



# Improving the standards for health care in Vietnam



Vietnam  
Health  
Improvement  
Project

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**Thank you!**  
**We couldn't do our work  
without your generous and continued support**

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# Mid-Autumn Festival

Life-skills development is one of the aims of the VNHIP's HIV Care Saves Lives Project. At our mid-autumn event, the children living with HIV were encouraged to express their feelings, share their dreams and develop relationships to support each other.

They designed, wrote and gave each other post cards to develop friendships with each other. They also got postcards, envelopes and stamps to take home so that they could send messages to children who were not able to attend the event.



The children making postcards for their friends



Performing a shadow-drama about "dreams"

We currently have 19 children regularly sending and receiving postcards from their new friends. Shadow-drama was also used to encourage the children to share their experiences. At first the children were too shy to express their feelings, but the shadow-drama gave them confidence. They had lots of fun performing their stories from behind the screen and learning from each other.



Mai's family

## Mai's story

Mai's father died in 2009 from HIV, leaving Mai, her mother and her brother with HIV. Mai's mother grows vegetables, raises chicken and does cas work for their neighbours. She is unable to work full-time as Mai and her brother are often sick. Mai's mother works hard, but it is not enough, and she is unable to earn enough to feed her children

Sagen Wilk, a former CHIA employee and VNHIP volunteer, sponsors Mai. Sagen's \$40 per month sponsorship provides for Mai and her family's basic needs. VNHIP also awarded Mai's mother a grant to expand her chicken raising, thanks to the generous support of the Betula Foundation. She now generates an income of 80 USD a month herself. VNHIP was also able to secure an education scholarship for Mai from the Children Education Foundation so that Mai can go to school

Mai and her family send their sincere thanks to VNHIP's generous donors.

## Nam Giang school water

Many schools in Nam Giang lack adequate water systems. The teachers have to carry the water from neighbouring water sources for hand-washing and cooking, which can be especially difficult in the dry hot season. Boarding students, particularly the girls, have many difficulties due to the lack of clean water. They have to bath and wash their clothes in the muddy river. The school's kitchen does not have enough water for food preparation or cooking. These problems increase the risk of infectious disease among the students.

In response to this situation, VNHIP has provided clean water supply systems including a well, pump and water tank for six schools. Thanks to these systems, more than of 800 students and teachers now have access to clean water for hand-washing, food preparation, cooking, and toilet flushing.

All the children at the schools will now benefit from safe clean water and a cleaner environment, which will also reduce problems such as diarrhea, intestinal worms, schistosomiasis, and malnutrition.



Water tank and "happy tap" for hand-washing in the Nam Giang schools

# NCD Management



Tobacco use is a risk for NCDs in Nam Giang

## Extending VNHIP's approach to non-communicable disease management

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimated that non-communicable diseases (NCDs) claim 380,000 lives per year in Vietnam, contributing to 73 percent of all deaths and reducing Vietnamese people's average longevity. Tobacco use, physical inactivity, unhealthy diet, excess salt/sodium intake and the harmful use of alcohol increase the risk of NCDs. These risk factors contribute to more than two thirds of chronic disease cases or the complications from these diseases. Proper control of these NCDs requires patient education, lifestyle modifications, chronic daily medications and close physician follow-up. Due to differences in physician education, as well as a lack of continuing physician education, the staff of the clinics in VNHIP's target area would benefit from up to date training in the management of NCDs. VNHIP previously worked closely with WHO in the development and modeling of the NCD protocol to better manage hypertension and diabetes in Phu Tho. Now, VNHIP's partnerships with WHO and Ministry of Health will extend this project to reduce exposure to modifiable risk factors through promotion of healthy lifestyle choices, and to strengthen health systems to address the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases.

## Non-communicable disease management for the homeless older people at the Adult Shelter

VNHIP continues to provide daily medicines and health provider education to 67 elderly patients with hypertension and/or diabetes as part of our partnership with the Aged Care and Disabled Shelter in Hoi An. We are very happy to report that for the past two



Providing care at the Adult Shelter

years no cases of stroke or heart attack have occurred at the Shelter. Previously six strokes and three heart attacks were reported on average each year

## Partnerships and Networking

VNHIP's strategy is to work closely with other organizations and has partnerships with Bach Mai hospital, Vietnam Respiratory Society, NCD professional societies, Universities and the MoH and WHO in Vietnam. Recently, Dr. Joshua Solomon, the Director and Founder of VNHIP, was invited to give a presentation on lung disease at a national congress organized by the Vietnam Respiratory Society. VNHIP will continue to build and extend its partnerships with other organizations to facilitate research and increase awareness of lessons learnt from VNHIP's work.



The National Congress of Vietnam Respiratory Society

# Cardiac Care

Dieu, is 19 years old and lives with her family in Quang Nam. She dreams of becoming a successful businesswoman to provide for her family, but she has a great barrier hindering her dream. Dieu has a congenital heart problem. Due to severe pulmonary hypertension, she is unable to have surgery. The only available treatment to keep her stable is to take Sildenafil every day, which is costly.

Dieu's family is very poor. She has two young siblings who are 7 and 14 years old. Due to asthma and heart disease, Dieu's mother is often admitted to hospital for long periods of time. Even though she is sick, Dieu's mother works hard to support her children.

Dieu wants to work to help her mother but she cannot. Instead she studies as well as she can, so that she can get a good job and support her family in the future. With medicine provided by VNHIP, Dieu's disease is stable and she is able to study business management at the Duy Tan University in Da Nang. She will graduate next year.

All our patients with chronic diseases are from very poor families. Their lack of income and high cost of medications usually keep them trapped in the cycle of poverty. We hope that by staying healthy and studying, the five girls and boys in VNHIP cardiac project will be able live full and independent lives. They are currently all stable and doing well.

To date VNHIP has sponsored 4 severe pulmonary hypertension and 120 successful surgical cases, each bringing great benefits to the patients and their families. VNHIP urgently needs your support to give 20 more poor patients the life saving and life changing medicine and/or surgery they need.



Dieu dreams of becoming a businesswoman



Successful cardiac surgery



## Greeting from Quang

Quang joined the VNHIP team in September 2016 as our new Country Director. Quang is a medical doctor, and holds a Masters degree in public health. He has been working for several NGOs, medical training institutes and public health programs in Vietnam. He is interested in organizational development, health research, political study, creative behavior change communication and the media. With VNHIP's team, he has a dream that the most vulnerable and marginalized people in Vietnam will equally and inclusively enjoy improved health and good quality health care in Vietnam.

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