

COOPERATION

GUIDEBOOKS TO
FRENCH CO-OPERATION IN VIETNAM

THE FRENCH SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FUND



Liberté • Egalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

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DESIGN AND PRINTING



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Preface

The aim of this publication is to introduce you to the French Social Development Fund, or *FSD (Fonds social de Développement)*. Within very modest proportions, the FSD is one of the most effective tools for French official development assistance or *APD (Aide publique au développement)* of recent years.

Its spirit is one of solidarity, since it aims to reduce poverty by contributing to social development. Its use is intellectually satisfying, because with modest but well-deployed means, assistance is given to the greatest number of people. It is also flexible to manage, since co-financing is awarded to projects in the form of grants.

In this instance, *FSD* credits allocated by the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the French Embassy in Hanoi for the period November 2001 to November 2004, totaling 457,000 Euros, have enabled the implementation of twenty-two projects, proposed by thirteen organisations, four of them Vietnamese.

These twenty-two projects have made it possible to help nearly 300,000 people in fifteen provinces, among the most vulnerable groups in society: children, elderly people, women, poor farmers, ethnic minorities. Some projects have in fact contributed to improving living conditions for whole communities.

Thanks to these projects, the beneficiaries have found gainful employment, received a better education, obtained access to clean water, been better protected from diseases and natural disasters; they have better understood road safety issues or benefited from micro-credit systems.

The *FSD* is therefore a model for aid that French co-operation in Vietnam would like to be able to use again. Its renewal would confirm French support for a multifaceted, imaginative and fruitful local co-operation. It would allow us to achieve the desire to be close to those whom we wish to help, and would confirm that, within the context of international official development assistance, a closer and more human co-operation also has a part to play.

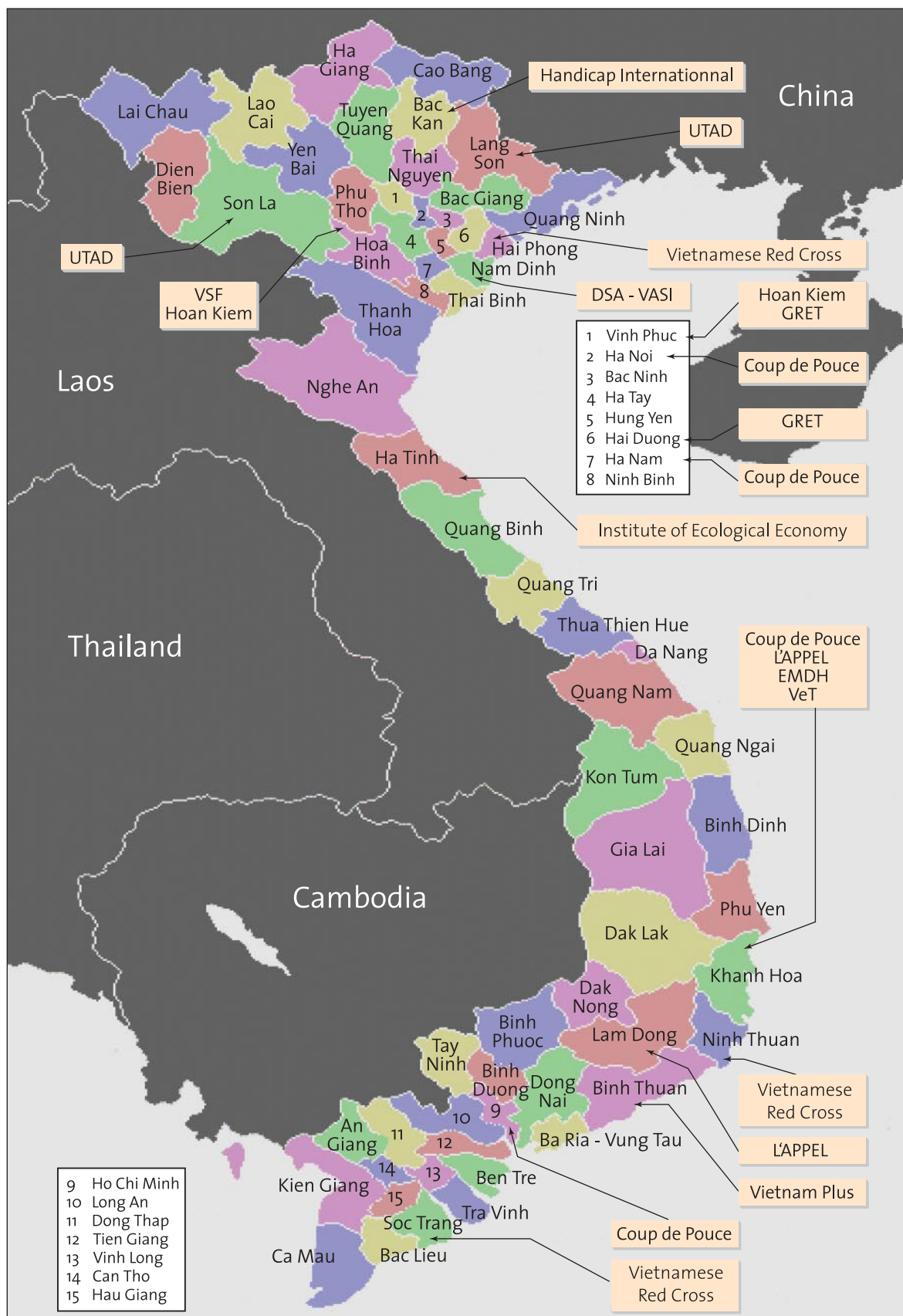


Jean-François Blarel
French Ambassador to Vietnam

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Map of the FSD projects



FSD Financings table

<i>Number of financing protocol</i>	<i>Name of the project</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Total Amount¹</i>	<i>Duration</i>
N° 1	Massage Centre of the Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Centre for Young Blind People for young blind and partially sighted masseurs.	Coup de Pouce	9 146.30 euros	12 months
N° 2	Resettlement for 500 families in Nha Trang.	Villes en transition (Towns in transition)	20 505.80 euros	October 2001 - April 2003
N° 3	Mong Cai sow farms in Van Lang commune, Phu Tho province.	Vétérinaires sans frontières (veterinarians without borders)	7 622.45 euros	December 2001 - December 2003
N° 4	Training Programme for Elite Engineers in Vietnam (PFIEV) : travel grants and hardship grants.	Coup de Pouce	9 146.40 euros	September 2001 - June 2002
N° 5	Nautical first aid, first aid river stations, medically equipped sampans in Soc Trang province.	Vietnamese Red Cross	9 591.94 euros	12 months : 2002-2003
N° 6	Sanitary development project in Ninh Thuong commune "Water conveyance. Fluorosis control and childhood pathologies."	L'APPEL	74 546 euros	September 2001 - March 2003
N° 7	Road traffic first aid, humanitarian dispensary in Hai Phong province.	Vietnamese Red Cross	8 953.27 euros	12 months : 2002-2003
N° 8	Support for women living in poverty in areas liable to flooding of two communes in Ha Hoà district - Development of lake fish farming in pens.	Association Hoan Kiem	7 622.45 euros	18 months : November 2001 - May 2003
N° 9	Strengthening of breeder groups, establishment of co-operative groups, support networks and fish-farming institutions in Vinh Phuc province.	Association Hoan Kiem	7 622.45 euros	18 months : 2001-2003
N° 10	Sanitary and socio-educative support in Dien Khanh district, Khanh Hoa province.	EMDH Children of the World-Human Rights	23 094.50 euros	January 2002 - December 2003
N° 11	Community development in Tanh Linh, Binh Thuan province.	Vietnam Plus	39 975 euros	From 2002 to 2003
N° 12	Provision of drinking water in Ninh Thuan province.	Vietnamese Red Cross	7 927.35 euros	8 months : 2002 - 2003
N° 13	Rehabilitation of a nursery in the Thuan Hoa district (Hue).	Dictionnaires et pots de peinture	Cancelled	

¹ The exchange rate is the French "chancery" rate applied at the payment of the grants.

<i>Number of financing protocol</i>	<i>Name of the project</i>	<i>Entity</i>	<i>Total Amount</i>	<i>Duration</i>
N° 14	<i>Creation of a nursery in the orphanage of Hoa Mai.</i>	<i>Montluçon – Saïgon</i>	<i>Cancelled</i>	
N° 15	<i>Rendering self-sufficient ten credit funds supervised and guaranteed by the Women's Association in Yen Lac district.</i>	<i>GRET - Research and technological Exchange group</i>	<i>12 261.22 euros</i>	<i>22 months : March 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 16	<i>Rendering self-sufficient ten credit funds supervised and guaranteed by the Women's Association in Vinh Tuong district.</i>	<i>GRET - Research and technological Exchange group</i>	<i>12 261.22 euros</i>	<i>22 months : March 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 17	<i>Livestock insurance fund schemes for the benefit of poor or moderately poor families in Vinh Phuc province.</i>	<i>GRET - Research and technological Exchange group</i>	<i>17 004 euros</i>	<i>April 2003 - April 2004</i>
N° 18	<i>Conservation and commercialisation of local aromatic rice varieties by women's producer groups.</i>	<i>Vietnam Agricultural Science Institute</i>	<i>19 068.75 euros</i>	<i>January 2003 - December 2004</i>
N° 19	<i>Raising the quality of living conditions for poor farmers living on the desert and sandy plain of Thach Ha district in Ha Tinh province.</i>	<i>Institute of Ecological Economy</i>	<i>32 954.40 euros</i>	<i>June 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 20	<i>Construction of a friendship house with the Congregation of Votaries of the Cross.</i>	<i>Coup de Pouce</i>	<i>11 664.10 euros</i>	<i>March 2003 - October 2004</i>
N° 21	<i>Support for career advice and professional integration of students leaving Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities.</i>	<i>Handicap International</i>	<i>20 470 euros</i>	<i>April 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 22	<i>Training Programme for Elite Engineers in Vietnam (PFIEV) : travel grants and hardship grants.</i>	<i>Coup de Pouce</i>	<i>8 120.50 euros</i>	<i>September 2002 - June 2003</i>
N° 23	<i>Sanitary education and maintenance training in favour of inhabitants of villages equipped with water conveyance systems constructed with the participation of L'APPEL and its co-financers.</i>	<i>L'APPEL</i>	<i>8 792.1456 euros</i>	<i>May 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 24	<i>Technology and production processes for "clean", high quality, high-yield seed potatoes to assist commercial potato production in the Red River Delta.</i>	<i>Union for technology Application and development</i>	<i>19 800 euros</i>	<i>20 months : May 2003 - November 2004</i>
N° 25	<i>Mini-livestock farms : freshwater turtles and frogs.</i>	<i>GRET - Research and technological Exchange group</i>	<i>18 094.65 euros</i>	<i>April 2003 - April 2004</i>



Coup de Pouce Vietnam

Founded on 22nd December 2000, *Coup de Pouce Vietnam* is a French non-profitmaking organisation. It aims to help disadvantaged children and women in Vietnam. The organisation originated within the Hanoi French-Speaking Women's Group (*le Cercle des Femmes Francophones de Hanoi*), formed from a core of members motivated by humanitarian aid. It is recognised by PACCOM, the Vietnamese

administration responsible for relations with international NGOs. All of its projects are proposed by Vietnamese institutions. They are implemented in accordance with Vietnamese law. The organisation has also signed an agreement formalising its partnership with the Committee for the Protection and Health of Street Children in Hanoi (*BVCSTE*).

