

Improve education for girls and minority groups in Vietnam

End of year report for Beautiful Store

May 2009 to March 2010

Achievement

- This project has supported the training of 5,166 teachers (from every school in Lao Cai Province) in Child Centred Methods (CCM).

Background

Lao Cai is one of the poorest provinces in Vietnam. The majority of families are from ethnic minority groups, who have the lowest levels of school attendance, and attainment – particularly girls¹. Many teachers in Lao Cai Province use outdated teaching methods – such as dictating to children – and the classrooms are often poor quality.

Poverty is a common reason for poor attendance and withdrawal of children from school in Lao Cai Province. Children from ethnic minorities also face challenges including language barriers and being enrolled into school at an older age – making them less likely to complete their education.



Children at Sa Pa II Primary School enjoying a simple pebble game. Through the training in child-centred methods (CCM), teachers are supported to introduce various learning games. Credit: Vu Thu Trang/Oxfam.

The Project

Oxfam has worked with the local government to improve the quality of education in Lao Cai, and increase the number of children completing school – especially ethnic minorities and girls.

The aims of this project were to:

- Enable all teachers in Lao Cai to use child-centred teaching methods.
- Improve the learning environment in ‘model’ classrooms, to demonstrate the benefits this can achieve.
- Pilot initiatives to enable girls and children from ethnic minorities to complete their education.
- Improve the ability of head teachers and education authorities to manage education services and monitor progress.
- Communicate good practices locally and nationally and promote their adoption into education policies.

Activities and Impact

Train teachers in Child Centred Methodology (CCM)

- 104 Provincial Trainers were trained in two additional CCM modules: ‘role playing’ and ‘learning games and energisers’.
- Oxfam supported the training of 4,535 model and ordinary teachers across Lao Cai Province through: supporting 27 monitoring visits by Education Managers and the

¹ Participatory Poverty Monitoring in Rural Communities in Vietnam, Oxfam and ActionAid, Nov 2009.

Provincial Trainers; providing stationery for district level training workshops; and equipping district training centres with two overhead projectors, two laptops, two screens and one video camera.

- Provincial Trainers trained 274 Primary School Teachers and 18 Secondary School in CCM in Sa Pa and Bat Xat Districts and carried out 25 monitoring visits in these two districts.
- 209 head teachers, teachers and District Education Managers were supported to undertake nine cross-district and 31 cross-school visits to observe CCM lessons.
- 25 teachers from Tra Vinh and Daknong Provinces were supported to undertake learning and training visits to Lao Cai Province.
- Teaching festivals were organised in Lao Cai Province and Bat Xat District, in which a total of 192 teachers demonstrated CCM lessons.
- 50 Local Education Managers attended a two-day workshop to review pilot initiatives to help ethnic minority children progress.
- Two District Education Officers travelled to Hanoi to study Education Monitoring and 11 Education Managers and Head Teachers travelled to Thailand, to learn about Child-Friendly schools and Child Rights in Thailand.



Grade 1 children from Phin Ngan Primary School, Bat Xat, happily show off their writing
Credit: Vu Thu Trang/Oxfam

Since 2007, the 104 Provincial Trainers have been trained, through this project, in eight CCM modules including: lesson planning; the skill of asking questions; providing feedback; group work; making teaching aids; decorating classrooms; role-play; and using learning games and energisers.

Having seen the benefits of CCM, the Local Education Authorities have now organised for the Provincial Trainers to provide CCM training to a total of 4,535 teachers from every primary school in Lao Cai Province – with support of stationery and equipment

from Oxfam. The equipment provided to the eight district CCM training centres has enabled the Provincial Trainers to provide professional and effective presentations to the teachers and enabled them to video lessons being taught and give feedback. A total of 33 secondary school teachers have also now been trained in CCM, as the Sa Pa District Authorities funded an additional 15 teachers to join the 18 secondary school teachers being trained through this project,

Teachers in Vietnam traditionally have lectured pupils, by dictating to them from the front of the class, without involving them in the lessons. The CCM training has taught the teachers to make the lessons more interesting and encourage children to be actively involved in their lessons. This has greatly improved the children's understanding of what is being taught.

The study visit to Thailand, by head teachers and education managers, inspired them to make many positive changes to their schools. For example, they introduced new subjects, such as life skills and organised student fairs to raise funds for children's scholarship funds.

Improve school environments in remote communities

- 40 classrooms in eight schools in Bat Xat District were equipped with CCM stationery kits, exercise books and pens.

- A set of training equipment – laptop, overhead projector and a camera – was provided for use by 45 classes in Sa Pa District.
- Four schools in Bat Xat received funds to make improvements and to repair damage caused by typhoon Kummuri in August 2008.
- 19 schools in Sa Pa District were provided with funds to make the school environments more child-friendly.

Teachers in Bat Xat District used the stationery kits to decorate their classrooms and to create teaching materials. The computer equipment provided to the schools in Sa Pa District is enabling children to benefit from IT lessons, and is also being used for teacher training that is undertaken in these remote schools.

