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NEWS RELEASE

**CapitaLand codevelops its first kindergarten - CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten with the local community through participatory design**  
***Supports inclusive and quality education through funding from CapitaLand Hope Foundation and Singapore-Vietnam partnerships***

**Singapore, 9 May 2018** – CapitaLand is leveraging its real estate expertise and engaging the local community through participatory design to codevelop its first kindergarten, CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten in Vietnam. CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is the 28<sup>th</sup> school in the network of CapitaLand Hope Schools in China and Vietnam, and the third in Vietnam.

CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is supported by CapitaLand’s philanthropic arm, CapitaLand Hope Foundation (CHF), which contributed over S\$215,000 to the construction and enhancement of the school with international non-government organisation World Vision and the Tien Lu District<sup>1</sup> government.

CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is currently the largest school in Le Xa commune, playing a significant role in the holistic development and education for about 350 students aged five and below, providing a safe and child-friendly environment for learning. With CHF’s support, the two-storey kindergarten now has 10 well-equipped classrooms, a teachers’ room, a meeting room, toilets, and the children will also get to enjoy a new playscape, courtyard, sensory wall and murals. Since phase one of the school was completed in late 2017, student enrolment rate at the kindergarten has increased 10% to 73%.

Mr Tan Seng Chai, CapitaLand’s Group Chief People Officer and Executive Director of CapitaLand Hope Foundation, who officiated the inauguration of CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten, said: “At CapitaLand, we are focused and strategic in our corporate philanthropy efforts - from the way we leverage our expertise to help the community, integrating the communities’ needs in the design of our buildings, to supporting underprivileged children’s needs through CapitaLand Hope Foundation. We have been combining CapitaLand’s extensive real estate design, development and master planning capabilities, with the collective efforts of our staff volunteers to build inclusive and sustainable communities across the world.”

“As we celebrated the inauguration of CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten, we also marked our 25<sup>th</sup> International Volunteer Expedition since we started this initiative more than 10 years ago. Through participatory design, we aim to empower the community to influence the development of the children’s education, and give them a greater sense of ownership in creating a better future for the next generation,” added Mr Tan.

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<sup>1</sup> Tien Lu is a rural district located 75 km away from Hanoi, with over 90% of its livelihoods dependent on farming. In the Le Xa commune, about 43% of households survive on less than S\$30 per capita per month.

Mr Chen Lian Pang, Chief Executive Officer, CapitaLand Vietnam said: “Vietnam is a key growth market for CapitaLand and we remain committed to contributing to the country’s urbanisation journey. We recognise that the long-term success of CapitaLand’s business is closely intertwined with the health and prosperity of the communities in which we operate. We seek to improve not just the economic, but also the environmental and social well-being of the community, in line with our credo ‘Building People. Building Communities.’. In total, our three CapitaLand Hope Schools in Vietnam provide quality education to about 650 students each year. Beyond building schools, we also aim to make a meaningful difference by giving time and attention to the children through our volunteer expeditions and programmes. I would like to express our sincere thanks to World Vision, Hung Yen Province and Tien Lu commune for their support in the construction of CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten.”

#### Better education through participatory design

With the aim to create a more inclusive school environment and improve the quality of education for children in the school, CapitaLand’s product and development experts joined faculty, researchers and students from the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) and Vietnam’s National University of Civil Engineering (NUCE), to research on the educational needs of Le Xa commune, the local climate and culture, for the school’s second phase of development.

These research findings were applied in the participatory design workshop jointly organised by CapitaLand with SUTD and NUCE in January 2018. At the workshop, new perspectives and ideas were generated together with the local community, students’ parents and teachers. After multiple iterations, the design prototypes were finally cocreated.

To bring these designs to life, CapitaLand brought together about 80 CapitaLand staff volunteers from markets such as China, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam on CapitaLand’s biannual International Volunteer Expedition (IVE) from 1 to 8 May 2018 to volunteer at the kindergarten. CapitaLand also garnered support from Nippon Paint in the execution of these designs during the IVE, sponsoring paint towards the meaningful cause.

During the expedition, the following designs and amenities were created:

- *Courtyard* – To minimise water retention and flooding during the rainy season, the landscaping at the courtyard serves to provide proper drainage and further level the ground, offering a conducive shared space for the students, teachers and parents to interact.
- *Murals* - Depicting the story of ‘Little Red Riding Hood’ and a local Vietnamese fable ‘Thousand Bamboo Knots’, these illustrations are painted on the walls of the school to not only provide a colourful learning environment, but to also aid the teachers’ efforts in storytelling and engaging the younger students. The murals are also painted with the students’ favourite colours.
- *Playscape* – To address the lack of a play area and offer a safe space for exploration and activities, a colourful playscape is artistically created using locally sourced recycled tyres and water barrels. The playground is modular in nature, to offer new forms of play that cater to a variety of ages.
- *Sensory Wall* - To promote interaction and encourage discovery amongst the students, a sensory wall featuring metal tins, pipes, pots and pans is created. The design elements seek

to stimulate imagination and creativity, and is the first of its kind across the 28 CapitaLand Hope Schools.

CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is the third Hope School in Vietnam after CapitaLand Nang Yen Primary Hope School in the Phu Tho District of Hanoi and CapitaLand Thanh Phuoc Primary Hope School in the Long An District of Ho Chi Minh City.

Vietnam is CapitaLand's third largest market for CapitaLand in Southeast Asia after Singapore and Malaysia, with S\$1 billion worth of gross assets under management in Vietnam as of 31 March 2018. CapitaLand has 12 residential developments, one integrated development and 21 Ascott serviced residences with around 4,700 units, across seven cities in Vietnam.

Please refer to **Annex A** for quotes from a parent of a student and a teacher of CapitaLand Le Ha Hope Kindergarten, and representatives from SUTD and World Vision. The building of CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is the third time CapitaLand has adopted the participatory design methodology to create inclusive and meaningful designs for the community. For more about CapitaLand's participatory design efforts, please see **Annex B**.

#### **About CapitaLand Limited ([www.capitaland.com](http://www.capitaland.com))**

CapitaLand is one of Asia's largest real estate companies. Headquartered and listed in Singapore, it is an owner and manager of a global portfolio worth S\$91 billion as at 31 March 2018, comprising integrated developments, shopping malls, serviced residences, offices, homes, real estate investment trusts (REITs) and funds. Present across more than 150 cities in over 30 countries, the Group focuses on Singapore and China as core markets, while it continues to expand in markets such as Vietnam and Indonesia.

CapitaLand's competitive advantage is its significant asset base and extensive market network. Coupled with extensive design, development and operational capabilities, the Group develops and manages high-quality real estate products and services. It also has one of the largest investment management businesses in Asia and a stable of five REITs listed in Singapore and Malaysia – CapitaLand Mall Trust, CapitaLand Commercial Trust, Ascott Residence Trust, CapitaLand Retail China Trust and CapitaLand Malaysia Mall Trust.

#### **About CapitaLand Hope Foundation ([www.capitalandhopefoundation.com](http://www.capitalandhopefoundation.com))**

CapitaLand Hope Foundation, the philanthropic arm of CapitaLand, was established in 2005 to further CapitaLand's community development commitment to 'Building People. Building Communities', by recognising that the long-term success of the company's business is closely intertwined with the health and prosperity of the communities in which it operates. Every year, CapitaLand allocates up to 0.5% of its net operating profit to the Foundation to promote social growth and development of underprivileged children with respect to their education, healthcare and shelter needs. CapitaLand Hope Foundation is a registered charity in Singapore and strongly believes each child has within them the potential for greatness, which if nurtured and built upon, can bring significant value to future societies. Going beyond donations associated with charitable giving, the Foundation also focuses on giving time and attention to the children beneficiaries through advocating volunteerism. The strong commitment of volunteers embodies CapitaLand's mission to care for and contribute to the economic, environmental and social development of communities.

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## Annex A – Quotes from beneficiaries and partners

**Ms Do Thi Vui, mother of 4-year-old twins Nguyen Ba Minh Khanh and Minh Khoi who are studying in CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten,** said: “My sons had to study in a small, dark and dilapidated storeroom that was previously used to keep fertiliser. The kindergarten borrowed money to repair it and then separated it into two small rooms of 15m<sup>2</sup> each to use as classrooms in 2005. The building was built a long time ago in 1967; walls were rotten and the roof leaked. It was not safe nor suitable for children to study in. Whenever it rained, the room was often very wet because of the leaking roof and rotten walls and windows. Because the school had so many problems at that time, I often kept my sons at home.”

“Now many other parents and I are delighted with the beautiful kindergarten; our children can access many learning kits and toys in a safe and bright classroom; they are also getting nutritious lunches there. I can go to work with peace of mind. On behalf of all parents, I would like to thank CapitaLand Hope Foundation and World Vision for supporting our children. With the new building, many generations of children in Le Xa commune will benefit from this support.”

**Ms Vu Thi Giang, teacher of 5-year-old class at CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten,** shared: “With the new school, all of us are very happy; the teachers are now able to provide learning programmes that are age appropriate and there is less overcrowding. The new classrooms have been encouraging us to give our best to educate our children.”

