

**REPORT ON VIETNAM PROJECTS
FUNDED BY MIVAC – 2011**

**By
DEREK SMITH – MIVAC VIETNAM COORDINATOR**

Background

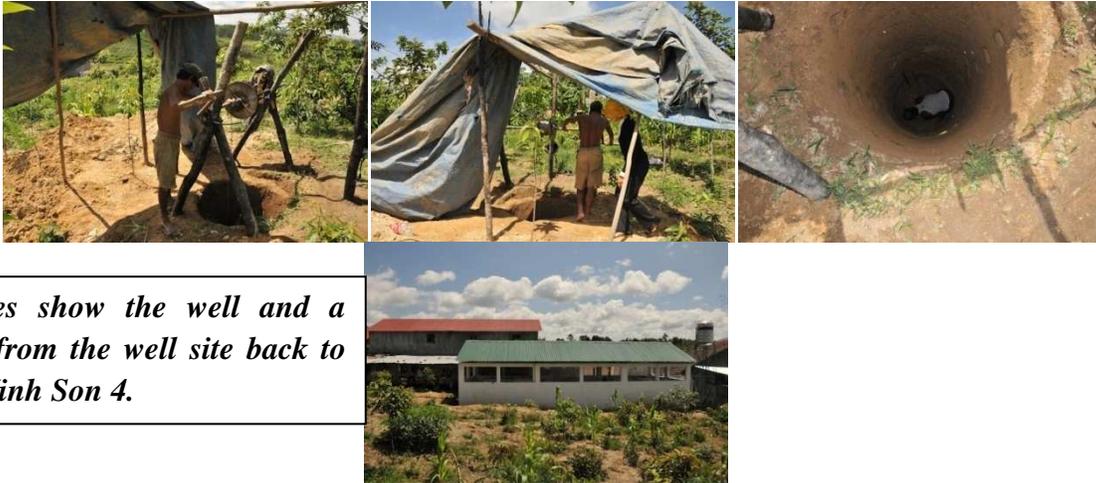
1. After discussions between Rob Woolley and Derek Smith, following Rob's visit to Kon Tum, Vietnam earlier this year, and subsequent discussions with the MiVAC Trustees, it was agreed that a sum of \$4500 would be used for work in the Vinh Son orphanages in Kon Tum. This amount was deposited into Derek's Vinh Son Orphanage account on 15 June 2011.
2. Tasks that Rob had identified included a fish pond at Vinh Son (VS) 4 for breeding of fish for food and sale (self sustainability), a toilet/shower block for the boy's dormitory at VS5 and a well at VS6. It was subsequently learned that East Meets West Foundation would be constructing the well at VS6 and improving the water purification for each of the VS. At time of writing the EMWF program has been completed.

Mission in Kon Tum

3. Derek arrived in Kon Tum on 2 June 2011 and departed on 11 July 2011. The first few days were spent visiting all the Vinh Son orphanages and having discussions with each of the Sisters in charge to confirm their needs. It is pointed out that the greater part of his work in Kon Tum is separate to MiVAC. Only the MiVAC work will be reported in this report. More information on the other work will be advised through Derek's post mission news letter.

Vinh Son 4 Projects

4. Derek visited VS4 on several occasions. After discussion with Sr. Lien, it was agreed that before the fish pond could be developed, a new well would have to be constructed. The fish pond was being used for washing therefore an alternative source of water was needed. A location for the well was identified further uphill from the existing pond. Materials and workers would be arranged by Sr. Lien. Subsequent inspection revealed that the well would need to be dug to a depth of 20 meters. It would be reinforced with concrete cylinders. Photos of the construction appear below.



Pictures show the well and a shot looking from the well site back to buildings at Vinh Son 4.

5. Although the bakery was not part of Rob's initial plan, as Derek was given discretion on how to utilize funds, it was considered a worthy task. It came about after it was discovered that children were not getting bread. This was primarily due to the high cost of flour (VND 500000/50kg bag). Ms. Marg Rapsey from Melbourne, who accompanied Derek to Kon Tum, funded the provision of all ingredients. VS1 has a bakery. VS2 has a bakery. VS4 bakes bread on wood fire.

6. Discussions were held with the Sisters and a cooperative baking program was established. Cost per bake per child was VND 2352. Numbers at VS 1, 3 and 5 = 363 – total VND 854000. Numbers at VS4 and 6 = 165 – total VND 388000. So for 30 days the venture was costed at 37,260,000. VS1 would bake for themselves, 3 and 5. VS4 would bake for themselves and 6. VS2 is not a part of this program.