Addresses and telephone numbers

Care of the French Embassy
57 Tran Hung Dao – Hanoi
www.coupdepoucevn.org

Secretary : Paulette Castel 09 04 34 71 91
Treasurer : Danielle Cam 09 13 57 18 03
President : Nicole Maillard 09 12 25 89 03

***Coup de Pouce* received financing for four projects from the FSD :**

I- Equipment and training at the Massage Centre of the Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Centre for Young Blind People for young blind and partially sighted masseurs

1- History and origins of the project

Set up in 1997, the Rehabilitation and Vocational Training Centre for Young Blind People (RVTCB), supported by the City of Hanoi People's Committee, is an NGO that aims to train young masseurs living with a visual handicap and thus encourage their professional integration.

About a hundred blind and partially sighted children live as boarders at the RVTCB and receive their schooling at the Vietnamese state school located next door.

Nonetheless, the absence of visual aid apparatus constitutes a real obstacle to their schooling and their vocational training.

The RVTCB, which in three years has already completed the training of twelve blind or partially sighted masseurs, was unable to function properly through lack of equipment. In addition, the trained masseurs had difficulty finding work outside the RVTCB. The RVTCB therefore built a Massage Centre on site with financial assistance from *EDEV*, a voluntary organisation made up of students from the French Higher School of Electricity in Paris (*Supelec*). Several rooms have been fitted out, but lack of essential equipment still outstanding has prevented the Centre from achieving the financial autonomy it seeks.

2- Description of the project

Location : Hanoi

Duration : 1 year (2001 – 2002)

Support for the RVTCB Massage Centre :

- **Equipment of massage rooms** to enable those blind and partially sighted that have successfully completed their course of study to practise their profession at the Centre.
- **Development of training programmes for teachers** of Traditional Vietnamese Holistic Gymnastics, a method developed to ease the rehabilitation of sensorimotor expression in young visually handicapped people.

Coup de Pouce Vietnam worked in partnership with the RVTCB (*Coup de Pouce* donated the funds provided by the FSD to the RVTCB), making purchases, monitoring the implementation of the project, assuming responsibility for the organisation necessary to its successful completion, and monitoring the follow-up with regard to the respect of hygiene regulations, administrative management and attracting customers.

Local partner :

RVTCB

33 Lac Trung,
Hanoi, Vietnam

Contact : phduong@ims.ncst.ac.vn or
duongphamhong@hotmail.com

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	15 243.90 euros
Vietnamese partners (RVTCB) :	6 097.60 euros
FSD financing :	9 146.30 euros

3- Outcomes

Fitting out seven massage rooms, acquisition of equipment (sauna, washing machines, etc.) and training eight blind and partially sighted masseurs enabled the Massage Centre to open its doors to the public in November 2002. Four Traditional Vietnamese Holistic Gymnastics teachers were trained and will be able to pass on their knowledge to students. The following season, 30 blind apprentice masseurs enrolled at the Centre.

II- Training Programme for Elite Engineers in Vietnam (PFIEV) : travel grants and hardship grants

1- History and origins of both projects

The *PFIEV* is a co-operation programme founded on a protocol signed on 12th November 1997 by the Vietnamese Minister for Education and Training, Mr. Nguyen Minh Hien and the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hubert Védrine. The second phase of the project will be completed in November 2006. Every year, the target is to train 250 talented engineers within four Vietnamese universities. The first intake for this programme took place in September 1999.

The four sites of the *PFIEV* are :

- School of Technology – Da Nang University
- Polytechnic Institute – National University, Ho Chi Minh City
- Hanoi Polytechnic Institute
- Hanoi School of Civil Engineering

A proportion of *PFIEV* students are from poor families,

particularly those coming from provinces in Central Vietnam. After two years fully devoted to these reputedly demanding studies, these students run into financial difficulties that affect their ability to study and consequently their results.

Since 2001-2002, given the national nature of the programme, students have been allowed to change sites in order to follow the specialised courses corresponding to their intended profession. This travel engenders extra costs. At the time of the project, the minimum annual expenditure of a student was assessed to be approximately €1,000.

Local partner :

Training Programme for Elite Engineers in Vietnam (*PFIEV*)

69 Ba Trieu, Hanoi, Vietnam

Tel : 04 943 27 13 / 943 41 89

Fax : 04 943 27 12

Email : Pfienv@hn.vnn.vn

2- Description of the first phase

Location : Hanoi – Danang – Ho Chi Minh Ville

Duration : 10 months (September 2001 – June 2002)

Coup de Pouce has acted as a go-between for the French Embassy, which finances the *PFIEV* programme, and for students with grants who follow the programme. Two kinds of grants were awarded :

- 22 travel grants, enabling students to specialise by changing sites ;
- 10 hardship grants for students whose parents are unable to pay for their studies.

Financing :

Total cost of the project : 31 219.50 euros

FSD financing : 9 146.40 euros

3- Description of the second phase

Location : Hanoi – Da Nang – Ho Chi Minh City

Duration : 10 months (September 2002 – June 2003)

This project is a repeat of Project n°4, which led to the awarding of 19 travel grants, allowing students to specialise by changing sites, and of 15 hardship grants, mostly for Da Nang students.

Financing :

Total cost of the project : 31 904.60 euros

Vietnamese partners : 23 784.10 euros

FSD financing : 8 120.50 euros

III- Construction of a friendship house with the Congregation of Votaries of the Cross



1- History and origins of the project

Ke So village, in Ha Nam province, is a mainly rural community. Social and sanitary facilities for public use and care facilities for elderly people or handicapped children were still nonexistent in 2002.

Many of these elderly people come into town in search of subsistence, so as not to be a burden on their families. The *Coup de Pouce* project of a friendship house fits into this context, aimed at integrating these elderly people into the social life of the village.

Prior to the agreement signed with the Embassy for financing from the FSD, *Coup de Pouce* signed an agreement with the Congregation of Votaries of the Cross (a Vietnamese catholic order) and the head of

the diocese in Ha Nam province for long-term support of this project. The Congregation already supports these kinds of facilities in various villages elsewhere in the province.

2- Description of the project

Location : Ha Nam province, Ninh Phu commune, Ke So village

Duration : 20 months from March 2003 to October 2004

Beneficiaries : all the neighbouring rural population, namely about 9,000 people, in particular elderly women living alone and/or suffering from poor health, and some children with Down's syndrome who do not have access to any day-care facilities.

The project's aim was to enable the whole population to receive first aid treatment near home or to follow a course of medical treatment prescribed by a doctor.

It also enabled elderly people without families and living in poverty to receive care and comfort. The friendship house was also intended to serve as a day-care centre for some children with Down's syndrome

or minor handicaps. The Congregation of Votaries of the Cross and the diocese of the province provided the plot of land and state-registered nurses at the end of the project.

Local Partner :

Congregation of Votaries of the Cross
(la congrégation des amantes de la croix)
31 Nha Chung, Hanoi

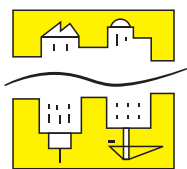
Financing :

Total cost of the project :	21 470.10 euros
- Vietnamese contribution :	9 804 euros
- FSD financing :	11 664.10 euros

3- Outcomes

The dispensary receives a daily average of 40 patients for first aid, courses of acupuncture, prescription of traditional medicine and monitoring of treatment prescribed by a doctor. Three isolated elderly people are received there as well as some handicapped children on a less regular basis.

The Congregation of Votaries of the Cross took responsibility for the running and staff costs at the end of the project as stated in the agreement.



VILLES EN TRANSITION - Vietnam (VeT) (Towns in Transition)

VeT Vietnam is the Vietnamese branch of the international solidarity organisation *Villes en Transition* (Towns in Transition) based in Lyon, France, that brings together a network of town planning and development professionals : sociologists, town planners, architects, engineers, economists and graphic designers. Their

collective expertise offers interdisciplinary complementarity and thinking, likely to promote an integrated approach to local and urban development problems. *VeT Vietnam* is a French non-profitmaking organisation created in 1995. It has operated with the authorisation of PACCOM since September 1996.

Addresses and telephone numbers

Villes en Transition
98 Tran Quang Khai – Office 305
Quan 1 – Ho Chi Minh City

Tel : +84 (0)8 48 16 83
Fax : +84 (0)8 48 04 91
Email : vet-vn@hcm.fpt.vn

Preparation and establishment of a resettlement project for 500 families in Nha Trang

1- History and origins of the project

Origins of the project

The activities of *VeT* in Nha Trang are based on the signature of a memorandum with the town's People's Committee on 21st September 2000.

History and context

The problem of insecure housing arose in the second half of the 20th century with mass movements of people brought about by various armed conflicts. It is becoming more acute today for two reasons : the increase in social inequalities since the opening of the country to the market economy, and migrations from countryside to towns, which can be expected to intensify in a country that is still 75% rural.

The inhabitants of poor neighbourhoods are not only excluded from basic urban services such as water, waste management or disposal. Unable to provide proof of regular employment or place of residence, they are denied access to education and to care facilities. To a greater or lesser extent, all Vietnamese towns experience this phenomenon.

The urban development plan drawn up by the Nha Trang People's Committee plans to extend the town to the south and promote neighbourhoods with tourism potential. It is within this framework that the municipal authorities plan to redefine the surroundings of Long Son Pagoda, in the Phuong Son neighbourhood. Famed for its seated statue of Buddha built on the top of Trai Thuy Hill, this much-

visited pagoda is surrounded by the shantytown that has grown up on the slopes beneath it.

The first 500 families affected by the resettlement project live in this shantytown. They are mostly natives of Nha Trang. Relocated to new economic zones in the context of the de-urbanisation policy applied after 1975, they returned and settled illegally, progressively “colonising” residential and vacant space in town.

