

June 2021

Dear friends,

We want to provide a little background on the ethnic groups we support. We assist by bringing water to communities, building schools for their children, and providing programs which help develop solid livelihoods.

Vietnam has 54 ethnic groups, or tribes. The largest is the Kinh or Vietnamese. The other 53 groups live mostly in mountainous areas throughout Vietnam. Of these 53 groups, three live in Quang Ngai province — the H're, Cor (also Kor), and Xo Dang.

The majority of MQI's projects for ethnic people are for the H're people with some projects helping the Kor people. Working with ethnic people in Vietnam requires sensitivity. Because of the trust that MQI has built over the decades, Mrs. Dinh Minh Oai, Vice-Chair of the Quang Ngai province People's Committee and a member of the H're tribe, in 2004 told the Vietnamese media that we are the only organization allowed to work with the ethnic minorities in the province.

Phan Van Do has a natural way of developing open relationships with the people of the ethnic groups of Vietnam. He has even learned some of their language to further his rapport with them.

His efforts help develop better relations with the people, which in turn creates stronger relationships with MQI.

PHASE I OF 2021 BEGUN EARLIER THIS YEAR

**We are focused on providing:
4 water wells, each costing about \$2600.**

Two wells for H're people-

- Tho An hamlet-- providing water to 83 people from 20 families
- Ho Dai sub hamlet, An Khuong hamlet-providing water for 66 people from 15 families

Two wells for Vietnamese people-

- Tinh Hiep village-providing water to 144 people from 34 families.
- Duc Son hamlet-providing water to 87 people from 27 families.

50 forage grinding machines distributed throughout four Kor ethnic villages

32 scholarships for students from the My Lai eight room primary school. These three primary schools for the children of My Lai were funded by MQI in the early 2000's.



Above photos, top to bottom: Phan Van Do relates well to ethnic people like this elderly Kor woman. Traditional H're home. MQI is supporting changing to brick and cement homes, which are much more durable and long-lasting. H're men and women are harvesting sugar cane by hand. Nguyen Van Tam of the Farmer's Union and Phan Van Do.

The grinding machines.

Each of the Kor ethnic villages receiving forage grinding machines must choose the farmers who will receive the machines, a sensitive process. In order to make an unbiased choice, every eligible farmer wrote his or her name on a piece of paper and the names are placed in a box and names are randomly picked— 5 names from one village and 15 names from the three other villages.

The process of choosing the eligible farmers is administered by the Farmer's Union of Quang Ngai province with MQI Project Coordinator overseeing the process. MQI purchases the machines for this project.

The Farmer's Union has never worked with a foreign organization before. Nor have they ever encountered the complex paperwork involved. Do has been teaching them, step by step, how to accomplish this. The Farmer's Union remains very enthusiastic about working with us and hopes for more opportunities to collaborate in the future.



Above: Phan Van Do with Dinh Van Hong, one of the farmers who will receive a grinding machine. Each recipient also has the responsibility to share their grinder with other farmers who were not chosen yet. In this way, a community of sharing is developed between the farmers.

Below: H're children often walk a long distance to school, therefore MQI is involved with raising funds to provide bicycles.

PHASE 2 OF 2021-STARTS IN JULY

Ethnic primary schools in need of water wells, wheel chairs, bicycles and water filtration systems.

Water wells.

As is common in Quang Ngai province, the hand dug wells dry up during the summer months, forcing the H're people to walk miles into the mountains to find water. They carry the water back to their homes in two buckets carried at the ends of a pole — a system called quang ganh. In addition to the incredibly hard work involved, this takes up hours of time needed for other important work.

One hamlet receiving a well, Tho An hamlet, had a water line constructed by a Vietnamese businessman and veteran. He also built a holding tank in Tho An. However, the water carried by this pipeline is so badly polluted from runoff of pesticides used in nearby Acacia tree plantations that it is too dangerous to use.

While there has recently been a spike of COVID cases in Ho Chi Minh city, the number of cases in Quang Ngai province is very low. Travel from Ho Chi Minh city to Quang Ngai is now restricted. If Do were to return to Quang Ngai now he would be quarantined for three weeks.

The Vietnamese government has contained this virus through rigidly controlling the movement of the population and continuous testing and the quarantine of foreigners entering Vietnam. However, the only way to get through this pandemic is through vaccinations and Vietnam, like other developing nations, receives very few doses of safe and reliable vaccines. Without access to enough vaccines to serve the majority of the population, the Vietnamese government will be on the defensive for some time to come.



Our unwavering support of the people of Vietnam has only been possible because of your continual support. We continue to keep our promises to the people of Vietnam and to you. With all of us working together—you, the people of Vietnam and MQI—we will weather whatever storms that arise in the future.

Please consider a generous contribution to help us continue this vital work.

Mike Boehm
nds

Mike Boehm and Phan Van Do



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