

NEWSLETTER

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ADRA Vietnam Country Director - Mr. Elidon Bardhi and Programs Director - Mr. Nguyen Anh Tinh, met with Chairwoman of the Cao Bang Women's Union - Mrs. Ha Nhat Le on September 6. ADRA has been working in Cao Bang for approximately 20 years and the Women's Union has been our main implementing partner. ADRA and the Women's Union have enjoyed effective relationships. This meeting aimed at strengthening the relationship and updating the representatives of Women's Union for ADRA's present work, new projects starting up and the future plans in the pipeline. The Women's Union indicated that they appreciate the work of ADRA Vietnam in the province and are committed to strengthen our relationship for the benefits of the ethnic minorities in the province. Both parties discussed and agreed on work plan and monitoring schedule for existing and new projects to strengthen this relationship.



Photo: ADRA Vietnam met with the representatives of the Cao Bang Women's Union

On the same day, ADRA Vietnam Country Director and Program Director met the Deputy Director of Cao Bang Department of Industry and Trade - Mr. Hoang Le Ky and his team to discuss ADRA's present work in Cao Bang and more specifically about our work in Sustainable Energy and our plans for the future.

ADRA Vietnam and the Department of Industry and Trade acknowledged that the needs of people of Cao Bang are higher than what one organization can address, but agreed to work together toward providing off-grid households with access to energy. Both parties agreed to work toward piloting at least one mini-grid that will be supplied with multiple sources of energy, and to seek ways to work together for a larger project that can be funded by EU Delegation in Vietnam. In Cao Bang, approximately 11% of the population does not have access to electricity, rating this province high in the list of provinces with limited access to electricity. This also offers opportunities for ADRA, provincial authorities and private sector to work together for local solutions that can attract government and donors' interest.



CONNECTIONS TRIP JULY 2017



Xin Chao 🇻🇳

4,500 bricks, 2 truck loads of gravel, 1 truck load of rocks, 1 heavy cement mixer, bags of cement, 500 metres of road to get past and we along with the ADRA Vietnam Team, Bao Lac district, managed to finish what we had set out to finish. Never could I have imagined that a 10-day trip into a foreign country would change my entire perspective on life and on people. To watch an entire community come together for the common goal of creating an environment for their 38 kids to play in and be able to use a proper toilet has me in tears and my heart is content.

I finally have grasped the idea of what hard work is, I understand how blessed I am and how the little things that would usually be on my mind are so irrelevant. To see the loving environment, the gratitude, the purpose driven determination behind each and everyone of those people has me in awe. I have left a piece of my heart in Vietnam, and no matter where I go next, Vietnam, you will always and forever be in my heart. The people I have crossed paths with, the team I was blessed to work alongside, the villagers I was blessed by and the kids I played with have changed my heart and I thank you for the blessings you have given me on that short trip. I could never repay you for what you have given me.

A massive thank you goes out to ADRA Vietnam, the district of Bao Lac, ADRA New Zealand everyone who has kept me and my team in your prayers, those who have given generously and those who have been there along this journey. I appreciate you all and here are some photos of my trip. As amazing as these photos are, they could never justify the true feeling I had whilst over there.

Blessings upon blessings.

Cam on. 🇻🇳

*By Milenita Kaufusi
A member of Connections Trip July 2017*

Milenita Kaufusi with seven members of the team from New Zealand helped create a positive change in the Na Tao community. By supporting "Let's Shine" project initiated by ADRA Vietnam, the volunteers worked with local people to build separate toilets for boys and girls and school staffs, upgrade school playground and a sloping pathway from main road to the school. The team also conducted a programme for children and donated sporting goods for the school as well as stationery for the children to encourage their schooling. This is a very meaningful project activity to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal "ENSURE INCLUSIVE AND EQUITABLE QUALITY EDUCATION AND PROMOTE LIFELONG LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL"

CLOSING CEREMONY OF LIBRE PROJECT

The official closing ceremony of the Livelihood Improvement for Building Resilient Communities (LIBRE) project in Vinh Long province was organized on the 10th of August 2017. In the main hall of the Committee of the Vietnamese Fatherland Front located in Vinh Long city, 40 representatives from the governmental agencies, the Women's Union, the partnering communities and ADRA Vietnam gathered to share experience, achievements and lessons learned from the 4-year project.

