



BETULA ASIAN AID FOUNDATION

Newsletter April 2020

Dear friends of Betula,

As we are going through extraordinary difficult times I do hope that this newsletter finds you and your loved ones healthy and in good spirits. As you can imagine the last 2 months have been difficult for us to conduct our regular activities due to travel restrictions and lock downs.

Moreover we do face a new challenge. Many people in our programs and beyond have lost their jobs and are literally without income. As there is no stimulus provided by the state or other form of social security we created a small emergency fund. The fund will help worst cases to overcome these difficult times providing food and medicine. Support is around 50 euro per month per case. We can do this because of your continuing support.

Thank you.

Meet My



My is 15 years old. When she was born she suffered from jaundice that caused brain damage leading to cerebral palsy. She was born into a family of two children. The poor family is living near Hue city. Her parents work at a garment factory. My could speak when she was 4 and walk when she was 6 years old. With your support My is a boarding student at Tam Binh center in Hue since she was 9.

Because her hands couldn't function properly writing was very difficult for My. The teacher kept encouraging her for years. Now My can write and read and do some math. In her free time My reads books and newspapers. Her favourite activity is to help the cook in the kitchen prepare the meals for all the children in the centre.

Home sweet home



BAAF considers a decent roof over our heads a basic human right. Many people especially elderly still live under unacceptable conditions. We therefore support to renovate and build homes for several poor people in areas where we are active.



In Tien Giang in the Mekong Delta we helped a poor family who only had a corrugated sheet over their head. In Gia Lai we helped an older woman who lives alone with her mentally disabled daughter to get the home she dreamt of for so many years.



We can help these people realize their homes with rather small amounts of money as the main cost for material are shared and family and neighbours help to build the homes. We especially thank the Dutch Business Association Vietnam for their support to help realize these homes.



Support for mentally disabled children in Da Lat

In a recent newsletter we mentioned a new cooperation that we established with a small centre for mentally disabled children in Da lat. The centre has some staff to do the necessary therapy for the children. But the constant daily care has to come from the family. Therefore all these families live of one income only and especially for single moms it is almost impossible to cope. Read the stories of Linh and Khanh.

Linh is 10 years old. He is being treated in the centre for almost 4 years now. He can't walk or talk. He has a younger sibling. His father is hired for agriculture work. Sometimes weeks in a row there is no work. Linh's mother is with her child constantly. Two years ago they borrowed 400 euro to pay for Linh's therapy. They have not been able to pay back the bank yet.

Khánh is 6 years old. He was born premature and had several complications leading to his disability. More over a heart condition makes the baby very weak. He had a heart operation which requires regular check-ups. This family as well borrowed money from the bank. 1500 euro for treatment, heart operation follow ups and raising cows seemed a good idea. The cow price tumbled, losses were made.

We help these and other families by providing support for meals and daily necessities.

The year of the Rat

At the end of January the lunar New Year, the year of the rat was celebrated. Making this a special time also for those less fortunate we supported 2 activities. In Hue we provided rice, cooking oil and sugar for a group of 50 elderly. A small gesture that makes a big difference. In Gia Lai we helped to organize a new year party for minority children. The children played games, had their favourite snacks and drinks and were given a small envelop with lucky money.



Melk is goed voor elk!

A Dutch saying goes “milk is good for all of us”. This is especially true for several babies in our programs. In Gia Lai we continue to support Hoan who is paralyzed because of Japanese Encephalitis. In Hanoi we continue support for 6 months of milk for a 2 year old boy whose mom is addicted to drugs and grandparents taking care of the boy. In the southern coastal province of Binh Thuan we support a single mom who was left by her boyfriend after she told him she was pregnant.

Giving minority children a warmer winter

Nam Xe comun is one of the poorest villages in Van Ba district of Lao Cai in Northern Vietnam. 100% of the population are H’s Mong and Dao minority people. 70% of the households in those communes are poor. During the winter in these mountainous areas it can get very cold. Sometimes it is 5 degrees below zero. The children here only wear basic clothes often very old and broken. Parents don’t have money to buy warm clothes for them.



There is one kindergarten, one primary school and one secondary school in this area. Most children at primary school and secondary school live in the school hostel. Both teachers and children have to face a lot of difficulties lacking resources and facilities. This winter we supported 35 children to get the warm winter clothes they need.



Our new partner Hope Box in Hanoi

In 2005 I introduced several orphan children from Bac Giang to a centre that provided free hospitality training in Hanoi. As I frequently followed up on them I also met with Huong, who was in the same class. Huong contacted me some months ago to inform me about her great initiative "Hope Box". Hope Box wants to empower Vietnamese women who have been a victim of gender-based violence by giving them a safe place to live, to enable them to earn money and to receive an education.

Almost 60% of married Vietnamese women have suffered physical, sexual or emotional violence by their husbands. Almost 90% did not seek to report the abuse at the time. Hope Box provides meals and pastry. All proceeds help to provide paid-work and accommodation for the victims. We love the initiative and are helping with the start up buying kitchen and restaurant inventory and we will support medical costs the victims may have due to abuse.

In short

- **2 hearts**

We are happy to announce that by the end of last year we were to extend the support for medicine for our 2 girls in Da Nang living with a heart condition. For another year their medicine supply is assured so they can focus on their work and study.

- **babies in Laos**

In a short period of time we received the news of 2 babies being abandoned by their parents in a hospital in Vientiane, Laos. The state covers the hospital charges for these babies but food and diapers are not. We helped by donating diapers for the next 3 months.



Why would you support us? Betula works at grass root level and direct. Your donations are completely used to help the beneficiaries. For more information about the programs and projects please visit our website:

www.betula-asianaid.org

Your support is needed and appreciated.

My thoughts are with those who suffer from Covid 19 because they are sick or affected by it in any other way. I wish you all good health and stay safe!

Kees