The municipal project intends to evict everyone from the shantytown, in order to “restore the town’s landscape” and furthermore, to restore a natural, healthy environment. This is a radical choice, but has no sustainable alternative. In their current state, many houses are carried away by landslides every year.

The Phuong Son families are to be resettled four kilometres away, in Vinh Trai neighbourhood, in a new residential zone planned within the town’s new development area. The site is a 100-hectare plain consisting principally of farmland. The project also makes provision for the installation of sport and leisure facilities. 25 hectares of the 100 are reserved for resettlement programmes for low-income families, in the Dat Lanh neighbourhood.

In terms of housing security, the project represents significant progress for these families. They will obtain right of use of a viable plot of land, made available by the authorities free of charge. The project calls for assisted self-construction, a housing credit system, and for development of economic activities on the resettlement site.

However, relocation four kilometres from their current place of living and employment poses a new problem for these families. Proximity to the town centre is for them a *sine qua non* of access to an income, even a modest and irregular one, and enables them to obtain day labour or to offer informal services (cyclo pedicab driver, itinerant salesperson).

2- Description of the project

Location : Nha Trang, Phuong Son and Dat Lanh neighbourhoods

Duration : 18 months from October 2001 to April 2003

The actions of VeT aim to support the first stage of the local authorities’ overall project by assisting in the preparation and implementation of the resettlement project. This consists of methodological, logistic and financial support, aimed at minimising negative impact from the operation.

The aims of the preparation and establishment of the project are to :

- **Train the partner and the local authorities in matters of social and economic development.**
- **Start a movement for community development** in Phuong Son (saving-credits, waste management, etc.) to prepare people for receiving credits and for the resettlement. This activity aims to strengthen the community’s capacity by enabling it to take concrete measures to improve the daily life of the community living close to the pagoda and awaiting relocation.
- **Identify the needs and aspirations of the inhabitants** (survey) and the **terms and conditions of the resettlement programme** (housing and equipment) with the partners.
- **Advise the local partners.** This role is taken on by the local representative of VeT, who is familiar with the region and with the aims of the association.

Local partners :

- Vinh Thai Savings Co-operative Bank : managing the funds necessary to initiate the resettlement project and for housing credit.
- The Department of Labour, Invalid and Social Affairs (DOLISA) and the Nha Trang Women’s Union, involved as local operators.
- Nha Trang People’s Committee : providing logistic support, dealing with administrative questions and piloting the project in its operative phase through its Urban Management Division.
- The People’s Committees of Phuong Son (evacuated site) and Dat Lanh (resettlement site).

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	33 603.40 euros
Vinh Thai Savings Co-operative Bank	6 798.78 euros
Villes en Transition	6 298.78 euros
FSD financing	20 505.80 euros

3- Outcomes

The project is six months behind the original schedule. This can be explained by the slowness of the decision making process in Vietnam and the delay in obtaining funds. *VeT* has made use of this time for further psychological preparation of those awaiting eviction. Those ones have been strongly involved to the resettlement preparation process. In total 284 families benefited from this project compared with the 500 initially forecast.

The Vinh Thai savings co-operative funds has been a serious partner in the management of the micro-finance programme.

However, the activity of *VeT* should have been supported by more important financing than the FSD in order to go up to an other stage of resettlement.



VETERINAIRES SANS FRONTIERES (VSF) (Veterinarians Without Borders)

Founded in 1983, VSF is an international solidarity organisation that works for rural development in support of peasant farmers in disadvantaged regions, and that contributes to pleas made in both northern and southern countries in favour of these kinds of agriculture, by the implementation of expertise appropriate to the domains of agriculture, livestock farming and animal health. In southern countries, livestock farming is a key factor

of development, giving access to improved diet and, in the longer term, economic and social progress.

In June 2004, VSF merged with CICDA, *le Centre International de Coopération pour le Développement Agricole* (International Co-operation Centre for Agricultural Development) to become *l'association Agronomes et Vétérinaires sans frontières – VSF CICDA* (Agronomists and Veterinarians Without Borders).

Addresses and telephone numbers

VSF-CICDA
67 To Ngoc Van, Tay Ho,
Hanoi, Vietnam

Head of the Vietnamese branch of VSF :

Patrice Gautier

Tel : +84 04 719 74 57

Fax : +84 04 718 3121

Email : p.gautier@avsf.org

Development of Mong Cai sow farms in Van Lang commune, Phu Tho province

1- History and origins of the project

Origins of the project

The NGO *Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (VSF)* obtained the operating permit issued by PACCOM on 30th September 2001 and operates with the approval of the People's Committee of Phu Tho province. A partnership agreement between VSF and the Provincial Sub-Department of Animal Health was signed on 1st November 2001.

History and context

Pig farming is one of the main elements of the family economy in the northwest region of Vietnam. Livestock

farming fills an essential role there. At the present time, the various technical production factors have only been partially mastered, while the organisation of veterinary authorities is now in the process of changing. The low number of breeders reduces pig-farming activity to fattening piglets bought at market. Significant sanitary and zootechnical problems arise from this situation, which considerably limits the profitability of livestock farming.

2- Description of the project

Location : Van Lang commune, Ha Hoa district, Phu Tho province.



Duration : December 2001 to December 2003.

In April 2002, 53 volunteer families were selected by the Women's Union and VSF. These families were classed in economic terms as "poor" or "of middle income" (according to an indicator used by VSF and according to the commune's economic classification).

Each family received a loan in two payments, one month apart, of 400,000 VND each (about €20). The pigsties were improved with the aid of the first payment and a Mong Cai sow was bought by each family with the help of this payment. Interest was levied, allowing for example for a fee to be paid to the Women's Union to manage the fund locally and for the creation of a risk fund to compensate for possible technical failures. These funds were supplied by the French organisation Zebunet (www.zebunet.org).

The farmers each signed a technical support contract with a veterinary agent from the commune. This contract stipulated monthly visits by the agent, paid for by the farmer, to allow monitoring of livestock and provide advice to the farmer.

Several meetings were organised with farmers in order to explain the project, issue the loans, organise the purchase of the sows, provide technical training and exchange information about livestock results. A guide, *How to start a Mong Cai sow farm*, was published.

Local partners :

- Van Lang Women's Union
- Van Lang People's Committee

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	10 823.15 euros
- Women's Union :	not estimated
(Provision of meeting rooms, travel, etc.)	
- French partners (VSF) :	3 201.20 euros
- FSD financing :	7 621.95 euros

3- Outcomes

This project originally bore the following name: "Development of poultry farming in Van Lang commune". Given the difficulty encountered by VSF in recruiting a project leader with the right qualifications, the organisation decided, in agreement with the Women's Union and the People's Committee of Van Lang commune, to modify the species of animal involved with the FSD.

The project thus dealt with the development of Mong Cai sow farming instead of poultry farming, the VSF team having acquired experience in another commune of the same district and having the capability to be rapidly operational.

VSF hoped to continue this project by supporting the local authorities in the drawing up of a sow farming development plan and to extend it to other mountainous areas of Vietnam and even to neighbouring countries.

Vietnamese Red Cross

The Vietnamese Red Cross (VNRC), created in 1946, is part of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, guided by seven principles : humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, volunteerism, unity and universality.

The VNRC is organised by sector and by province. It also has branches in each district and in most communes. Its network includes four million volunteers.

The aim of the VNRC is to bring help to the most vulnerable people. It manages dispensaries where treatment is administered for free to the poorest ;

it runs a blood donor programme and is involved in natural disaster prevention programmes such as mangrove reforestation. It also plays an important role in training, education, community first aid and emergency first aid.

To compensate for the insufficiencies of community health care organisations, the Vietnamese Red Cross has developed over many years a network of volunteers and members all the way down to village level. Being the first links in the medical assistance chain, their role is to provide emergency first aid in the community, to connect people with the dispensaries and keep people informed.

Address

*Vietnamese Red Cross
82 Nguyen Du
Hanoi, Vietnam*

The Vietnamese Red Cross received FSD funding for three projects :

I- Nautical first aid, first aid river stations, medically equipped sampans in Soc Trang province

1- History and origins of the project

Soc Trang province is a coastal province (72 km of coastline) located in the Mekong Delta in the southeast of Vietnam. Several branches of the Mekong cross it, as do countless canals and rivers. Made up of seven districts, it has a population of 1,700,000 inhabitants, 80% rural. This province is particularly prone to flooding, hurricanes and typhoons.

2- Description of the project

Location : six communes of Soc Trang province : Phong Nam, An Thanh, Long Hung, Hung Phu, Thi Tran Phu Loc and Lam Tan.

Duration : 12 months (2002-2003)

Beneficiaries : all the inhabitants of the six communes, namely 72,195 people, but especially those in difficulties (first aid to the drowning and transport of the wounded).

The activity consisted of creating six nautical first aid stations located in high-risk places along the Mekong and at canal intersections. These stations are each equipped with a motorised sampan, fitted out with first aid kits, lifebelts and lifejackets as well as a crew of volunteers. These volunteers are responsible for running the first aid station, for rescuing people who are drowning, and for transporting the wounded and the sick to the nearest and most appropriate health facilities. This free service is guaranteed around the clock and

enables people to obtain rapid access to treatment.

One hundred volunteers were trained in first aid and more specifically in the problems associated with first aid in water.

Partner :

The French Red Cross took part in this project on an equal footing with the Vietnamese Red Cross. It was involved in the design, development and monitoring of the project.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	13 617.40 euros
- Soc Trang Vietnamese Red Cross	4 025.40 euros
- FSD financing	9 592 euros

3- Outcomes

The project seems to have had a positive impact on the life of the people, particularly through realisation of the dangers associated with natural disasters and river transport. The ability of Red Cross officials to manage such situations has been improved thanks to the training sessions held.

II- Road traffic first aid, humanitarian dispensary in Hai Phong province

1- History and origins of the project

Highway 14, linking Do Son district to the town of Hai Phong, is becoming progressively busier, owing to the development of tourist sites in the Do Son region that are located along the sea front. On its route are five villages in Kien Thuy district, four communities in Do Son district and ten light industry warehouses. Widening work was being carried out, as thousands of people travel on this road every day.

On average there are 170 fatal accidents a year in the town of Hai Phong, along with several hundred wounded. A large proportion of these accidents happen on this road.

There was already a first aid station near Route 14 at Hai Thanh, installed by the Government in 1980. It employed a doctor, two medical assistants and two nurses. However, it was under-equipped and in poor condition. It required renovation ; its equipment needed upgrading and new training sessions were necessary.

The Vietnamese Red Cross identified needs and designed this project, which is fully approved by the Government. The issue of road safety is dealt with at the national level in Vietnam.

