**MiVAC AGM 03.08.2021**

**Report by Vietnam Project Coordinator**

**Vietnam Project**

We have the project, the funds, the vaccinations, the will but the way is not yet open. I have put back our commencement date until mid-January 2022 as the wet season commences in September and that it is not a pleasant time to be wandering around the bush. The aim of my visit is to establish the MiVAC base in Khe Sanh and finalise administrative arrangements prior to Brian arriving to commence construction. There are other factors yet to be addressed prior to the visit, as follows:

1. Approval for Vietnam entry including visas from Vietnam Authorities.
2. Approval to depart Australia from our own Authorities.
3. Negotiate the vagaries of a COVID lockdown.
4. Finding an affordable air ticket!

**Web Page**

It would be an understatement to suggest that that mivac.org.au may have needed some attention. I was fortunate enough to engage a local gem, Robyn Walters who has done an extraordinary job, a task well beyond any of us. Not only has she whipped the site into shape but has been very proactive in ‘advising’ me for which I am very grateful. There is still more to come.

**Fund Raising**

You are aware that we were not successful in our quest for funding of household toilets as part of the Ba Tang project. The reasoning behind a non-funding decision relates to many open defecators not utilizing toilet facilities. I have researched and prepared a paper which outlines a process which will ensure a successful user uptake of pour flush latrines. The next step is to discuss the draft with the various Vietnamese stake holders prior to implementation of the proposal.

In the meantime, I have proposed a “Donate a Dunny’ fund raiser to be promoted on our website. The emerging idea fostered by Robyn is to break down a total installation into identifiable components with a price tag attached to each. Potential donors would then be invited to buy one or more components depending on their budget. The end game may well be 3 overall standards being supply only, supply and install and special invalid. I am presently awaiting a component price list from a Vietnam supplier.

**Clothing Fundraising**

During our last Visit to Quang Tri (November 2020) a young man from Khe Sanh, Hoang Van Hiep, approached us with a request to assist with the provision of coats/shoes for the extremely poor children who were missing school during the colder months. I had met Hiep during previous visits whom I knew to be a champion of assisting the underprivileged children of the region. We then specifically raised some AU$3290 which I was to take with me to Vietnam on my next visit for local purchase of the requested items.

Nature however, intervened with particularly bad storms lashing the region in September/October 2020 resulting in severe damage to schools. I was asked if I would send the money for replenishment of school necessaries destroyed by flooding. The children had just emerged from COVID quarantine to find that their school was closed. A chicken and egg situation, no books etc equalled no school. No cool weather clothing equalled no school on cold days. A decision was taken to fund the school which was promptly carried out. Other donors were subsequently found to provide the clothing. Win win.

Peter Perry

MiVAC Board Member and Vietnam Project Coordinator