

# Children of Vietnam

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# CHILDREN OF VIETNAM

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

November, 2015

## Change Service Requested

### Note our new mailing address!

PO Box 18039  
Greensboro, NC 27419

### Note our new phone number!

336.235.0981



## Children of Vietnam Legacy Society

Leave a legacy that continues your commitment and concern beyond your lifetime. Join the Children of Vietnam Legacy Society by making a gift to Children of Vietnam in your will. For more information please contact Ben Wilson, President, at 336.727.1110 or email him at [bwilson8202@triad.rr.com](mailto:bwilson8202@triad.rr.com).

## Building bright futures for vulnerable children...here's how:

MAKE A DONATION. Your continuing gift gives an education, safe and stable housing, sound nutrition, and good healthcare for poor, orphaned and disabled children — you are lighting the path out of poverty.

### Educating

- Tutoring an orphan at risk of leaving school. . . . . \$20
- Keeping a child in school with books, paper, pencils, uniforms. . . . . \$55
- Helping a child arrive at school on time, safe and ready to learn with a bike . . . . . \$70

### Healing

- Eliminating parasite infections for an entire kindergarten class. . . . . \$20
- Giving emergency hospital support for seriously ill children . . . . . \$100
- Helping a child with disabilities grow to his/her potential . . . . . \$350

### Sheltering

- Building a bathroom for an ethnic minority family . . . . . \$400
- Supplying enough bricks to build a home for a family. . . . . \$500

### Nurturing

- Gifting a box of holiday food for a family . . . . . \$25
- Feeding 2,500 vulnerable children specialized vitamin-fortified porridge . . . . . \$50
- Empowering a mother with a micro-loan . . . . . \$700

**Cảm ơn! Thank you!**



## 2015 Plans With Your Help

### Educating

- 600 children stay in school
- 151 orphans & street children tutored
- 25 girls empowered through education
- 69 youth go to college
- 100 children have bikes for school
- 2 villages have kindergartens

### Healing

- 26,000 children stay worm free
- 30 children receive emergency care

### Sheltering

- 40 villagers have toilets
- 100 villagers have clean water
- 10 families in safe homes

### Nurturing

- 87 orphans have daily milk
- 200 children with disabilities treated
- 50 single mothers run successful businesses
- 1,000,000 meals for hungry children & families

## From the President, Country Director & Executive Director

Dear Friends,

The children and families whose futures you are transforming are so very much more than their struggles and challenges.

Poverty hurts, stifles, and makes children and families so very vulnerable, but it is their enduring spirit to do more, be more, and push through these challenges that is inspiring.

- ♥ It is Phuc, a young adolescent with a mobility disability, who received physical therapy and a microloan to start his own business. To leverage this opportunity, he first created his own vocational training by going to a local barber asking for mentorship. He now earns nearly \$140 a month from his own shop.
- ♥ It is the bond of sisterhood expressed when Thai, a single mom, while attend one of our business training for single mothers, stood up and reflected with the other women she came to know over the day ... “I am no longer a single mother.”
- ♥ It is a new teacher, one of our university scholarship students, who is now tutoring orphans and shares with her young charges, “failure is the mother of success.”

We thank you for joining with us and seeing not only the challenges, but also the possibilities for a new and better future for these children.

*Ben Wilson*  
Ben Wilson  
President

*Luong Thi Huong*  
Luong Thi Huong  
Country Director

*Nancy Letteri*  
Nancy Letteri  
Executive Director



(l-r) Luong Thi Huong, Country Director, Ben Wilson, President, and Nancy Letteri, Executive Director in front of COV office in Danang

## Toilets - The untalked about need

In 2010, COV was invited by Tay Giang District, the very mountainous district of Quang Nam Province, to assist the nearly 8,000 C’Tu ethnic minority find ways to improve the quality of life for families. So now why toilets... Well toilets are an unmet need for the gentle C’Tu families. 97% live in poverty and live day to day doing subsistence farming.

We don’t talk about toilets very much but the need is VERY real. UNICEF estimates that in Vietnam, “6.5 % of the population resort to open defecation and close to half of the population in rural areas do not use sanitation facilities.” Open defecation leads to diseases including parasitic infestations which can cause malnutrition, disease transmission and other medical conditions. To date we have helped 40 families with household toilets. Our sincere thanks to all our donors who are helping these families one toilet at a time.