One of the core pillars in LIBRE project is to support communities and governmental agencies from grass-roots level to build up practical Community-based Disaster Risk Management plans. This objective was achieved through a range of project activities, including training courses to enhance capacity of local agents of change, communication events to increase public awareness, initiatives to upgrade infrastructure so as to improve the living conditions of the people.

Activities	Number of Units Accomplished	Activities	Number of Units Accomplished
Infrastructure		Communication events and practices	
Communication panels of disaster risk management methods in public places	24	Disaster drills	35
Trash bins for agro-chemicals and pesticides containers	104	Drawing contest on Environment and Climate Change at schools	275 student participants
Rural roads / dykes	6	School campaign for students to follow instructions in hurricane season	165 student participants
		Communal campaign on disaster risk reduction	154 adult participants
Household facilities		Loans to improve livelihood	
Water jars	899	Cow loans	260
Latrines	75	Monetary loans to develop household economic models	273

Sustaining Household Income

STORY

Becoming a single mom, she bears all responsibilities to raise two daughters (the smallest at that time was 4 years old) and is the bread earner for their life. Telling about the experience of very difficult time, she exposed: "I worked in the other households' fields in daytime to earn money for two kids' study, then in night time I cultivated in my own land. It's very hard because I did double workload." The woman featured in this story is Ms. Duong Thi Tieng, living in Tich Quoi village, Tich Thien commune of Tra On district. In 2017, she is turning 49 years old. Ms. Tieng told: "I luckily inherit 4,000 meters square of arable land and because of the motivation to bring a full life to my children, who unfortunately do not have a family of both parents, I work very hard to cultivate a variety of crops. Lacking finance to sufficiently enrich my land was one of the difficulties until 2014. In this year, the local Women's Union introduced me to the Community Development Fund of LIBRE project. The project was implemented in the village to help broaden people's knowledge about Disaster Risk Management and improve households' livelihoods and so building trust in the villagers. Considering the favorable interest rate and due date of return, I registered for a loan of 3 million dong. The lump sum was not of much value, but that reduced the risks for farmers to return.



I invested in fertilizers and pesticides to be used in 2,000 meters square of green gourds intercropped with lime trees, the rest of land was rice planting. The harvest time of green gourds was around 50 days. After three seasons of green gourds, the lime trees reached to maturity, I used the profit earned from green gourds to keep nurturing lime trees. At the moment, we rely on the lime trees for monthly products and earnings. In order to save money from hiring workers, I pick limes every day to sell to the markets. This source of income (estimated at 3 to 5 million dong or 130 to 220 USD) is stable and supports my two daughters to follow their university education."

START UP OF CARE 2 PROJECT

Practical actions were conducted in the third quarter of 2017 in order to support the start up of CARE 2 project. In three days (August 21-23), the Country Director, Programs Director and Officer of ADRA Vietnam attended the "Vietnam Renewable Energy Week 2017" that was organized by the Vietnam Sustainable Energy Alliance. Our participation involved thematic discussions on the energy development pathway and climate policies of Vietnam, and approaching innovative solutions for off-grid power generators that are produced and applied domestically. Mr. Nguyen Anh Thinh - Programs Director of ADRA Vietnam visited the solar panel manufacturing factories and sustainable energy models of GreenID in Bac Giang province. We are driving further discussion with GreenID to understand and learn more about the local models. From August 28 to September 1, Mr. Marcel Wagner - Country Director of ADRA Austria and who is representing one of the project donors, facilitated work meeting with the ADRA Vietnam team to elaborate project's action plan. One week later on the September 6, the Country Director and Programs Director of ADRA Vietnam had a visit at Department of Industry and Trade of Cao Bang province. During this meeting, exchange of CARE 2 project goals and activities as well as current situation of electricity access at very remote areas was open from both sides. The local Department of Industry and Trade expressed interest in assisting the establishment of mini-grids for marginalized communities.

