



# Project Vietnam Inc.

## Newsletter: April 2018

### Editor's Desk

With the return from Cambodia and Vietnam of PVI's Project Teams, the April 2018 Newsletter includes Team Reports from Peter Angell and Trip Coordinator Ian Bath. From the reports it is clear that once again a huge amount of worthwhile work, benefiting the locals in both countries, has been accomplished.

The great work done this year in Cambodia and Vietnam would not have been possible if not for the planning and managing efforts of the building team leaders. Peter Angell and Ron Toohey are to be warmly congratulated.

Our Presidents report highlights the highs and lows of the painting team

Ian Bath's report also includes a tribute to our old friend Murray Templeton.



**Our Vietnam project team coordinator hard at it in his office on any given day.**

David Williams reports on the progress of the two dental trainees supported by PVI's "John Robertson and Tony Van Boxmeer Scholarships".

Also included is an article highlighting Ros Organ's initiative in introducing 'girls packs' to young ladies in Ream Cambodia.

The newsletter acknowledges the contributions of the people and organisations whose generous financial donations have enabled PVI to continue their humanitarian projects in Vietnam and Cambodia.

Happy reading.

Jan and John

## ***President's Report***

It is a pleasure to introduce you to the 2018 Autumn edition of PVI's Newsletter. Thank you to Jan, John and all those who contributed.

With both Project Teams having just returned home from Vietnam and Cambodia it is an appropriate time for us to recall the events of the last six weeks. As I don't wish to "Steal the thunder" from any of the included reports I would like to give some special attention and recognition to a bunch of volunteers we call the Painting Team.

Mostly drawn from the female members and those who have yet to find their special niche in the building team, their industry and pride of work is second to none.

During the early days of the project the enthusiasm of our painting team is fever pitched. The tool boxes containing our painting equipment is usually the first to be opened. Their contents this year are looking pretty good, due to a donated supply of quality brushes provided by some generous hardware stores back home.

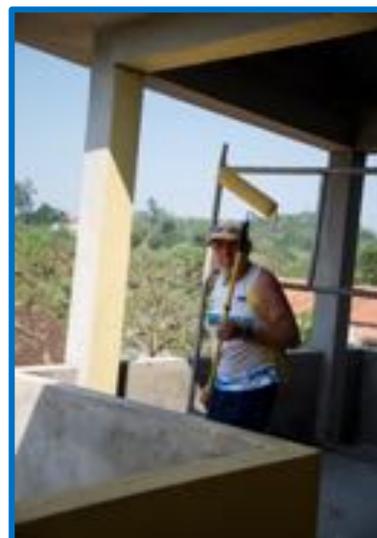
This year, with a brand-new building and dry walls, the only thing holding us up was to decide on a colour.

This decision is not taken lightly. A special meeting, held by the local parents, teachers and our team, came up with the appropriate compromise. It's amazing that with a colour chart containing thousands of colours the final verdict is always a particular shade of custard. Oh well they have to look at it a lot longer than us!



Next is the anxious wait for the paint to arrive. This gives the team some time to prepare the walls ready for the sealer.

The sight of a motor bikes arriving carrying 20L drums is better than Santa turning up. Now the difficult process to remove the lids from the drums. The more expensive the paint the longer it takes, it can be a three-man operation before the special sequence is worked out.



This process can be easily forgotten from year to year.

So, the show is on the road. The new rollers and extension poles are now hot property and must be protected during smoko and even toilet breaks. “Now where’s my paint gone?” is a common cry.



**A well-earned smoko.**

Sadly, in the early days the painter is low on the priority list for ladders. Bloody electricians and ceiling team have stolen them all. We never have enough ladders and the painter's life is a constant juggle of pleading and theft. It seems the more we have – the more we need.



**Sparkies working diligently.**

Lack of lighting means some painters spend all day in a windowless store room wondering why we are doing this when it's only going to be filled with stuff and the door locked.