7. In addition to providing bread for the children twice a week, bread is also produced for each VS to sell with all proceeds going back to fund ingredients. This is working and it appears to be a self sustaining program. Given the state of the facility at VS4 (see photos below), supporting the cost of a building for baking bread was considered worthy.



The lads at bakery VS4



Bread ready for baking VS4



VS4 Bakery from outside



Marg and Sr. Lien with the finished product



Sr. Imelda VS1 weighing up the ingredients



Children VS1 who bake the bread



Into the oven for baking and the finished product – terrific tasting bread



Children at VS4 helping build the new bakery

8. The fish pond had not commenced re-developing prior to Derek's departure. Materials had been purchased as per the receipts. Photos will be provided once the task has been completed, and sent to Derek by Teresa Lung who is known also to Rob Woolley.



Fish Pond VS4

9. The cost of the work at VS4 is VND 35,910.000. Sr. Lien was given VND 36M on 26 June to cover all works.

Vinh Son 5 Projects

10. The toilet/washroom project was discussed by Rob and Derek. The boy's dormitory at VS5 did not have any toilet facilities so boys had to use toilets located to the rear of the girl's dorm. There are only 3 or 4 toilets there. In discussion with Sr. Truc (in charge of VS5) and Teresa Lung of VS5 it was agreed to construct three toilets, three shower/wash facilities, to the rear of the boy's dorm.

11. Three Americans who were in Kon Tum at the time, offered to lend a hand with this project. They are Deryle Perryman (Vietnam Veteran and Artillery member US Army, operating in Kon Tum region 1968/69), Dick Cooper from the music industry and personal acquaintance of Bob Dylan and Chris Christophenson, and Dorian (last name not known). They wanted to get their hands dirty so, appropriately, they did with work getting under way on 4 July.



Construction under way VS5



Dorian hard at work



Derek Smith in a hole



Deryle Perryman at work



Derek and Deryle admiring their work



Dick Cooper at work



L – Two lads from VS5. R – A cheeky smile from A Bin

12. Cost of construction of toilets/washrooms for VS5 was VND 41,250,000 as per receipts attached. The work was not completed when Derek left Kon Tum. Teresa Lung will provide photos of the completed work in the near future.

13. The covered area at VS5 is intended to house push bikes and motor scooters, affording protection from the rain and providing a secure area to prevent theft. This work was not commenced while Derek was in Kon Tum. VND 13M was provided to Teresa Lung for the work. Receipts and photos will be provided in the future.



Covered area will be constructed between the two buildings to the rear of this photo.

Support to Vinh Son 3

14. Vinh Son 3 orphanage is located approximately 12 km from Kon Tum to the left of Road 24. There are 81 children at VS3. As it is so far from Kon Tum, like VS4 and 6, it rarely receives visitors. Again, like all the VS, it relies on the charity and good will of others to get by. The Sister in charge of VS3 is Sr. Gabrielle. She was a sister and nurse in a non-military hospital in Kon Tum during the American War.

15. The new school year for the children, commences in mid August. New clothes including footwear are essential and as the children are growing, are a regular requirement. On each mission to Kon Tum, Derek visits all the VS and in consultation with the Sisters, agrees on support needed. At the time of visiting VS3, clothing for school was asked for. Given that there was some money remaining from the MiVAC funds, Derek decided to meet this need. It will be seen from the supporting spreadsheet that the funding given was VND 10M. \$151.40 was provided from Derek's funds. Receipts are not yet in hand for this expenditure. These will be forwarded once received from Sr. Gabrielle.



Sr Gabrielle and some of the children VS3



Discussing needs over lunch at VS3



Children from VS3 tending vegetable garden

Conclusion

16. The funding provided by MiVAC and its generous donors has ensured much needed support has been given to the Vinh Son orphanages. The fish pond and bakery at VS4 are contributing to self sustainability. The toilets at VS5 are providing improved hygiene and health conditions for the children. The school uniforms for VS3 children will ensure they can attend school looking the same as other students (Vietnamese) and thus avoid teasing and discriminatory treatment.

17. Rob Woolley advised that a major portion of these funds came from Sister Patricia and Hope Adelaide. Although Derek does not know these donors, on behalf of the orphans of the VS, he would like to extend his sincere thanks for their generosity and compassion. As Rob Woolley knows from spending time in Kon Tum, the orphanages will always need support. Without the visits to this area and the continuing support of MiVAC and its donors, and other caring organizations, the plight of the 700 children of the VS orphanages, would be grim. Thank You.

Derek Smith
MiVAC Vietnam Projects Coordinator
31 July 2011