Increasing access to clean water

STORY

Ms. Pham Thi Muoi (59 years old) resides with her husband in Quang Huy village, Hieu Phung commune of Vung Liem district. Both are wandering lottery tickets sellers for food. This income source is unstable, therefore makes it even harder for them to improve the living conditions. In the residential area of Ms. Muoi's house, no less than ten families confront difficulties to access clean water source.



The reason is that they barely afford the construction costs of pipelines and containers. Living in the less-favorable environment for well-being, the people of these families are exposed to risks of diseases, including diarrhea and skin infection. One of villagers opined: "the river water at lowest level is very dark. When we need to pump river water for usage we have to wait until the rising tide, so the water is cleaner. Sometimes when the pump is running, we see that the next-door family is washing clothes and the waste water runs down to river. It is the life of sharing this river so we all accept things like that. In order to treat the water, we put more purification powder than usual."

In three time periods including June 2015, August 2016 and July 2016, the LIBRE project provided to Hieu Phung commune 87 water jars, of which each unit is capable of 1,600 liters. Each jar is worth of 800,000 local currency (approximately 35USD), the beneficiary household agreed on contributing one fourth of the finance to own the product. In Quang Huy village where Ms. Muoi and her neighbors were thirsty of this support, 23 jars were registered to improve the water situation.

The local people still pumps water from river to contain in this new kind of jars in regular basis, except during the wet season when rain water is more abundant. With the jar of 1,600 liter capacity that LIBRE project provided, it is estimated that 3 or 4 sacks of purification powder are sufficient (this powder costs 2,000 – 5,000 VND, around 9 to 22 cents per sack). The purification powder helps desilt water but not turn it into clean drinking water. The water used for cooking and drinking is taken from smaller jars of the families (capacity of 50-100 liters) and treated by boiling.

For the family of Ms. Muoi, since there are only two people so the big jar of project is enough for them to contain rain water for showering besides cooking. Her husband shared his appreciation: "my concern has been reduced since we owned this water jar. All hygiene and necessary activities depend on it to keep good health. One thank you is not enough for the project support."

FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT OF ADRA KOREA IN VIETNAM (AUGUST 25-30)

The first official visit of ADRA Korea's representatives in Vietnam aims to monitor the existing Child Sponsorship Program, which has been in constant collaboration of 9 years between the two ADRA offices. At the same time, working meeting to explore further opportunities of cooperation in long-term development projects and in the Connections Trip program was scheduled.



In the monitoring trip, the South-Western province called Tay Ninh was chosen as the first site. Ms. Choi Gibbeum – ADRA Korea Child Sponsorship Program Coordinator and Ms. Vu Lan Huong – ADRA Vietnam Programs M&E Officer met up with the Tay Ninh Blind Association and 23 students currently receiving sponsorship. This joyful gathering did not only provide a thoughtful understanding of the sponsorship impact on students and their families' lives, but also give the chance to Ms. Choi to be on behalf of the individual donors delivering the financial assistance of the third quarter 2017 to the beneficiaries.

Photo: Representatives of ADRA Korea and ADRA Vietnam visited a student receiving sponsorship and her family in Cao Bang

The second selected site was Cao Bang province where 64 ethnic minority students with very difficult family's situations are receiving sponsorship. Joining this 3-day-journey starting from August 27 was another representative from ADRA Korea, Mr. Lee Dea-won who is the Programs Director. The ADRA team traveled difficult roads to visit four families of ethnic minority students. Despite of the language barrier, sharing about the improvement in living conditions and schooling thanks to the sponsorship was encouraged.

On the last day at ADRA Vietnam's office based in Hanoi, ADRA Korea and ADRA Vietnam discussed further opportunity of cooperation, including the Connections Trips organized for individuals and groups from South Korea to support the less advantaged communities in Vietnam.

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