2- Description of the project

Location : Hai Thanh village, Kien Thuy district, Hai Phong province

Duration : 12 months (2002-2003)

Beneficiaries : the 4,000 inhabitants of Hai Thanh village, the 60,000 inhabitants and 10,000 industrial workers who live near Highway 14 as well as the thousands of people travelling on this road every day. The objective of this project was **to provide emergency first aid for victims of road accidents**, but also **to provide basic treatment** for the sick in the district :

- Renovation of the old first aid station
- Purchase of equipment for the dispensary (beds, basic surgical apparatus, telephone)
- Improvement of patient care (open 24 hours a day with shifts, primary health care, emergency treatment, monitoring of pregnancies, preventive medicine)
- Organisation of emergency first aid training classes.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	15 051.24 euros
- Vietnamese Red Cross and the local population	6 097.97 euros
- FSD financing	8 953.27 euros

3- Outcomes

The District People's Committee has undertaken to finance the running costs, including medicine, which should make it possible for this dispensary to be viable.

III- Provision of drinking water in Ninh Thuan province

1- History and origins of the project

Ninh Thuan province is located at the southern edge of Central Vietnam. It is made up of five districts and contains 540,000 inhabitants of whom 20% are members of the Cham and Raglay ethnic minorities. Surrounded by high mountains, it is the driest province in Vietnam. However, the rainy season does a lot of damage there, in the form of flooding.

In terms of GDP, this province is one of the least economically developed in Vietnam.

The Ninh Thuan Red Cross identified populated areas that lacked drinking water. The inhabitants of these villages were still using water from streams for their personal use, leading to cases of stomach-ache, eye and skin diseases, and even of cholera, which affects mainly women and children. The Cham ethnic minority are sedentary by tradition, which obliges them to fetch drinking water on foot far from their villages, carrying it in containers on their backs.

2- Description of the project

Location : 4 villages in Ninh Thuan province

Duration : 8 months between 2002 and 2003

Beneficiaries : 9,274 families or approximately 47,825 people

This programme consisted of providing drinking water for the inhabitants of the four villages concerned by building 22 wells. The aims of this were as follows :

- **Provide the inhabitants of the villages with drinking water.**

- **Improve the villagers' health and hygiene** by thus reducing incidence of infectious diseases linked to lack of drinking water and to use of water unfit for consumption
- **Make arable and livestock farming easier**, which in the long term should improve the villages' financial autonomy.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	12 471.15 euros
- Vietnamese Red Cross :	4 544.10 euros
- FSD financing :	7 927.35 euros



L'APPEL

L'APPEL is an organisation founded by a group of pediatricians in 1968 to provide medical aid to child war victims in Vietnam. L'APPEL has a long experience in development activities in Vietnam in 3 fields : health, education and sanitation. Over the years, activities have developed both in the North and in the South : upgrading seminars for medical staff working in neonatology, provision of medical equipment and medicine, refurbishment of hospital premises. Support from the European Community was obtained from 1991 to 1995 for this refurbishment work.

Since 1991, L'APPEL has undertaken, at the request of its local partners, to decentralise its seminars to hospitals in the provinces. The Da Lat region was selected to begin a cycle of upgrading seminars. During a mission carried out in 1993, a delegation from L'APPEL visited the ethnic minority village Dangiarit B, in the Da Lat medical district. At that time, it was stressed that access to clean water was vital to provide better care for the children.

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L'APPEL received FSD funding for two projects :

I- Sanitary development project in Ninh Thuong commune : water conveyance, fluorosis control and childhood pathologies

1- History and origins of the project

Ninh Thuong commune is located in Ninh Hoa district in the north of Khanh Hoa province. It is 7 km in length and includes in total, with its hamlets, nearly 12,000 inhabitants.

Water was supplied from wells. Owing to geographic reasons peculiar to this region, the water is abnormally rich in fluorine. This causes a chronic intoxication in its inhabitants who suffer from

"fluorosis", which leads to serious dental deterioration, especially in children.

According to surveys made by the Hanoi National Geological Group, the level of fluorine reaches 18 mg/litre of water, while the acceptable dose is 0.7 mg/litre.

Various techniques were tried: equipment containing carbon filters was installed, but the results were very poor. In 1993, with help from UNICEF, earthenware jars



and tanks were supplied to families to collect rainwater, but this remained insufficient, particularly in the dry season.

The solution proposed was to supply the hamlets of the commune with spring water from the nearby mountains. Test of water quality made it possible to find a suitable spring, located 4.5 km from the first hamlet, in the forest, at a difference in altitude of 100 m in relation to the highest of the hamlets, Thôn III. Analyses showed fluorine content of 0.08 mg per litre. In addition there were no pollutants of human or animal origin in the water. The spring flowed strongly even in the dry season and was sufficient for the local inhabitants.

Professor Hoang Tu Hung, Vice-President of the Institute of Odontology and Stomatology of the Department of Dental Sciences at the Ho Chi Minh City University, was familiar with the water conveyance installations completed in recent years by L'APPEL in Lam Dong and Khanh Hoa provinces. It was therefore his suggestion that the Ninh Hoa People's Committee and the doctor from the village health centre requested help from L'APPEL in April 2000.

2- Description of the project

Location : Ninh Thuong village and neighbouring hamlets – Ninh Hoa district – Khanh Hoa province.

Duration : 18 months (September 2001 to March 2003)

Beneficiaries : about 12,000 people: poor farmers in the mountain foothills. Most of the villagers are Kinh with a few ethnic minority communities, mainly Raglai.

Local partners :

People's Committees of Khanh Hoa province and Ninh Hoa district

People's Committee of the village of Ninh Thuong

L'APPEL's involvement was on two levels.

Firstly it was to pilot and monitor the project with a permanent contact on site, Mr. Bui Van Binh. He was assisted by an engineer from the provincial planning office, who carried out technical monitoring of the building site while the work was being done. Those from L'APPEL monitoring the project followed the technical and financial progress of the water conveyance work through twice-yearly missions. They

were responsible for purchasing certain specific equipment and having it sent to Vietnam.

Aims of the project :

- **To improve living conditions in the fields of health and hygiene** for the families concerned by equipping the village with standpipes providing clean water, neither polluted nor containing excess fluorine, and also to do the same for all public installations (health centres and educational establishments).
- **Involvement of the villagers in work on the project:** the villagers themselves undertook all trench digging, earthworks and burying of pipes.
- **Public health education**, with training sessions designed to familiarise village leaders, members of the maintenance crew (made up of villagers) and hygiene officials with water management.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	172 002.44 euros
Provincial and district authorities :	41 620.88 euros
Inhabitants of Ninh Thuong :	32 209.30 euros
L'APPEL :	23 626.22 euros
FSD financing :	74 546 euros

3- Outcomes

The work carried out through the project has provided clean water for nearly 1,700 families. However, the villagers continue to rely on L'APPEL for maintenance work and any modifications the system requires. While the project has succeeded in improving their living conditions, the local inhabitants must become responsible for the system, thus making it their own.

II- Sanitary education and maintenance training in favour of inhabitants of villages equipped with water conveyance systems

1- History and origins of the project

The water conveyance systems installed by the various APPEL projects in Vietnam fit perfectly into an initiative to improve the sanitary and medical conditions of ethnic minority peoples.

During visits by representatives of L'APPEL, local authorities systematically requested follow-up, maintenance and public education concerning water use. This request led L'APPEL to consider a complementary project of education and training.

2- Description of the project

Location :

In Lam Dong province, Lac Duong district (Dangiarit B, Da Sar and Dan Kia villages) and Di Linh district (Kala, Tam Bô, Gia Bac and Son Dien villages).

In Khanh Hoa province, Khanh Son district (Son Trung, Son Hiep and Son Binh villages) and Ninh Hoa district (Ninh Thuong village).

Duration : 20 months, May 2003 to November 2004

Beneficiaries : those in charge of the 13 villages, as well as the inhabitants of the villages concerned, namely about 27 to 29,000 people.



Local partners : the People's Committees of Lac Duong, Di Dinh, Khanh Son and Ninh Hoa districts and the Centre for Water and Rural Hygiene in Khanh Hoa province.

L'APPEL adopted a two-part teaching strategy :

- sanitary education of village leaders, primary school teachers, presidents of People's Committees along with heads of families and community leaders
- training by a technician from L'APPEL of the maintenance crew, made up of villagers appointed by each village.

The policy of making the inhabitants responsible was

continued and developed with the systematic installation of water meters, and the payment of a contribution proportional to each family's consumption. These funds were controlled by a "Management Committee" under the authority of the village leader and were set aside to cover payment of the maintenance crew and purchase of basic equipment.

Objectives : to increase the involvement of villagers and local authorities

- in controlled usage of water and also improvement of sanitary conditions and hygiene practices.
- in maintaining equipment installed with the collaboration of L'APPEL in good condition.
- in adapting the existing systems to future expansion of the village.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	17 771 euros
- Contributions from local bodies :	5 368.30 euros
- L'APPEL :	3 609.50 euros
- FSD financing :	8 761.20 euros

3- Outcomes

Halfway through the project, the meter system was working well. However, problems apparently arose with the minority communities and led to standpipes being cut off. Integration difficulties thus persisted.

The transfer of responsibility from L'APPEL to the villagers took some time, but by the end of the project the maintenance crew was able to carry out basic work. The project brought about a significant decrease in skin diseases, conjunctivitis and diarrhoea in children.

This project demonstrated the capital importance of the training and education component in guaranteeing the permanence of the systems installed.

Hoan Kiem

The organisation *Hoan Kiem* was founded in 2000 by French expatriates living in Vietnam. It was a non-profitmaking organisation. The founder members wished to join forces to give direct financial assistance to Vietnamese farming families and enable them to develop profitable activities. The organisation was mainly active in the fields of the

environment, agriculture and livestock farming. The projects supported by the organisation with FSD financing are within the framework of the *Fleuve Rouge* Programme and have therefore received technical support from the *GRET* (Research and Technological Exchange Group), a French NGO. The organisation ceased its activities in 2003.

Hoan Kiem received FSD co-financing for two projects :

I- Support for women living in poverty in areas liable to flooding of two communes in Ha Hoà district - Development of lake fish farming in pens

1- History and origins of the project

Minh Côi and Bang Gia are two outlying communes on the south bank of the Red River in Ha Hoà district. They are both mountainous areas located on the Red River and on one of its tributaries. Because of this, they are often subject to flooding, which precludes growing a summer rice crop.

