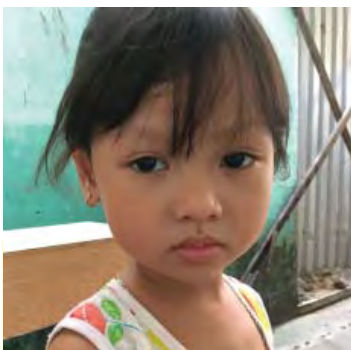




CHILDREN OF VIETNAM

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

November 2017



From the President, Country Director & Executive Director,

Children of Vietnam will be 20 years old in 2018. How can twenty years pass so fast? Tempus fugit (time flies)! Was it the enjoyment of seeing thousands of lovely smiling faces? Was it happy voices of children now able to walk and play? Was it children with renewed and healthy bodies? Was it poor children no longer hungry as their tummies are full? Was it children with an insatiable thirst for learning who are now satisfied?



Ben with scholarship recipients

And now, through all the LOOONG days in central Vietnam riding on Hondas through stifling heat, chilling rain, dust galore in summer and mud aplenty in winter we see the light at the end of the tunnel of poverty. There stands THOUSANDS of children, precious eyes smiling as they now have a decent life—all because you have given of yourselves, your time and your resources to make their good life a reality.

The countless days of writing grants, chasing every lead for funding and driving our friends, colleagues and family crazy has been our normal routine for nearly 20 years! All for the benefit of the children—and well worth every minute!

For you, dear friends of Children of Vietnam we thank you sincerely! As we celebrate the past over the next 12 months, we are also looking to the future with the goal of eliminating child poverty in Vietnam. Our journey is not yet complete, but we can see the light thanks to you!

Cảm ơn bạn,

Ben Wilson
President

Luong Thi Huong
Country Director

Nancy F. Letteri
Executive Director

**Poverty hurts children.
The impact is lasting.
It is multifaceted.**

Poverty

37% of all children in Vietnam live in poverty

Poor health

10 million children are infested with parasites

Poor nutrition

24% of children under 5 are malnourished

No sanitation

41% of children do not have hygienic toilets

No clean water

Unsafe water & sanitation accounts for nearly half of the communicable diseases

Low income

Minimum wage in Vietnam only meets between 50% to 70% of basic needs

Minimal or no education

80% of children with disabilities never attend school or drop out of school

Look What You've Done

Children of Vietnam will be 20 years old in 2018.

Over the next 12 months, we will be celebrating the past and looking to the future. To kick off this celebration, we are happy to share with you a few life-changing milestones. Thank you for walking with us on this incredible journey.

8,553,600 vitamin fortified meals to hungry children.

43 Kindergartens constructed giving **8,800** children an early start to a brighter future.

394,943 children provided parasite remediation treatments.

4,065 interventions for **813** children with disabilities including those affected by Agent Orange.

350 single mother households given increased livelihood to support their **681** children.

11,066 children have access to an education through scholarships and educational aids.



Typhoon Damrey—Homes and Livelihoods Destroyed

We have seen first-hand what can happen when the destructive force of nature makes landfall. Sadly, this has not just been a terrible year in Texas and Puerto Rico, it has also happened in Vietnam affecting over 4 million people, including 1 million children. Typhoon Damrey, Vietnam's 12th major storm this year, wreaked havoc with a prolonged downpour of rain causing massive flooding and mudslides. So far 106 people died, nearly 1,500 homes destroyed and 120,000 damaged. In the mountains, where we help hundreds of children with kindergartens, 40 families lost their homes in mud slides. Landslides and flooding are devastating wherever they occur, but in these rural villages that have so little to begin with, they are life

altering.

In the rural DaNang areas and in Quang Nam province, villages were completely flooded. This is where many of our children with disabilities and single mother beneficiaries live. This flooding not only destroyed homes but also destroyed livelihoods—crops ruined, fishing boats damaged, chickens and cows lost, and clothes and household items gone.

