



Viet Nam Health Improvement Project

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Season's greetings!

Thank you!

**We couldn't do the work we do
without your generous and continued support**

The Griffin Foundation
The Henkel organization
The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS
Foundation
The Maddox Foundation

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Nam Giang Health and Hygiene



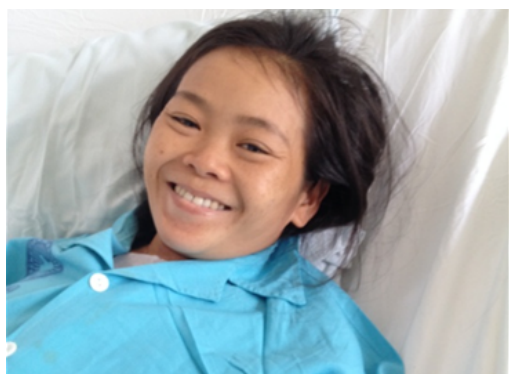
Clean hands prevent disease

In the last 6 months, we have provided hand washing training sessions in all 16 schools in Ca Dy commune, Nam Giang District. These sessions were run by VNHIP staff with the support of the school teachers. During the training we encouraged the children to answer the questions so they felt more confident and remembered the knowledge better. We set up 70 hand washing stations and provided soap for all 16 schools.

After the equipment was installed and the soap provided, the students, teachers and cooking staff are washing their hands much more often, especially the children. The children are now counting while they are washing their hands to make sure they complete all steps properly. They and the teachers also maintain the equipment very well.

Through the teachers we are monitoring the health of the students in the schools and know that the number of children with gastrointestinal disorders, such as abdominal pain and diarrhoea, is decreasing.

Cardiac Care



Hanh's surgery has changed her life

VNHIP supported surgeries for 14 people in 2015, but still has 5 people on the waiting list. The most common diagnoses were valve disease and congenital heart disease. Each patient had successful surgeries in Da Nang or Hue hospital. All the patients were able to go back to work after their treatment and are leading full and active lives once again. On average, we contribute a third of the cost of the surgery with the remainder coming from insurance and from the family. We are happy to not only contribute to saving these people's lives, but also to bring them some security.

Non-Communicable Diseases



VNHIP protocol improving patient care

In October 2015, the VNHIP team met with the WHO non-communicable diseases team to discuss progress on the wider use of the protocol we developed in order to better manage hypertension and diabetes in Vietnam at the commune level. The officers from WHO informed us that the protocol was being trialed in one province and that its use would be expanded throughout Vietnam over the next five years.

Children Living with HIV

One of VNHIP's goals is to improve the health and wellbeing of children living with HIV in central Vietnam and to improve the financial status of families living with HIV. We now have regular contact with 14 children living with HIV and their families.



Loans help families income security



Children celebrate the Full Moon Festival



Oral health education at EMWDC



Dental care is important for kids with HIV

Microcredit Program

During 2015, we introduced a microcredit program. The Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation provided a grant to assist eligible families to start or expand their current income generating activities, mainly raising cows or running a small shop. Six families now have interest free loans for five years and are making quarterly repayments. The repayments will be reinvested in granting loans to new beneficiaries.

Some families do not have the confidence that they can repay a loan because they have so little. For instance, a single parent who is HIV positive has four children and two of them are living with HIV. She would like to raise more chickens in a bigger coop but she is not confident that she can make the quarterly repayments. For her and for two other vulnerable families we have found sponsors who help with school fees, supplies and clothes, and transportation and medication costs to ease the stress of loan repayment.

Social Activities

In small communities, the stigma of HIV may lead to social isolation for the family as people are afraid of their children mixing with a child living with HIV. These isolated families need the opportunity to talk to each other about how they are managing their day to day difficulties. Recently, we organized the full moon festival where the families met with each other and shared experiences. With the help of sponsors we covered the cost of transportation and participation to make sure everyone could come even if they lived far away.

Dental Care

Dental care is particularly important for people with HIV as some medications used to treat HIV can reduce the amount of saliva that is produced in the mouth. People with reduced saliva experience an increase in tooth decay and infections in the soft tissue of their mouths. In addition, people with a weakened immune system are prone to developing specific oral health problems, such as thrush, mouth ulcers and gingivitis.

VNHIP has a new collaboration with East Meets West Dental Center (EMWDC) to provide dental education, assessment and treatment to the children living with HIV. Nine children and their families received much needed oral health education and dental treatment in September and October. The children will now receive this care every year and we will share the costs with the EMW Dental Center.

Other News

Forging links with other NGOs

In October, the VNHIP team visited a number of large NGOs in Hanoi: Save the Children, World Vision, Plan International, UNICEF and WHO. From these meetings we found that our approach to health problems in Vietnam was in line with the approaches being used by others. We gathered current resource materials we can use and showcased the work we are doing here in Central Vietnam. We also found out that World Vision is beginning work in Nam Giang and have since met with the local team who are keen to work in partnership with us. We were most appreciative of the time and generosity of the large NGOs and plan to visit again annually.

VNHIP welcomes visiting midwives

In November, VNHIP had a visit from a group of midwives from Australia and the UK who were on a Jon Baines Tour of Vietnam. The midwives were particularly interested in our work with children living with HIV and the work with schools in Nam Giang. We enjoyed the opportunity to showcase our work and appreciated the donation made.



Children with disabilities

In November, the VNHIP team provided handwashing education to the staff and children with disabilities at the Kianh Centre. This centre provides education to 90 children. The children loved the session and have since been washing their hands with soap much more regularly.



OUR NEW VOLUNTEER

Lenora Lippmann

Lenora joined the VNHIP team in June 2015 as a program management coach. Like our other volunteer Andrew, Lenora is here with the support of Australian Volunteers in International Development (AVID), an Australian Government initiative.

Most recently Lenora worked on an HIV program in Kenya and prior to that, she has been working to improve primary care through capacity building with general practice in Victoria, Australia. She has managed statewide primary care programs in mental health, chronic disease management, aged care, clinical risk management, alcohol and drugs, and palliative care. Lenora also has a background in social planning, management, and program evaluation. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours), a Bachelor of Social Work, a Master of Urban Planning and a Master of Public Health.

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