## Kindergartens and water filters too!

We have achieved even more great results for the C’Tu people . . . constructing six kindergartens in villages so remote they are only accessible in good weather, and training safe sanitation practices and distributing over 200 water filters to these villages. The local government has supported all of our work by making contributions of labor and funds for all of these projects. Our goal is to build 19 more kindergartens and to continue distributing water filters. All of you, our donors, have made this possible.



C’Tu Children in front of new toilet



## She Could Not Image Her Life This Way

In the past Ngà had a happy life with her husband and her two little pretty daughters. Every day, Ngà and her husband went to work at an electric company of an industrial zone with low but stable income so they were happy. However, in 2011 there was an upheaval in her family that changed her life forever. It was the monsoon season and the rain was nonstop. Schools were closing early. So the couple had to leave work. Ngà went home to prepare for dinner, and her husband went to the school to get their girls. On the way to the school, Ngà's husband was swept away by the water and he went away forever.

Ngà gave up her work at electric company, and she tried to start a small business for coffee and groceries hoping to make up the income from her husband. But she was always behind. She could not image her life this way. Ngà's story is not unusual. Women in Vietnam are more likely to experience higher rates of unemployment and to have 'vulnerable forms of employment.' Lack of access to financial capital is the factor most cited in surveys and interviews as a constraint to entrepreneurial development in Vietnam.

COV's Empowering Foundations for Women & Their Children (EFWC) training and micro-credit programs allow women to overcome these barriers to successful entrepreneurship.



Ngà's grocery store

This summer, Ngà was selected to join COV's EFWC. She was given a small microloan to expand her grocery business, she received training on business management, and she was provided with a full health check. Equally helpful and important, the girls, now in 4th and 2nd grade, were given a school scholarship for books and uniforms, a lamp to study at night and a bike to share to ride to school. All of this totaled \$639... a small amount for a new lease on life. Ngà shared that she is so happy and promises to try all her best to change the life for her daughters.

We are delighted to share this new data with our program supporters that 65.31% of women enrolled in EFWC for two years or longer now live above the poverty line with regular, stable income. And there is more good news:

- Average monthly household earnings have increased by 31%.
- 100% of loan payments have been made on schedule except for one loan which was forgiven due to typhoon damage.
- Not even ONE of the children in these households has left school. Many have graduated high school and are now employed; remarkably, **13 currently attend college** through our scholarship program. The increased self-esteem of the mothers and the pride of their families is without measure. We are so proud of these women and their children!



Ngà & her children

## "Pill Day" for Thousands of School Children



1 tablet, 1 drink of water and the children are protected for 6 months

children everywhere wiggling and giggling happy for this change of schedule.

The children look with curiosity at the doctors in white coats, nurses and COV DaNang staff. Today is "Pill Day." This day happens twice a year for all children in Hoa Vang when COV partners with health clinic staff and the schools to distribute medicine that will keep these children parasite free.

Intestinal worms thrive where poverty,

malnutrition, inadequate sanitation, and minimal health care and awareness exist. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates over 10 million children in Vietnam are infected with intestinal parasites. Further, WHO classifies parasites as among the six most dangerous diseases that infect humans. Infections have been shown to have a negative impact on cognitive tasks and long-term health. Parasites consume over 30% of the food digested by a child, basically stealing the food away from the child and causing illness and even death if not treated. School children in Hoa Vang, between 25,000-30,000 per year, have benefited from "Pill Day" for eleven years. . . that is nearly 640,000 doses thanks to all of the incredible support from you, our donors.

row. They are like



Students lined up for medication

Parasite health check before dosing



Parasite health check before dosing

School children in Hoa Vang, between 25,000-30,000 per year, have benefited from "Pill Day" for eleven years. . . that is nearly 640,000 doses thanks to all of the incredible support from you, our donors.