Fortunately, we have started an emergency fund and are immediately bringing relief supplies to the truly grateful families. You can pitch-in by making your donation designated to our DISASTER/EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND.

www.childrenofvietnam.org/donate/



Linh, Lĩnh and Linh—Sisters at Risk of Leaving School

To meet these three sisters is to fall in love. Each are charming and each unique. Last year they lost their father due to an illness. Now they band together with their older

The sisters' mother works as a handywoman in a textile company but the income is only \$90 per month, that is only .60 cents per day per family member. To help out, this past



brother and widowed mother to do what they can to survive and still stay in school. The girls are in 5th, 8th and 12th grade. These bright young girls are 3 of the over 600 children supported each year with school scholarships thanks to your gifts.

Linh, the youngest, won a school art contest by drawing a landscape with an ocean and island. Lĩnh, the middle sister loves math and wants to be a fashion designer. Linh the oldest is a star soccer player.

This family has one more challenge to overcome. The middle sister has developed a tumor over her left eye that is slowly growing. Luckily it is not malignant, but she will eventually need surgery, a huge cost for this very tight knit family.

Unfortunately, only 49.7% of school-aged children attend school beyond 9th grade. Children do not attend or drop out of school for two primary reasons: their families cannot afford school expenses or they have to work to support their families. (UNICEF School Attendance Report)

summer all three sisters worked from 6 am to 2 pm in a fish factory packing boxes with fish. Their brother worked as a bricklayer. But now it is school time, and they are back in school. The question is for how long; will they need to dropout and limit their futures simply to put food on the table and pay for medical costs?



Pink Pills are a BIG Deal

As the school day starts there is a sea of first graders lined up, giggling and pushing. They seem happy and carefree as they await the medical checkup and the little pink pill they take twice a year. These children look just like happy healthy first graders anywhere in the world. And they are, because those pink pills keep them parasite free and able to live and grow normally.



For children in rural Vietnam, intestinal parasites are an obstacle to physical and mental development, school attendance and good health. Intestinal worms thrive where poverty, malnutrition, inadequate sanitation, and minimal health care exist. According to the World Health Organization, over 10 million children in Vietnam are infested, living with chronic abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and fatigue. Infestation even at low levels makes unnecessary demands on a child's resources, hindering proper physical and mental development.

This can result in stunted growth, chronic diseases, cognitive impairment and a host of difficulties that will follow children into adulthood. These children deserve to be parasite free. Your support has enabled COV to administer treatment to 394,943 children during the past twelve years. Our hope is that together we can eliminate parasites from all the children in the near future.



IRA Required Minimum Distribution

Required to take a minimum distribution from your IRA? You have the option to distribute tax free by directing it to the charity of your choice. Your distribution can support charitable causes and get a tax break while meeting tax requirements for IRAs. Please contact your financial advisor for more information and consider Children of Vietnam in your discussions.

When will my head become smaller?

It was twenty-three years after the war ended when COV was founded in 1998. People were in deep economic despair. Only 4 years earlier, the U.S. had lifted the trade embargo against Vietnam. Children were suffering and remediating pain and suffering was the top priority. In 2006, we were taken on a tour by a local official to visit some of these families in need. What we saw was nothing less than crushing...children whose families were so loving but so poor they had no option but watch their children with disabilities languish. Why so many children we asked, and the locals told us . . . *"Agent Orange is still affecting our children."* This from a war that ended years ago.

Fast forward to today and meet Vy, a friendly and cheerful child. Yet she was born with hydrocephalus, one of the disabilities identified by the US Dept. of Veterans Affairs as linked to Agent Orange exposure. The Vietnam Red Cross estimates that 150,000 Vietnamese children are disabled due to their parent's exposure to dioxin. As it turns out, one of Vy's



Vy with her dog

grandparents served during the war as a guerrilla and was stationed in the mountainous areas of Danang and Quang Nam province where Agent Orange spraying occurred.

When we met Vy, we enrolled her in our program for children with disabilities, Hope System of Care, and provided health checks, physical therapy, support to attend kindergarten to prepare her for elementary school and monthly nutritional support. Vy's parents could not afford any of these interventions. Vy is now in 2nd grade, happy and with many friends even though she often gets sick and has difficulty learning in school. She sometimes makes a joke by asking her mother, *"when will my head become smaller?"*

To date, over 813 children just like Vy, have been helped with your support. To date you have enabled COV to provide 4,065 life-changing interventions. Some of these children's disabilities are linked to Agent Orange, others are not. Regardless, ALL children deserve to develop to their full potential. As we look to the future, let's continue to work together to ensure this happens.