These two communes are exclusively agricultural with problems of temporary rural exodus when climatic conditions become unfavourable. They are considered as being among the poorest in Ha Hoà district. The proportion of families living in poverty in these communes reaches 60 and 64% respectively.

Although conditions are not really favourable for growing rice, they are much more so for farming fish, thanks to the presence of lakes, the Red River and its tributaries. This has led to various breeding schemes being proposed for the development of fish farming.

2- Description of the project

Location : Minh Côi and Bang Gia - Ha Hoà district - Phu Tho province.

Duration : 18 months from November 2001 to May 2003.

Beneficiaries : the principal families potentially able to undertake fish-farming activities. Support was given in priority to women who are members of the Women's Union. In the short term, this project was expected to contribute to improvement in living conditions for 300 families.

Objectives :

- **Reduce poverty** by proposing a profitable activity to 300 women from two communes
- **Provide technical assistance** to families, allowing them to try out and choose the fish-farming methods that appear best suited to their needs.
- **Promote, as much as possible, the existing natural resources** while diminishing reliance of family economies on climatic conditions
- **Propose and reinforce means of organisation** of families to increase solidarity within the society and ensure improved sustainability of the project
- **Extend this development model** to other communes.

Financing :

Total cost of the project

14 101.05 euros

Farmers' contribution	6 478.66 euros
FSD financing	7 622.45 euros

Partners :

- Women's Union of Bang Gia and Minh Côi communes in Ha Hoà, Phu Tho province.
- *GRET* (Research and Technological Exchange Group), Fleuve Rouge (Red River) Programme.

3- Outcomes

This project has enabled development of an area unsuitable for growing rice, but that presented several features well suited to fish farming. This has generated new income for these farming families all year round.

Two clubs for extension of fish-farming techniques were set up, one in Bang Gia (168 members) and the other in Minh Côi (76 members). The partnership between these two clubs and the local authorities seems to have worked very well. Two women were chosen as "intermediary farmers" to become the local technicians, to help other women in development of fish farming and to guarantee the project's technical sustainability.

An insurance/advice fund scheme was set up in each commune. The aim was to make people aware of the importance of fish disease prevention in order to improve the profitability of farming businesses.

Two "fish pharmacies" selling preventive and curative medicine at reasonable prices were established.

This project demonstrated the economic and social interest of developing fish farming.

Organisations such as agricultural co-operatives would allow this activity to receive better official recognition.

At the suggestion of the *GRET*, the president of the Ha Hoà District People's Committee undertook to :

- train about 20 fish-farming technicians .
- set up a network of fish-farming technicians who would carry out training sessions and exchanges of ideas with the provincial club for extension of fish-farming techniques.
- build a complete system for breeding young fish.
- develop a club for voluntary extension of techniques.

II- Strengthening of breeder groups, establishment of co-operative groups, support networks and fish-farming institutions in Vinh Phuc province

1- History and origins of the project

Tam Duong is a hilly district of nearly 150,000 inhabitants. Among them, 35% possess ponds or pools. The part of the *Fleuve Rouge* (Red River) Programme in which *Hoan Kiem* participates consists mainly of technical training, leading to the establishment of about twenty fish-farming groups. Work on strengthening these groups must continue and lead to the creation of co-operative groups and fish-farming technical support institutions.

The main difficulties encountered were lack of a technical support network and of a scheme for extension of fish-farming techniques that would

have helped to develop production, lack of organisation in the distribution sector leading to overdependence on intermediaries, the insufficiency of the system for breeding young fish to satisfy needs, problems concerning diseases in fish farms.

2- Description of the project

Location : Dai Dinh, Hô Son, Dao Tu and Duy Phiên communes - Tam Duong district - Vinh Phuc province.

Duration : 18 months (2001 to 2003).

Beneficiaries : 600 to 700 families belonging to various fish-farming groups.

Aims of the project

- **Train thirty technicians** and build a network at the district level
- **Create co-operative groups** producing eggs and young fish, aiming for self-sufficiency in terms of the quantity and quality of young fish being bred
- **Create a network of services** for supply of preventive products with regard to diseases
- **Organise groups of fish farmers** to ease product sales
- **Increase the level of know-how** and technical skills in families.

Financing :

Total cost of the project	14 101.05 euros
Farmers' contribution	6 478.66 euros
FSD financing	7 622.45 euros

3- Outcomes

Technical training days for fish farmers were organised during the first phase of the project, with distribution of booklets. About 600 people took part in these training sessions. Four fish-farming management committees were set up, one for each commune. Each committee was made up of 5 to 7 people (People's Committee, extension group for fish-farming techniques, co-operative group of fish

farmers and leaders of fish-farmer groups). These committees, which are genuine institutional innovations, allocated loans to projects co-financed by the fish farmers themselves.

During the second phase, 17 technicians received an elementary certificate in fish farming with the possibility of giving training to other fish farmers in their communes then providing monitoring, technical and methodological support for each group. These training sessions thus enabled a synergy to be created within groups of fish farmers. This resulted in improved organisation and planning, and increased production capacities (about 8 metric tons more in 2003 than the year before).

Added to this was the creation of four turnover stocks of preventive and curative medicine for fish diseases, which were previously only available at a distance of 50 or 100 km from the communes. This contributed to reducing diseases in the ponds and in improving productivity.

This project has real added value, thanks to the training sessions and the creation of the committees. A structure has developed around the groups, strengthening the capabilities of all concerned and boosting productivity.

Enfants du monde - Droits de l'homme (EMDH) (Children of the World – Human Rights)

Enfants du Monde – Droits de l'Homme (EMDH) (Children of the World – Human Rights) is a French non-profitmaking organisation, approved by the Ministry of Youth and Sports. It is a member of the French Council for the Rights of the Child (COFRADE) and of the federation *La voix de l'enfant* (Voice of the Child)². It has been conferred special consultative status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Since 1986, *EMDH* fights for recognition of the child as a person enjoying specific rights. Their activities are founded on the International Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations

General Assembly on 20th November 1989. The organisation is independent of all political and denominational tendencies.

Since 1993, *EMDH* is carrying out activities in Vietnam aimed at children in difficulties: improvement of access to education, protection of street children, and improvement of living conditions for handicapped children.

Activities are mostly located in the south and centre of Vietnam and the organisation is registered with PACCOM since 2001.

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Sanitary and socio-educative support in Dien Khanh district, Khanh Hoa province

1- History and origins of the project

Origins of the project

The project was set up at the request of the Vietnamese partner, the Khanh Hoa Provincial Department of Education and Training, who wished to extend to fresh communes the health education work begun at ten places in the province in 1998.

Context

Khanh Hoa province, both coastal and mountainous, enjoys a geographical situation that, with socio-economic development, is advantageous. However, professional integration and access to education and sanitary services are still limited. Some areas therefore lag behind economically, and especially those inhabited by ethnic groups.

² La Voix de l'Enfant (Voice of the Child) is a federation of 50 associations founded in 1981 concerned with "the welfare of children whoever they are, wherever they are". The federation seeks to be a spokesperson for children, a forum for exchange of ideas and co-ordination and a propositional force for the application of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Suoi Tien commune is located in a semi-forested region. Although it covers an area of 3,500 hectares, only 600 of them are cultivatable. The inhabitants are mostly Kinh (about 690 families) and a minority of Raglay (40 families). The number of poor families is very high and schoolwork is regularly interrupted by work in the fields. Some linguistic difficulties have also been noted.

Dien Tan commune is a mountainous commune where little land can be cultivated. The inhabitants are also mostly Kinh with other 'minority' families : Raglay, Chinese, Cham and Khmer. 90% of families

are considered as being in difficulties or even wretchedly poor.

These remote areas have gradually become more organised. The local authorities were anxious to improve living conditions for villagers but lacked resources.

While schooling was carried out on the whole, (in half-day groups), serious health problems remained. Malnutrition struck owing to poverty but also because of mothers' ignorance of a balanced diet (frequent diarrhoea).

The Khanh Hoa Provincial Department of Education wished to improve the conditions of schooling in remote and disadvantaged communes. The programme targets especially children, in particular the children of ethnic minorities so that they may benefit from a schooling adapted to their needs, particularly their linguistic needs. In addition, health education classes through teaching of simple notions were aimed at getting children to pass on the message received in class into their family circles.

2- Description of the project

Location : rural communes of Suoi Tiên and Diên Tân - Diên Khánh district - Khanh Hoa province.

Duration : 2 years from January 2002 to December 2003.

Beneficiaries : the children of the communes and the whole community.

The general objective of the project was to **improve the schooling and sanitary situation**, especially for children of ethnic minorities and children of poor and large families. To achieve this, three targets were specified:

- Children : organise full-day classes, improve awareness of health problems, train teaching staff in health education, encourage children to pass on notions learnt to their families, procure points of access to running water necessary to daily life
- Community officials : train these officials and improve their awareness of health education,

follow-up training of families

- Families : train parents in maintaining access to running water, use of latrines, general hygiene and protection of the environment.

Local partners :

- People's Committees in the areas involved
- Provincial and district Education Departments
- Local health organisations
- The Women's Union, which made one of its officials available
- The teaching teams

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	32 600 euros
- Vietnamese partners	9 450 euros
- FSD financing	23 130 euros

3- Outcomes

The programme developed by EMDH was simple, practical and well suited to the needs of the people targeted. 40 children from ethnic minorities from 1st to 5th grade (primary school) benefited from this project. While before the school attendance rate was no better than 50% to 60 %, it reached 100% after the implementation of the project. The children were more diligent and became an excellent means of spreading information concerning hygiene and health. Families got involved in the project and expressed their wishes, in particular concerning the construction of latrines and wells.





Viêt Nam Plus

Created in 1994 by a group of friends, *Viêt Nam Plus* is a non-governmental organisation registered in France, Vietnam and Belgium. *Viêt Nam Plus* has operated in Vietnam since its creation. Its general objective is the economic and social development of the community based on existing local organisations and civil society, according to three founding principles of operation : for

and with the poorest, getting beneficiaries to participate and sustainability of projects.

In France, the organisation informs the public of the situation in Vietnam and of activities carried out. Particular attention is given to informing and mobilising people of Vietnamese origin living in France.

Addresses and telephone numbers

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Community development in Tanh Linh, Binh Thuan province

1- History and origins of the project

History of the project

At the beginning of 2001, Tanh Linh People's Committee and *Viêt Nam Plus* signed a collaboration agreement to work together on community development projects including micro-credit and savings schemes, preventive health, agriculture and handicrafts.

Context

Tanh Linh is one of the poorest districts in Binh Thuan province. This forested and mountainous district is home to a large number of ethnic minorities. Tanh Linh People's Committee and *Viêt Nam Plus* decide to collaborate on three communes (Lac Tanh, Duc Binh and Duc Thuan) with a total population of 26,000.

