A Deeper U.S. Partnership with Vietnam on War-related Health & Disability

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The Challenge

The Goal

Three Steps to a Deeper Partnership

Background & Charts

THE CHALLENGE

As of the end of 2024, Agent Orange victims were fewer than 20% of all Vietnamese who were receiving US disability assistance.

Vietnamese Receiving US Disability Assistance 2021-2024

Eight Heavily-sprayed Provinces

	Percent	Number
Agent Orange Victims	**18%**	**5,146**
Other Vietnamese with Disabilities	82%	23,874
Total Recipients	100%	29,020

Source: Inclusion Project beneficiaries- Banyan Global, Disability Project_Beneficiary Data, January 2025

THE GOAL

Ensure that, not just 20%, but a large majority of the beneficiaries of U.S. health and disability assistance are people the Vietnamese consider to be war victims of unexploded ordnance and Agent Orange/dioxin.

Three Steps to a Deeper U.S. Partnership with Vietnam

First, provide resources to the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange (VAVA) and the National Action Center for Toxic Chemicals & Environmental Remediation to **update lists of households with disabled war victims** who meet criteria set by the Vietnamese for victims of Agent Orange and unexploded ordnance.

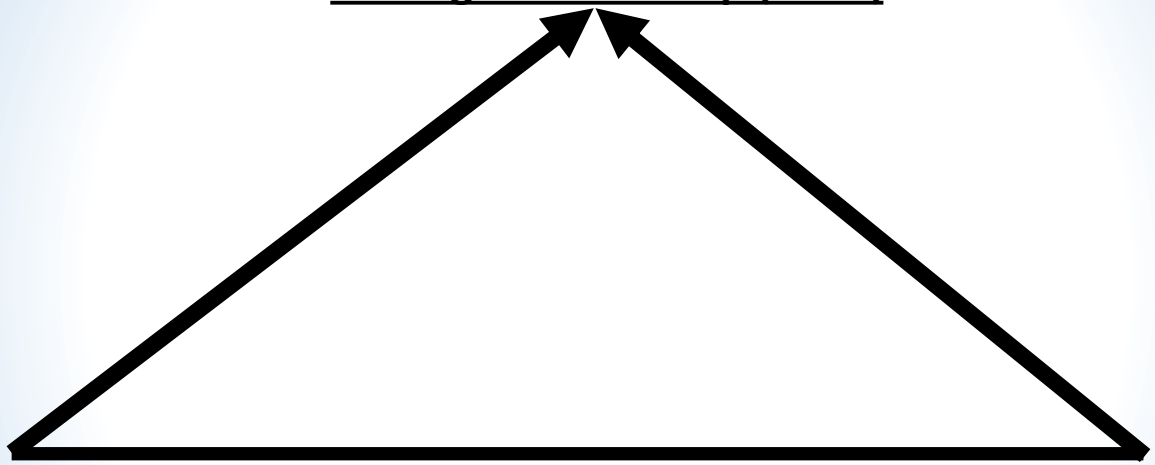
Next, on this list **select households below the poverty line with a severely disabled family member who requires the full time attention of a family caregiver** in the heavily sprayed provinces. Half of the U.S. assistance should go to this group; the other half goes to building stronger social support services.

Third, **make direct household assistance last for three years providing 'wrap around' services tailored to each family's specific needs.** These are services which strengthen family capacity and improve the beneficiary's conditions of life. Examples are housing upgrades to better accommodate disability needs, training and enterprise loans for able-bodied family members, occupational therapy and other social services.

BACKGROUND

As Never Before, Vietnam & the U.S. Are Aligned to Remedy the Post-war Legacy of Agent Orange/Dioxin and Unexploded Ordnance

U.S. -Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (2023)



The Foundations of Partnership

New MOU (Oct. 2025) *between the U.S. &* Vietnam on war legacies aims to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities in provinces heavily affected by Agent Orange.

Senate Resolution 321 (Dec. 2025) "expresses the commitment of the United States to the sustained continuation of funding" for war legacy programs including support for persons with disabilities.