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Children of Vietnam

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PO Box 18039
Greensboro, NC 27419

Our phone number!

336.235.0981



Remember COV in your Workplace.

Federal Employees: our CFC # is 15685.
State Employees: COV is included in CA, FL & NC campaigns.

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

MAKE A DONATION TO HONOR OF A LOVED ONE

— you are lighting the path out of poverty.

Disaster Relief

Provides emergency food and supplies for families affected by typhoons...\$65

Educating

Keeps a child in school with books, pencils, uniforms and a bike ...\$145

Awards a university scholarship for 1 of 4 years to a poor student ...\$515

Healing

Eliminates parasite infections for an entire school of 200 ...\$112

Gives critical care to a child with disabilities for 1 year...\$350

Sheltering

Trains an entire community handwashing and other hygiene ...\$100

Builds a bathroom for an ethnic minority family...\$700

Nurturing

Feeds 1,250 vulnerable children specialized vitamin-fortified porridge ...\$25

Provides business and life skills training for a single mother ...\$50

Invests in a single mother to improve her family's economic stability ...\$320



Cảm ơn! Thank you!



November 17, 2017

Dear Friend of Children of Vietnam,

During this holiday season, here's our promise to you. With your gift, you can build a bright future . . . give hope . . . change the world . . . for a child right now.

As we look back over nearly 20 years, we have seen so many children . . .



- * walk for the first time with physical therapy
- * dance and prance in their new kindergarten
- * succeed in school and head off to college
- * hear for the first time with hearing aids
- * learn and grow because of a nutritious meal

Over 500,000 poor, orphaned and disabled children were given what they needed to develop to their fullest potential. We give thanks to you for making this possible.

And yet, our work is not done . . .

Vulnerable children still need help. Each is unique, each has talents and challenges, each is precious. Join us in providing what their life circumstance cannot...hearing aids, school clothes and books, sanitary toilets and clean water, medical care, a warm meal.

Help us reach our funding goal of \$100,000. We work efficiently, effectively, and tirelessly because each child matters.

Please give generously this season and continue to transform the future for a child.

With sincere appreciation,

Ben Wilson
President & Founder

Nancy F. Letter
Executive Director

Luong This Huong
Country Director

P.S. Your gift now will feed, education, heal and aid more children living in poverty this coming year. Thank you.

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Cycling Out Child Poverty & 20th Anniversary Celebration

Children of Vietnam will be 20 years in 2018. As part of our year-long celebration, join us by Cycling Out Child Poverty!

We need your legs and YOUR hearts...**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**—MARCH 15-17 2018 for the trip of a lifetime that will change lives. JOIN OUR DANANG TEAM and cycle through the rolling hills and rice patties of Vietnam make stops along the way to meet the children and families who have and will benefit from YOUR participation.

You can't make the trip to Vietnam? WE STILL NEED YOU! You can challenge yourself and form a team to ride the same the number of miles that our DaNang Team will be riding. Corporate, Family and Friend Teams are a great way to motivate one another while raising money for children who truly need you. Ride solo, on a team or even on a stationary bike—we just NEED your legs and your hearts.

If you would like participate please contact Suzanne Fulcher at sfulcher.childrenofvietnam@gmail.com to get started.



Why a Founders Circle?

- Founders have laid the foundational pillars upon which COV has built its programs—compassion, dedication, innovation, respect, partnerships, effectiveness, efficiency and transparency.
- A circle because it's the universal symbol of love and connectedness that your support has helped to greatly enlarge, with children at the center of that circle.



Each Newsletter we will highlight one of the members of this prestigious society letting everyone know the impact that you have made on the lives of children. COV will be reaching out to individuals, but we need YOUR input, stories and memories. If you were there when we started, please contact Suzanne Fulcher, Director of Donor Relations, sfulcher.childrenofvietnam@gmail.com or 336-847-4380. We want YOU in our circle.