In these three communes, the living and hygienic

conditions of the inhabitants are quite poor. Employment is mostly agricultural (particularly rice paddy), but the agricultural techniques used were not very effective, and the level of training of agricultural extension services remained insufficient. People from ethnic minorities, where illiteracy is quite common, found themselves all the more affected by this lack of skills.

Access to credit being limited for families who lack guarantees, they resorted to borrowing from loan sharks. Meanwhile, banks did not allow small savings deposits.

Experimental savings-credit groups were set up from the beginning of 2001 to gauge the appropriateness of a micro-financing programme in Tanh Linh and to measure the real motivation of the Women's Union, principal partner in the savings-credit programme, as

well as its ability to work with the groups formed. The positive result led to the definition of a new community development project in order to support the organisation of civil society and to adopt a community participation approach.

2- Description of the project

Location : three communes of Tanh Linh district : Lac Tanh, Duc Thuan and Duc Binh in Binh Thuan province.

Duration : the project has a total duration of 5 years but FSD financing concerns 2002 and 2003.

Beneficiaries : the poorest and the women of these three communes, given that, taken together, 2,200 households out of 5,000 live on an income of less than \$80 US a year.

Four main activities have been implemented within the framework of credit-saving groups :

- Firstly, a credit fund was set up by groups of poor women. After two days' training, (bookkeeping, calculating interest, conflict resolution), the groups established a weekly saving scheme. Women who wished to could then borrow money from the group.
The aims were to **increase income** in the target population, **build up a saving capital** of an average per member of 400,000 VND and to **render organisation of the community solid and sustainable**.
- A course of basic and preventive health training was developed at the request of the saving-credit groups. These women were trained in hygiene, first aid and action to be taken in case of sickness. This component contributed to **improving hygiene** in 1,000 families.
- An agriculture and livestock farming training programme : use of fertilisers and pesticides, introduction to new seeds and varieties, disease prevention, vaccines and nutrition for livestock. Farmers' groups, in total 200 participants during 2002 and 300 during 2003, followed the agricultural training.
The training sessions on livestock farming involved six people in 2002 and another six in 2003. In a few months these farmers were trained as para-veterinarians.
The aims were to **increase agricultural yield and**



income for farmers and improve **access to para-veterinary services**.

- Finally, development of new jobs with training sessions in making specific handicraft products. The aim was to train about twenty women and to create about one hundred **new jobs** in a sector other than agriculture.

Local partners :

- District People's Committee
- Representatives of Communal People's Committees
- Women's Union
- Education and Health Departments
- Agricultural bureau

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	108 963.82 euros
- Vietnamese partners	58 100.28 euros
- <i>Viêt Nam Plus</i>	10 888.54 euros
- FSD financing	39 975 euros

3- Outcomes

Viêt Nam Plus implemented small-scale projects that were managed by the beneficiaries themselves and touched on several fields : health, hygiene, agriculture and credit. In addition to being involved personally, the beneficiaries were able to acquire skills (keeping accounts, first aid, agricultural training) that enhanced the quality of their work.

The creation of saving-credit groups by the Women's Union was an excellent means of generating dynamism within village communities, and enabling the circulation of preventive information concerning health or hygiene within families.



GRET - Groupe de Recherche et d'Echanges Technologiques (Research and Technological Exchange Group)

Created 30 years ago (1976), the *GRET* (Research and Technological Exchange Group) is a non-profitmaking organisation that derives most of its resources from activities as a service contractor. Over the last ten or so years, the organisation has developed projects in the field that are systematically carried out in partnership with local organisations or that lead to the creation of such organisations. The *GRET* is active in about forty countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. In some countries, such as Vietnam, the desire to carry out long-term activities has led them to opening permanent branch offices.

Active in Vietnam since 1988, the *GRET* offers various forms of support to agriculture and rural development, public health and institutional development. The *GRET's* long history in this country, the professionalism of its technical assistants, its knowledge of the rural world and local procedures, its ability to co-ordinate all kinds of projects (from the most modest to the most complex), the know-how of the *GRET* with regard to producing reference

documents, all of these give the organisation a high degree of credibility.

Close collaboration with national partners and international NGOs enables the *GRET* to co-ordinate several programmes and develop many different projects. By experimenting with new forms of development, these projects are designed to reach a large proportion of the rural population, mainly in the most disadvantaged regions. In this manner, thanks to support and training from the *GRET*, these people can obtain access to technical innovations and to advances in terms of means of production and organisation. The ultimate goal of this initiative is to improve the quality of life of these people.

Over the past few years, the activities of the *GRET* in Vietnam have been concentrated on a number of large-scale projects, namely *Fleuve Rouge* (Red River) (*DIALOGS* Project) and *FASEVIE*, which each bring together several projects overseen by one or several technical assistants.

The *GRET* received financing on four occasions from the FSD, of which two were for a single project, implemented in two different districts :

I- Rendering self-sufficient ten credit funds supervised and guaranteed by the Women's Association in Yen Lac and Vinh Tuong districts

1- History and origins of the project

In order to respond to fresh financial needs in rural

areas where 80% of the Vietnamese population reside, the Bank for Agricultural Development became the Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural

Development (VBARD). Over the last ten years, this bank has experienced extremely rapid growth.

In parallel, a Vietnam Bank for the Poor (VBP) was created in 1995 that enjoys the use of the distribution network and the officials of the VBARD. The customers targeted by the VBP are in theory the most needy segment of the population.

In 2001, credit schemes were used by about 50% of rural families. These apparently good results concealed a disparity in access to credit to the detriment of the poorest households. Access to the VBARD, despite an increased flexibility in loan procedures, remained very difficult for these people. With a continuous increase in the average size of individual loans (\$80 US in 1992 rising to \$550 US in 2001), the Agricultural Bank was effectively targeting ever more wealthy customers.

The project consisting of ten credit funds started in 1996 and was an experimental model for self-managed village credit funds, targeting those people not reached by the existing financial schemes. One of the aims was to test the involvement of a mass organisation in the management and monitoring of funds. The Women's Association was chosen as partner for the project.

This project was also intended to make possible a link between the formal banking sector and the credit funds. The VBP agreed to set up the funds.

After four years of experimenting, the funds have stood the test of time. The repayment rate is 100%; the VBP was satisfied with these micro-credit schemes, as were the beneficiaries.

2- Description of the project

Location : Vinh Phuc province

- Yen Lac district : Dong Cuong commune (three credit funds) Lien Chau commune (two funds).
- Vinh Tuong district : An Tuong commune (two funds), Lung Hao commune (two funds) and Vinh Binh commune (one fund).

Beneficiaries : households unable to access loans from the VBARD, i.e. about 500 families per district. 98% of beneficiaries are women. The poorest households receive priority, on condition that they are creditworthy.

Duration : 18 months (from March 2003 to November 2004)

The aim of this phase was to achieve complete self-sufficiency of the funds :

- Self-sufficiency and permanence of the funds in order to ensure a lasting access for families to micro-credit
- Supervision and running of credit funds by the District Women's Association and sharing of experience on a national scale thanks to the participation of the Women's Associations in the Women's Union seminar.
- Installation of a pertinent model of credit funds that could be used widely by the Vietnam Bank for the Poor and consideration of relaxing the legal framework.

Over and above this aim, the idea was to prove that a model of a credit fund supported by the Women's Association had its place in the rapidly evolving world of micro-finance in Vietnam.

Financing :

Yen Lac district

Total cost of the project :	21 070.05 euros
- Vietnamese contribution	6 300 euros
- GRET	2 508.83 euros
- FSD financing	12 261.22 euros

Vinh Tuong district

Total cost of the project :	21 070.05 euros
- Vietnamese contribution	6 300 euros
- GRET	2 508.83 euros
- FSD financing	12 261.22 euros

Local partners :

- The Women's Association of Yen Lac and Vinh Tuong districts.
- Vietnam Bank for the Poor³

3- Outcomes

The final phase consists of removing the GRET from the mechanism that has been installed. Restarting the funds was perfectly co-ordinated by the Women's Associations of the two districts and the funds have shown that they can operate normally. The project was extended until 2005 in order to enable the women in charge of managing the funds to strengthen their technical skills.

³ Renamed the Vietnam Bank for Social Policies, its status has become independent from that of the VBARD.

II- Livestock insurance fund schemes for the benefit of poor or moderately poor families in Vinh Phuc province



1- History and origins of the project

The districts concerned are located in the north of Vinh Phuc province, in hilly country with rather unfavourable natural conditions. Serious irrigation problems were affecting several communes. Sources of income were quite limited and could not be derived from hunting or gathering as in other mountainous or forested regions.

More than 90% of the population are farmers. The economy is based on growing rice (3 crops a year). Space being quite limited and population density being quite high, fish-farming and pig-farming activities have increased. Livestock farming has developed greatly, with the opportunity to obtain animals of increasingly high genetic calibre, as well as industrial feed and veterinary products.

However, some families struggled to keep up with these advances through lack of means and basic know-how or an ineffective control of animal diseases. Poor families were falling into debt.

Public bodies giving technical support, with regard to

information extension and animal health care, are often inadequate, and cannot help a significant number of families (2 engineers for 20,000 livestock farming families). Some technical and methodological support seemed appropriate.

2- Description of the project

Location : Vinh Phuc province, Lap Thach district

Beneficiaries : about 1,200 families, of which 600 through the schemes targeting the most needy and a further 600 primarily through the other schemes.

Duration : 18 months (March 2003 to November 2004)

The overall aim of this project is to develop different livestock farming insurance funds to encourage sustainable safety and development of livestock farming and family economies.

- **Initiate and develop two pig-farming insurance schemes** to ensure the safety and better integration of farms known in the business as "farowers" (sow breeders)
- **Experiment with insurance schemes** and adapted development methods effective in new livestock farming market sectors
- **Monitor and train actors implementing schemes stemming from the first ones** and consider how to adapt them in order to ensure inclusion of the poorest families
- **Carry out training, follow-up monitoring and maximise impact** of the aims already listed
- **Undertake the co-ordination**, federalisation and outward communication of lessons learnt

Local partners :

- Lâp Thach District Agriculture and Rural Development Section
- District Extension Centre
- Veterinary Station
- People's Committee
- Communal extension groups

- Communal Women's Unions
- Sông Lô Institute

Financing :

Total financing of the project :	34 104 euros
- Contribution from the Vietnamese	9 192 euros
- GRET	7 908 euros
- FSD financing	17 004 euros

3- Outcomes

Livestock farmers' participation in training sessions enabled them to acquire technical know-how and to realise the importance of preventive actions (vaccines, hygiene, the environment).