## COV University Graduates Tutoring Orphans

Our tutoring program is changing, and we could not be happier. Our goal is to increase the level of academic achievement for all of the children at the Hoa Mai Orphanage. To do this, we hired six recently



Tutors who graduate from COV's University Scholarship Program

new tutors all come from very poor families and understand the stresses that many of the children at the orphanage may be experiencing. We think these new teachers

will serve as excellent mentors as well. Our tutors will teach lessons after school for grades 6-12 as these students are under severe pressure to earn excellent grades for acceptance into a good high school and university. Subjects covered will be math, physics, chemistry, literature and English. Join us in wishing great academic success for all of the children at Hoa Mai Orphanage!



Tutoring the students at Hoa Mai



Tutoring for the 80 children at Hoa Mai Orphanage

## Expanding Disability Services to Meet the Needs of Rural Families

He kept his eyes down looking at the ground. Who was this boy that has caught my eye standing with his mother? I asked to be introduced and found out quickly what a sweet boy he was. His mother smiled next to him, very happy as her son was identified to be part of our Hope System of Care for Children with Disabilities (HSC). In Vietnam thousands of children suffer disabilities linked to Agent Orange exposure of their parents or grandparents.. Through this program, he was

HSC promotes the rights of children with disabilities to develop to their fullest potential, assists children and their parents in gaining access to critical interventions, and promotes the "voice" of this vulnerable population.

During the month of September, I had the opportunity to meet many more children like this young boy. There was the 5 year old girl who was born totally blind and the boy born without an outer ear and profoundly deaf. I met with parents



Young boy with malformed ear and who is deaf



Mother and daughter who is blind



Parent talking with an expert about her child



Mother and boy recuperating after heart surgery standing with Houg (Country Director) and Nancy (Executive Director)

afforded a heart surgery. He is slowly growing stronger and hopes to be able to attend school soon. According to UNICEF, half of all children with disabilities are illiterate; 85% do not finish primary school.

who told the story of their children with looks of love, worry and hope. With your help, we are making hope become a reality. Thank you. – Nancy Letteri, COV Executive Director

## SCHOOL!

September is a huge month for everyone here at Children of Vietnam. Thanks to you, our donors, we see more than 600 young bright faces head to another school year. This year our scholarship award ceremonies were combined with the Mid-Autumn Festival. The days were happy and filled with bright colors of gold and red, dragons, lanterns and sweets for all the children.



## Want to Stay Informed?

We are passionate about giving children a bright future, and we love to share our good news about the children we serve! If you want more current updates, sign up for our e-newsletter sent out 4-6 times a year. Send us your email address (we will not share it) to: [info@childrenofvietnam.org](mailto:info@childrenofvietnam.org) with "e-newsletter request" in the subject line.

- Or -

Visit our Facebook page at [Facebook.com/childrenofvietnam](https://www.facebook.com/childrenofvietnam)





March 10-14, 2016  
JOIN OUR CAMPAIGN



## DO YOU KNOW how riding a bike can help reduce child poverty in Vietnam?

Not long ago, bicycles were the most popular way for Vietnamese people to get around, whether going to school, work, or the local market. Now-a-days families use the motorbike with as many as five people on board, small children sandwiched between their parents, traveling at speeds up to 20 miles an hour. It is now children in Vietnam who depend on the bicycle to get to school ready to learn. And it is this cycling to school each day that will pave a path out of poverty for those children whose families struggle to earn enough for daily food.

### IN HONOR OF THESE CHILDREN CYCLING EACH DAY . . .

We invite you to join our group of ordinary bike riders and ride through Vietnam's exquisite countryside on March 10-14, 2016. We will set out from Da Nang in Central Vietnam to ride for four days through some of the world's most beautiful scenery -- brilliant green rice paddies, rolling hills in the shadow of distant mountains, and finally back to Da Nang along the sparkling waters of the East Vietnam Sea. The four-day route will cover 135 miles (217 kilometers), or about less than 50 miles a day.

Or can't join us in Vietnam? Form a team of your own and ride your bike at home while friends sponsor your ride. Or ride a stationary bike on your campus or health club!

Gather your friends, family and colleagues to sponsor you and make a difference. For information on registration, costs, and a kit for gaining sponsors, send an email to: [info@childrenofvietnam.org](mailto:info@childrenofvietnam.org) or call: 336.235.0981.