Both Governments Are Devoting Funding to These Needs

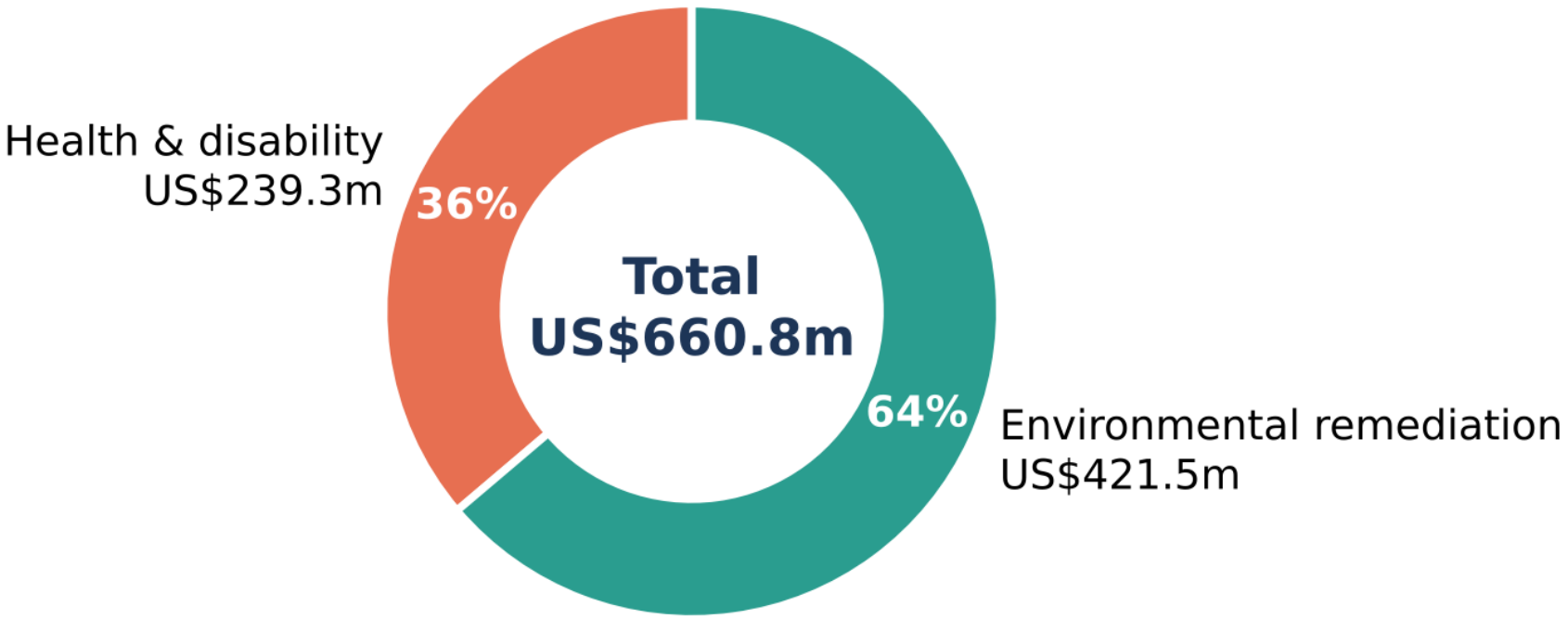
Vietnam spends about $430 million each year on assistance to Agent Orange victims.

The U.S. Congress appropriated $30 million in FY2026 for aid to the disabled in Vietnam, with this requirement:

> "...to assist persons with severe physical mobility, cognitive, or developmental disabilities: Provided, that such funds shall be prioritized to assist persons whose disabilities may be related to the use of Agent Orange and exposure to dioxin, or are the result of unexploded ordnance accidents; "

The U.S. State Department take these Congressional appropriations and distributes them 'regardless of cause' and many Agent Orange victims are missed.

Focus of U.S. Agent Orange Assistance to Vietnam 2007–2026



U.S. Agent Orange Assistance to Vietnam, by Year and Focus 2007–2026