The insurance-advice project brought about a reduction in poverty in the district by increasing the incomes of the families involved but also by improvement of hygiene within the villages and by environmental preservation. About 800 families (roughly 5,000 people) are affected by the project.

Of the 50 funds originally planned, 38 were actually



established and mainly concerned pig farming. Diversification of insurance funds into livestock farming other than pigs (cattle and poultry) remained minimal.

The scheme was not yet completely self-sufficient by the end of the project. A local organisation was created. This is the Sông Lô Association, which should evolve into a local NGO. This organisation should monitor insurance-advice activities after the end of the project. The aim is to perpetuate these funds.

III- Pilot project for establishment of mini-livestock farms. Main animals concerned : freshwater turtles and frogs

1- History and origins of the project

Since the establishment of a policy of increased openness (*doi moi*), growing inequalities have sprung up between urban areas with high potential and less advantaged rural areas. To counter this, Vietnam has established a development policy in rural areas. To forestall a rural exodus and to settle families in rural areas, the Vietnamese Government seeks to encourage the development of family agriculture and to find outlets likely to generate greater income. Several projects are in the process of being developed in the field of protection of the environment and of certain rare, endangered species, among others the turtles and frogs targeted by the project (ratification by Vietnam in 1997 of the CITES Convention).

It is in this spirit of development of family agriculture, establishment of new food processing market sectors and protection of endangered animals that this project was conceived.

Mini-livestock farming consists of rearing, for food or economic purposes, of certain relatively small animals (snails, turtles, freshwater crabs, manure worms, frogs). Some animals are used as food for human consumption, others as animal protein or as a source of income.

Small-scale, peri-urban farmers can easily do some mini-livestock farming. This avoids removal from the wild and contributes to safeguarding the species.

2- Description of the project

Location : Hai Duong province, Thanh Ha district

Beneficiaries : 97 families in the district who have been rearing turtles for some years, 4 families chosen to establish a frog farm, jobs created in the food processing sector.

Duration : One year (April 2003 to April 2004) with a restructuring of the financing for the frog farm during the summer of 2003.

The main aim of the project was to **develop new production sectors** for human consumption as well as other applications, through raising livestock. The project contributed to **poverty alleviation and reduction of pollution and assisted in strengthening local civil organisations**.

The following activities were carried out:

- Market survey to study existing outlets, competition and potential outlets for processed goods
- Evaluation of existing turtle farms
- Establishment of frog farming
- Technical support to livestock farmers
- Experimentation with the processing of products from livestock farming.

Support activities to local frog farming were halted during the summer of 2003 owing to problems in

finding suitable animal feed and with pond design. A meeting was called with all the project's technical partners and the livestock farmers having taken part in the experiment. All concluded that the experiment had to come to a close and the reasons for failure were analysed. All resources from this component were redeployed towards the groups of turtle producers.

Financing :

Total financing of the project :	36 288.3 euros
- Vietnamese contribution	13 176 euros
- GRET	5 017.65 euros
- FSD financing	18 094.65 euros

Local partners :

- Farmer's Association, Thanh Ha district, Hai Duong province
- VASI (Vietnam Agricultural Science Institute)

3- Outcomes

In November 2004 the co-operative of Hong Lac turtle farmers was created. In order to continue the project, the *FSD* activities were taken up and integrated into the *DIALOGS* Project, run by a consortium of various European NGOs and Vietnamese partners.

This allowed activities to continue until the end of 2005. This innovative experience could be reproduced on a larger scale.

VIETNAM AGRICULTURAL SCIENCE INSTITUTE (VASI)

In January 1988, a directive from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Food Industry created the VASI from the merger of two previously existing departments: the Departments of Agricultural Ecology and Hydraulics. It develops co-operation with French organisations such as the *GRET* (Research and Technological Exchange Group), the *INRA* (French National Institute for Agricultural Research), *VSF* (Veterinarians Without Borders) and *AFDI* (French Farmers and International Development), within the *Fleuve Rouge* (Red River) Programme. This programme contributes significantly to change in research and rural development concepts in Vietnam. Its results have brought about the development of farmers' groups in the northern regions of Vietnam.

Completed projects

- The *PAOPA* Project, (Support for Organisation of Agricultural Production) (1999-2002), a project financed by the *FSP* (French Governmental Priority Solidarity Fund), developed several activities, in particular for the rice- and pig-farming sectors, with the participation of farmers (development of civil society with the creation of co-operatives and associations).
Within this programme several projects were implemented:
 - > The *ECOPOL* Project conducted research into the agricultural products sector in partnership with the *CIRAD* (French Agricultural Research Centre

for International Development). This project provided an overview of all sectors of food production and contributed to the establishment of new development projects.

- > The *SAM* Project, Land Systems in Mountainous Regions, developed research activities concerning extension and support methods for producers with regard to land systems in mountainous regions.
- The *INCO-DC "DELTAS"* Project (1998 to 2000) in collaboration with the *GRET*, the Universities of Louvain (Belgium), Mainz (Germany), Kasetsart (Thailand), Can Tho and the *IRD* (French public science and technology research and overseas development institute) was concerned with institutional changes in water management, hydraulic operations and economic diversification processes.

Ongoing projects

- The *INCO-URBASIA* Project (2002 to 2006) in collaboration with *GRET*, *INRA*, the University of Louvain, a Norwegian organisation and a Cambodian one, aims to analyse the dynamics at work in rural peri-urban areas around secondary cities in two countries: Vietnam and Cambodia (restructuring of the area, land dynamics, evolution of consumers' demands and the capacity of local agriculture to meet these demands).

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Conservation and commercialisation of local aromatic rice varieties by women's producer groups

1- History and origins of the project

The Red River Delta is where rice was first grown and various varieties can be found there. Among them, certain varieties of low-yield, aromatic rice are dying out.

Research conducted by the CIRAD (ECOPOL Project) and the VASI into aromatic varieties of rice has shown that the Tam Xoan variety originated in Hai Hau district but that the genetic potential of this variety was not stabilised. Post-harvest preservation and processing techniques were not very effective. In addition, the consumer was unable to distinguish any difference in the end product, as Tam Xoan rice was mixed with other varieties.

After many years of insufficient production, Vietnam set itself the target of producing increasing quantities of rice, while neither the authorities nor the farmers were much concerned about its quality.

At the same time, the country's economic development has led to an improvement in household earnings. This increase in disposable income has created a demand for diversity in the market for agricultural products and in particular, a category of consumers has emerged seeking to purchase products and foodstuffs as specific as Tam Xoan rice, produced in Hai Hau district.

2- Description of the project

Location : Hai An and Hai Phong communes, Hai Hau district, Nam Dinh province

Duration : 2 years (from January 2003 to December 2004)

Beneficiaries : several hundred farming families, in particular women, rice traders who benefit from a high quality local supply, local experts who have strengthened their expertise and urban consumers.

This project began with an experimental phase involving 31 families, 26 for preservation and 5 for

processing of the rice by traditional methods. The VASI experts held several meetings with these farmers in order to study and identify this variety and the procedures for growing Tam Xoan rice. Then a production plan was developed in close collaboration with the farmers.

Organising women's groups made it possible to begin production of Tam Xoan rice. At the same time, collective marketing and promotion activities were established.

Aims :

- Encourage groups of poor and moderately poor farmers (particularly women's producer groups) to produce Tam Xoan rice.
- Promote development of a commodity chain (market sector) for high quality aromatic rice.
- Improve preservation of local varieties by farmers
- Strengthen capacity in local organisations for development activities.

Partners :

Women's Association of Hai Hau district, Nam Dinh province
District Agriculture and Rural Development Section

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	27 713.25 euros
- Vietnamese contribution	8 644.5 euros
- FSD financing	19 068.75 euros

3- Outcomes

The project brought about the creation of two associations, one bringing together producers and the other processors and traders of Tam Xoan rice. The creation of these associations was a positive step for community development, as they manage and monitor the whole Tam Xoan rice commodity chain. The rice is better promoted and risks are minimised.

Following the FSD project, the local actors wished to establish a system certifying product origin for Tam Xoan rice, similar to *appellations contrôlées*.

Institute of Ecological Economy

The Institute of Ecological Economy is a Vietnamese NGO founded in 1990 by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment. The 19 founding members, experts from varied scientific fields, associated themselves voluntarily to help poor farmers, living in fragile ecosystems.

The Institute has various missions :

- The study of socio-economic problems of so-called "ecological" regions with the aim of raising the quality of inhabitants' living conditions and protecting, improving and enriching the ecological environment
- The study of technical advances in the field of economic and technical management in order to

pass on these advances to the target regions

- Sharing of know-how in ecological technology in order to train competent officials.

Since its foundation, the Institute has installed, with the help of national and international organisations, nine ecological villages on barren hillsides, sandy plains and submerged land. Four of these villages are established in sandy regions of Quang Binh and Quang Tri provinces in northern-central Vietnam. For each village, the Institute improved the environment and changed the farming practices, which were very unstable, with a view to sustainable development.

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Raising the quality of living conditions for poor farmers living on the desert and sandy plain of Thach Ha district in Ha Tinh province

1- History and origins of the project

Origins of the project

The Vietnam Institute of Ecological Economy initiated this project. Armed with past experience in several villages, the Institute wished to renew the ecological development of a village in a precarious environment.

History of the project

Ha Tinh province consists of mostly mountainous terrain bordering on narrow plains. The life of its inhabitants is essentially based on rice production. However, Thach Ha district is in the east of Ha Tinh province, on the edge of the sea, and a large

proportion of it is silted up with sand. The inhabitants are mostly farmers/fishermen.

The marine resources are gradually being exhausted and food production has become difficult particularly because of drought (high and continual winds, strong sunshine). The women are obliged to seek work in the towns, abandoning their role in the home, in particular children's education. The commune has no school for children over the age of twelve. They have to travel to other, more distant villages. When the climatic conditions prevent this, the rate of absenteeism is very high.



These very difficult and disadvantageous conditions have created economic and social inequalities between Thach Ha and the surrounding communes : famine, poverty and illiteracy are all rife there. The project of the Institute of Ecological Economy aims to bring the living conditions of the inhabitants of this fragile ecosystem up to the same level as that of those living in more favourable conditions.

2- Description of the project

Location : Thach Tan commune, Thach Ha district, Ha Tinh province.

Beneficiaries : About a hundred families in general made up of six people each (two children, two elderly people over 60 and two adult farmers or fishermen).

Duration : June 2003 to November 2004.

