rights is indeed more acceptable and persuasive. I realized the slogan always used by UNAIDS, “leaving no one behind” is more than a cliché, but also a spirit we should always adhere to and believe in.



## LGBT+ Stronger Together summit

UNAIDS in collaboration with LGBT+ led social enterprise, Lighthouse to organized the first community led LGBT+ summit for the community. Over 70 representatives of LGBTIQ communities-based organizations (CBOs) around Viet Nam discussed the ways to advance the LGBTI’s community’s health, equity and sustainability in the three-day summit.

# Work in UN



## LGBT+ Stronger Together summit (cont.)



I have assisted in communication strategies planning and implementation for the LGBT+ civil society summit in Viet Nam. I have designed and facilitated a session, for civil society to map out their geographic locations and visualize their services. I was quite nervous about the language barriers at the beginning. Fortunately, the attendees were cooperative and responsive. Their active participation assured me and made the workshop carry out smoothly.



## World AIDS Day 2019



World AIDS Day takes place on 1 December every year and World AIDS Day theme was released by the headquarter as “Communities Make the Differences” in mid-November. Resonating the theme, we decided to create social media post, wall banner and content for our website to highlight the contribution of community in Viet Nam.

Facing the tight timeline, my colleague and I kept contacting each other around the clock to finalize the communication plan and social media post content. As they were publication of the United Nations, we had to check thoroughly of the English and Vietnamese text content. Gratefully, the communication works could be done on schedule. I recalled my excitement when I heard the banner and the social media posts had been successfully posted!

# Work in UN

There were various joint-agencies events. I supported the organization of meetings and events. It was so much fun from developing concept notes and the program details to implementing the activities. I especially enjoyed the part that I could interact with the public and connect with them.



## International Youth Day



## International Volunteer Day



## Diversity Day



# Life in Viet Nam



Viet Nam is an adorable place that inhabited by friendly people and enchanting nature landscape. The love-hate mixed feeling towards the sea of motorbikes on the traffic road, the tranquility when sipping Viet Nam coffee at a lake side café, the satisfaction when successfully communicated with the ladies in wet market by my scrappy Vietnamese, all these memories paints my fruitful journey.

The assignment has not only granted me priceless working experiences, but also nurtured my personal growth. This half year journey is a process of “adulthood” for me. I learnt to be more sophisticated at work and meanwhile I learnt how to take good care of myself.

This journey is definitely one of most remarkable memories of my life. It was so exciting to meet new people, new task and new challenges every day. I found my passion in addressing gender inequality and sexual reproductive health issues. I also gained great enjoyment of living and working in a foreign country, with truly indulging in their local culture. I believe this journey is only the beginning of my exploration of the world. It gave me determination to embrace the uncertainties ahead and continue to be “inspiration in action”.