**Assistant Professor Dr Chong Keng Hua, Architecture and Sustainable Design, Singapore University of Technology and Design,** said: “We are really glad to be part of this meaningful project by CapitaLand Hope Foundation. As part of the pilot research project under SUTD-MIT International Design Centre<sup>2</sup>, with support from SUTD O-Lab<sup>3</sup>, it is a unique opportunity for SUTD students to collaborate with the students and faculty from NUCE, to apply design thinking and participatory design processes in working with members of the Le Xa commune, and furthermore see their designs implemented in real life. We hope such cross-cultural collaboration will leave sustainable impact on the local community and improve the lives of the children in the area.”

**Ms Lilian Chung, National Director, World Vision Singapore,** said: “Our vision for every child is to have fullness of life and we believe that this is achieved by working with like-minded partners such as CapitaLand. We have been partnering with CapitaLand and its serviced residence unit Ascott for over 10 years to support various initiatives.<sup>4</sup> CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is part of World Vision’s ongoing development programme to support Tien Lu District in Vietnam and together, we hope that providing quality early childhood development programme through the kindergarten will help the children achieve literacy and a good head start in life.”

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<sup>2</sup> SUTD-MIT International Design Centre (IDC) is a leading global hub for innovation-ready design research, science and practice. Working with governmental bodies, NGOs and corporate stakeholders, it addresses the societal and ecological challenges of today and turn them into business opportunities and growth engines of tomorrow. <https://idc.sutd.edu.sg/>

<sup>3</sup> SUTD Opportunity Lab (O-Lab) is a multidisciplinary educational laboratory, led by Dr Chong Keng Hua and Dr Samson Lim, that seeks to understand and enhance the role that design and designers play in social change. <http://olab.sutd.edu.sg/about-us/>

<sup>4</sup> World Vision’s past partnerships with Ascott and CapitaLand also included raising funds for immunisation, nutrition and medical treatments in China; building a school dormitory in Thailand; and relief efforts in areas devastated by super typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines.

## **Annex B – CapitaLand and Participatory Design**

The building of CapitaLand Le Xa Hope Kindergarten is the third time CapitaLand has adopted participatory design to create inclusive and meaningful designs for the community. Participatory design involves designing with different stakeholders in the community and giving them the ability to influence and shape the project processes and outcomes.

### **CapitaLand Young Architect Programme (July - Nov 2017)**

CapitaLand Young Architect Programme (CLYAP) is funded by CapitaLand Hope Foundation, and supported by People's Association, Community Development Councils (CDCs) and the National University of Singapore (NUS). CLYAP aims to inspire the younger generation to play a role in shaping real estate of the future and sets out to empower the community in rethinking the design and infrastructure of public spaces around their neighbourhood through participatory design.

Seventy secondary students across five districts participated in a three-month mentorship programme to gain first-hand experience in designing sustainable solutions for community spaces. These aspiring young architects actively sought inputs from residents and other stakeholders in their neighbourhoods to develop ideas for a diverse range of communal spaces, including void decks, pavilions for senior citizens and youth centres.

Five product and design experts from CapitaLand mentored and shared their knowledge on the building industry and advised the students on how to apply design and architectural concepts as well as develop feasible solutions for the community. Twelve students from NUS 'Architecture Design Facilitation' course also joined as mentors. The CDCs are conducting feasibility studies to explore implementing some of the winning designs in their respective districts.

CLYAP culminated in the students' prized works being featured in a public exhibition at IMM outlet mall, from 3 to 12 November 2017. Aside from having their projects on display, five students from the inaugural cohort who clinched the Young Architect Award, were each rewarded with a special student immersion programme with CapitaLand during the December school holidays. The immersion programme involves experiential tours of CapitaLand's iconic properties in Singapore and the opportunity to work with project development experts from CapitaLand.

### **CapitaLand-Ascott GK Eco Village (May 2017)**

CapitaLand Hope Foundation contributed 3 million Philippine pesos (about S\$83,000) to construct 20 houses for 20 underprivileged families in the CapitaLand-Ascott GK Eco Village. The project is a collaboration with CapitaLand's serviced residence unit, The Ascott Limited (Ascott), and local non-governmental organisation Gawad Kalinga.

Close to 80 CapitaLand and Ascott staff volunteers and management from eight countries helped build these houses over a five-day volunteer expedition to Batangas City from 13 to 17 May 2017. The CapitaLand-Ascott GK Eco Village is built with reusable wood and has environmentally-friendly features such as an organic farm as well as local water filtering.

CapitaLand hosted four students from the National University of Singapore who conducted a participatory design workshop to better understand the needs of the local villagers and to identify the community facilities that would best serve the community.

The students engaged the villagers in a three-day workshop to understand their daily lifestyle and challenges, map out their daily routine and the places they frequently visit. The students facilitated discussions that allowed the villagers to prioritise the facilities they would like to have. The community facilities shortlisted included having sporting facilities or a playground, water tank for farming, a library and an area for the villagers to park their tricycles.