The Institute's actions entailed :

- Identifying the **causes of poverty** (natural conditions, technical and financial difficulties, etc.)
- Identifying the **needs of families**
- Programming **activities to improve living conditions and production** (planting windbreaks

of trees, digging wells for drinking water and ponds to collect rain water, fish farming, establishing cultivated plants adapted to the improved natural conditions)

- **Technical training** for the inhabitants and local administrative officials.

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	43 166.4 euros
- Contribution from the Institute of Ecological Economy	3 312 euros
- Contribution from beneficiaries	6900 euros
- FSD financing	32 954.4 euros

3- Outcomes

The living conditions and the environment of the village improved considerably thanks to the installation of roads, irrigation canals, fishponds and fields with food crops. 81 families benefited from this project and each now has a small house with a fruit and vegetable patch. From a village in a sandy desert, the village has become a luxuriant oasis.

The villagers were given a sense of responsibility and all became involved in the project.

HANDICAP International

Handicap International is a French non-governmental, non-profitmaking organisation for international solidarity. It was created in 1982 and its head office is in Lyon, France.

The French section of the organisation founded the international movement that created the sections in Belgium (1986), Switzerland (1996), Germany (1998), Luxemburg (1998), the UK (1999) and representative offices in Denmark and in the US.

In 1982, Handicap International was created to respond to the destitution and need for surgical appliances of thousands of handicapped Cambodian refugees on the Thai border. The organisation is today present in about 46 countries. Currently, Handicap International seeks to help any person who has become handicapped and excluded due to any factors, be they medical, social, economic or cultural. This is put into practice through multidisciplinary programmes to take care of people (treatment, re-education, psychological support) and environmental activities (rural development, education, health,

rights, landmine clearance).

From 2001 to the end of 2004, Handicap International worked with VIPASED (Vietnam Association for Promoting and Supporting Educational Development), a Vietnamese organisation that brings together teachers who wish to work for the development of boarding schools for ethnic minorities (*EIME*), particularly in Bac Can and Lao Cai provinces in Northern Vietnam. This programme should make it possible to renew technical education in these boarding schools while taking into account the social realities and economic potential of the poorest communes.

Always keen to work with ethnic minorities in mountainous areas, Handicap International has also undertaken to do so in favour of AIDS prevention. The new activity takes place in a wide-ranging programme built up on both sides of the border between Laos and Vietnam, in Quang Tri province on the Vietnamese side.

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Pilot project of support for career advice and professional integration of students leaving Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities

1- History and origins of the project

In 1990, a national programme (Programme 7) was developed in Vietnam aimed at strengthening

primary and secondary education for people living in precarious circumstances in mountainous areas, disadvantaged regions and on islands. This programme brought about the construction of



several primary schools in communes, and of secondary boarding schools in the administrative centres of the most disadvantaged districts and provinces, usually inhabited in the majority by ethnic minorities.

During 2000, an assessment of Programme 7 was carried out by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) with the participation of VIPASED, which showed that despite the skills acquired, 30 to 40% of students did not continue with their schooling beyond the ninth year, end of the first cycle of secondary studies and equivalent to the fourth year of secondary school (age 14-15). This was for various reasons: family constraints, inadequate level of students, lack of room in the provincial schools. At the end of the second cycle of secondary education, nearly 50% of students who obtain the leaving certificate cannot continue into higher education (universities or vocational schools).

The very general content of secondary education does not enable students to practise a trade making it possible to support themselves while contributing to the development of their community.

The project aims to strengthen technical education in the boarding schools for ethnic minorities as planned by Handicap International and the CESEMA⁴ who have worked together on this since 2001. The CESEMA is a Vietnamese NGO placed in charge of implementing the project by VIPASED. Within this framework, both organisations identified the problem of students who, upon leaving boarding school, can no longer continue their studies beyond this first cycle of general education.

Within the framework of French co-operation, since 2001 Handicap International and the CESEMA have helped the boarding schools for ethnic minorities in Lao Cai, Sapa, Bac Can and Cho Don to develop complementary activities for students through more vocational training programmes. The results obtained were encouraging but stronger efforts were needed for those students who were obliged to return home. In 2000, nearly half of the 858 students who had attended the Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities returned to their communes without any complementary training.

It is in this context that a request was made for assistance from the Bac Can Education Department for the professional integration of these students into their communities.

2- Description of the project

Location : the six districts of Bac Can province

Duration : 20 months from April 2003 to November 2004

Beneficiaries : 50 students having left the Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities : 50 micro-projects were selected, as well as the communes and inhabitants who will benefit from the services provided by these former students.

The aim of this project was the strengthening of educational capacity at the Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities so that it might contribute to easing the return to their communities of students no longer able to continue their studies. This approach should also have contributed to social and economic development of the students' native communes and villages, by teaching them a trade that provides them with an income.

Within the school, a local steering committee was established, made up of the director of the school, two technical teachers, an advisor from the Department of Education and Training, a representative of the Youth Union and a member of the provincial section of VIPASED. This committee was responsible for considering students' applications and monitoring their progress.

⁴ Centre for Supporting Education in Mountainous Areas

Activities of the project :

- Development of training and practice modules
- Intervention of a technical advisor in students' families while teaching classes at the boarding school for ethnic minorities
- Establishment of a turnover fund making it possible to finance, in the form of a loan of one million dong per pupil, the purchase of equipment to put the micro-projects into practice
- Financing improvements and equipment for the Bac Can boarding school for ethnic minorities.

Local partners :

- Bac Can Provincial People's Committee through the Department of Education and Training
- Bac Can Provincial Youth Union
- The CESEMA answering to VIPASED
- Vietnam Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (VBARD)

Financing :

Total cost of the project :	29 095 euros
- Bac Can People's Committee	8 625 euros
- FSD financing	20 470 euros

3- Outcomes

This project demonstrated the importance of technical education for the development of communities, particularly in the most disadvantaged provinces. Thanks to the project, students leaving school became resource people and vectors for new techniques in their families and their communities.

In November 2004, a request to prolong the project of support to students leaving the boarding schools for ethnic minorities was made by the CESEMA in order to continue strengthening the skills of all the actors involved in the project (partners and beneficiaries) and to capitalise of the previous phases.



UTAD - Union for Technology Application and Development

The UTAD was created in 1995 by some members of a professional organisation, the Vietnam Union of Science and Technology Associations (VUSTA). Its vocation is to conduct research, to apply it and to carry out technology transfers in the fields of agriculture and rural development.

The UTAD can call upon a multidisciplinary group of scientists able to respond to project requests in the fields of agriculture and rural development. In addition to this there is a network of collaborators across the whole country, well known and experienced scientists working in universities, research institutes, agricultural extension organisations, etc. The Union also maintains close relations with the authorities and local inhabitants.

Since its creation, the UTAD has taken part in the implementation of several projects that have all obtained good results :

- Vietnamo-Dutch programme for growing potatoes (Northern Vietnam).
- National project for improvement of the production process of potatoes varieties (co-ordinated by VUSTA).
- Project to produce teaching materials for colleges (Lang Son province).
- Project to assist in vocational training in ethnic minority schools (Hoa Binh and Lang Son provinces).
- Project to assist women farming livestock (Lang Son province).
- Project for poverty alleviation and economic development (Yen Bai province).
- Project to produce varieties of bamboo (Thanh Hoa province).

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Technology and production processes for “clean”, high quality, high-yield seed potatoes to assist commercial potato production in the Red River Delta

1- History and origins of the project

With two crops a year, the growing of potatoes in the Red River Delta has contributed to increasing agricultural production and improving farmers' incomes. In fact, potatoes are much more profitable than rice. The winter potato harvest alone brings in 42

to 87% of farmers' annual income. If farmers had access to high quality and high-yield varieties, they could plant more potatoes and create new jobs.

Some mountainous provinces in Northern Vietnam offer the conditions necessary for producing high quality seed potatoes, hence the idea of

setting up potato nurseries there to supply the Red River Delta.

In the two communes involved in the project, fields are often left empty between two rice crops. During this period, potato growing can be developed, thus solving the problem of underemployment and increasing income per hectare of farmed land.

2- Description of the project

Location :

- Phiang Luong commune, Moc Chau district, Son La province
- Dai Dong commune, Trang Dinh district, Lang Son province

Beneficiaries : 200 households in two communes chosen for the size of their rice fields and the soil quality required for growing potatoes.

Duration : 20 months from May 2003 to November 2004.

The project was put into practice by supplying farmers with high-yield varieties of potato in addition to training in potato growing, harvesting and preservation techniques.

The first aim was to contribute to the famine and poverty eradication programme by increasing the income per hectare of farmed land. The second aim was to develop a commodity chain (market sector) for “clean”, high-yield seed potatoes in the mountainous regions and in the Delta.

Financing :

Total cost of the project	56 040 euros
- Contribution from UTAD	12 480 euros
- People's Committees (provinces and districts) and co-operative	23 760 euros
- FSD financing	19 800 euros



3- Outcomes

The UTAD carried out 8 training sessions for officials and farmers from the villages concerned by the project, dealing with seed potato production techniques and processes (preparing the soil, choosing seeds, preservation of products, etc.). This series of training sessions was followed by a visit to a potato farm in Hai Phong.

18 metric tons of clean seed from the Netherlands were supplied by the UTAD to farmers as well as 27 metric tons of F1 seeds and 27,650 kg of chemical fertiliser and 300 kg of pesticides.

In the spring of 2003 the average yield per hectare was about 14 to 15 metric tons. In the spring of 2004 this yield had reached 16 to 18 metric tons per hectare.

The final results were very positive both quantitatively (two crops a year) and qualitatively for seed potatoes, showing the project's effectiveness with regard to poverty alleviation in mountainous areas.

The UTAD is considering developing this production in other Red River Delta provinces. Moreover, it has already requested and received the Embassy's help for a new phase of this project.

Recent publications

ALREADY PUBLISHED :

Edition 2002

- n° 1 : French co-operation in Vietnam
- n° 2 : Training and Higher Education in Vietnam
- n° 3 : Annual report on the activities of the cultural and co-operation centre of the French Embassy, 2001
- n° 4 : French co-operation in training
- n° 5 : New challenges to suburban development in HaNoi
- n° 6 : The Chinese-Vietnamese urban model
- n° 7 : Innovation policies
- n° 8 : French health co operation in Vietnam
- n° 9 : French urban development activities in Vietnam
- n° 10 : Directory of 2002 - 2003 former scholarship holders and trainees from Ho Chi Minh City and the provinces of the South

Edition 2003

- n° 1 : French Human resource Training Activities
 - n° 2 : Annual report on the activities of the cultural and co-operation centre of the French Embassy, 2002
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