Four schools in Bat Xat District were provided with funds to repair damage caused by the typhoon and have enabled improvements to be made to the schools including: repairing flooring, windows and electricity wiring. Schools have also been provided with kitchen equipment, toilets, mosquito nets and out door play equipment including swings.

Nineteen schools in Sa Pa. district were supported to cultivate allotments, paint walls and fences, to make school grounds more child-friendly.

Thanks to the improvement of school environment and the relationships between teachers and students, a high level of attendance has been maintained, which improved the students learning outcomes.



A first year student, enjoying a book provided by this project at Ta Le Primary School, Bat Xat District.

Credit: Benedicte Piton/Oxfam.

Pilot initiatives to help ethnic minority children progress

- 32 pre-school teachers were trained to teach young children Vietnamese, using CCM and visual learning aids.
- Three pre-schools in Sa Pa District were provided with outdoor play equipment, colourful learning equipment and toys.
- Scholarships of US\$35 per student per year have been paid in monthly instalments to 100 female ethnic-minority students in three lower secondary schools in Sa Pa district.
- Cooking equipment and learning materials were provided to three lower-secondary schools in Sa Pa District to support 300 boarding students.
- Boarding girl students were also provided with hygiene equipment, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, washing bowls, towels, washing powder, combs and trunks for their clothes.
- Three pilot Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) reviewed past activities and planned future community events in workshops in three communes in Sa Pa District.

Vietnamese is the language used in schools, so teaching Vietnamese to the pre-school children prepares them for school by making them confident in the language and therefore in their schoolwork. Outdoor play equipment, such as swings, and colourful learning equipment and toys are helping to provide pre-school children with a positive start to school, and encouraging children to be enrolled into school at the right age. This makes them more likely to complete their education.

One hundred poor ethnic minority girls and boys were provided with scholarships, which mean their parents are less likely to have to withdraw them from school because of poverty. Equipment was also provided to boarding students, especially girls, to help them to stay in school. Parents in this area can rarely afford to provide the additional equipment their children need for boarding school. Pilot initiatives, such as providing scholarships and essentials for boarders, demonstrates to policy makers that simple low cost support can result in more ethnic minority children completing their education.



Lower Secondary Boarding girl students in Trung Chai School, Sa Pa District. Oxfam has provided support to these boarding girl students, including scholarships, learning materials, cooking equipment and personal hygiene kits to encourage them to complete their secondary education, and not drop out because of poverty

Oxfam is piloting a new PTA structure that covers all of the school stages – to encourage parents to keep their children enrolled in school through all of the school stages, and to encourage them to get involved in their children’s education through the community events.

Promote child-centred methods and schools

- Oxfam co-hosted a national education forum, focusing on disadvantaged children in Vietnam, with the Ministry of Education and Training.

Leaders from the Ministry of Education and education experts from 21 international organisations attended the forum. It was a chance to explore ideas for innovating education policies and solutions, and to suggest policies to the government that benefit girls and ethnic minority children.

Financial Report

Activity	Total Programme Cost (budget) GBP	Beautiful Store's contribution (budget) GBP	Total Programme Expenditure (GBP)	Beautiful Store's contribution (GBP)
Vietnam	115,000	46,729	113,940	46,729
Train teachers in Child Centred Methods (CCM)	30,958	12,579	27,839	11,417
Train 32 pre-school teachers to teach young children Vietnamese.	1,128	458	1,364	559
Organise one district teaching festival and one provincial teaching festival	4,640	1,885	7,259	2,977
Organise a study tour for 45 selected primary resource teachers and education managers for experience sharing in CCM model application & expansion	5,355	2,176	4,813	1,974
Improve schools in remote communities e.g. refurbishment work	11,425	4,642	12,322	5,053
Provide three pre-schools in Sapa district with outdoor play equipment, colourful learning equipment and toys.	2799	1,137	2,050	841
Organise a workshop to disseminate and share learning between districts in Lao Cao Province. Train 104 resource teachers and 200 new teachers in Child Centred methods through 14 workshops at district level	9324	3,789	5,611	2,301
Provide scholarships to 100 poor ethnic minority children at three lower secondary schools to ensure continuous study. Provide 45 model classes with stationary and school supplies	1,800	731	3,085	1,265
Provide cooking equipment and learning materials to three lower secondary schools in Sapa district to support 300 boarding students	2,529	1,028	-	-
Support three pilot parent teacher associations to review past activities, and provide boarding girl students with hygiene equipment	6,389	2,596	4,135	1,696
Provide support to lower secondary schools and organise two national education forums, focusing on disadvantaged children in Vietnam, with the Ministry of Education and Training	12,273	4,987	10,979	4,503
Programme management and evaluation	26,380	10,719	34,483	14,142
Contribution to Oxfam's overall work		3,271		3,271
Total Project Costs	115,000	50,000	113,940	50,000

Thank you for your generous support of this project.