But in the end, it is all worth it. When the lights are switched on and we stand back to admire the work we agree those electricians are not all a bunch of useless so and so's.

As the outside colour goes on, the building is slowly transformed. Now a thing of beauty until we realise that the last paint drum opened is a slightly different colour. Bloody hell! Now time for some smart blending and recoating of some areas.

This year we were privileged to have a short visit by Ian and Murray's sons. As it happens two of the boys were professional painters. We were impressed to see how the pros do it, watching them operate was like music and I know now you can't have a brush too big when cutting-in.

The cries for getting rid of those crappy roller sleeves were loud and clear. We need more nap!!

So, what I am trying to say is a huge thank you to our most misunderstood group of people on the project. The constant cries of "Who's knocked off my brush and pot?" will echo for years to come.

## Team Reports

### Cambodian Team Ream

Well this was certainly a very mixed bag and not quite what we were expecting. Things changed at the last minute, (which we have come to expect over the years). On many occasions it is a wait and see what we end up with and then we sort out a plan of attack. To start with, we planned to tackle quite a few different tasks in three different schools at Ream over-seen by our good friends at All Kids.



Kieran, Brian and Terry managed to turn a pile of broken timber into over 80 good usable desks at the Battrang High School by using their combined skills to rebuild them. Along with repair to the doors and shutters, the principal was overjoyed.

Jacky, David, Nathan and Kym worked on the painting and reviving the tired old toilet blocks with a few coats of paint along with a little hands-on decorating outside to brighten things up.



Further work was performed on the two water towers at Battrang and Smach Deng to ensure the ongoing success of both the water filtration systems. Safety rails and ladders were added to the top to help with future maintenance. Thanks Dave.



A new pathway was constructed to eliminate the muddy walk up to the bathroom for the girls.

The team also ran a pipeline from a mountain water source down to another little local school at Champkapich to keep their tanks topped up along with some new push button plumbing.

All in all, it was a very challenging trip with the team split up in various areas most of the time. Rewarding time afterwards, enjoying each other's company by dining together most nights. Well, Sihanoukville has certainly changed over the past 5 years, especially in the last year with so much Chinese investment coming into the area by way of Casino's, just what the Cambodian's need!!!!

Ros had plans of supplying 100's of reusable "girls packs" to the local young ladies. From components sourced in Australia and some from Phnom Penh packs were locally made up under Ros' direction. The packs were very well received and we look forward to some feedback, as this could become a regular yearly project.



Another of our tasks was to fund some roof repairs on two of the classroom blocks at Smach Deng Primary School. It was decided that on one building the entire roof needed replacing. At the last minute PVI agreed to chip in the extra funds to enable this to be completed. Using local tradesmen, we now have confirmation that this has been completed. (See below an extract of correspondence from Paul Otto at Allkids).

*``See attached photos of the new school roof from Ian. On behalf of all the kids, school staff and ALLKids, please pass on my sincere thanks to the PVI team. Everyone is very pleased and I am glad to see that the staff and kids at the Smach Deng School are taking a renewed pride in their school and facilities.*

*kindest regards, Paul*

*``*



Always so proud to be involved in projects like this and I know all our team members feel the same way. To leave here knowing we have helped out in some small way, giving the school children a better chance on health, education and life. To be able to forget about our own personal issues and to think of others is always worthwhile.

Peter Angell  
Cambodia Team Coordinator.

## **Vietnam Team Phong Nha**

Well here I go with another trip report on our Phong Nha new kindergarten build that was commenced last March 2017 and successfully completed mid-March 2018.

At the beginning of the coordination for this trip I thought that I'd really have a problem fielding enough volunteers to form a project team to complete the task ahead to finish our kindergarten build. However, by the end of October 2017 all fears were allayed as the team numbers swelled to about 28 very keen volunteers which was a sufficient number of members to complete our task ahead.



**Vietnam Project Team**

Our allotted start date was set down for Monday March 8<sup>th</sup> and all of our team were in situ at Phong Nha by Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>.

Now for all those people that haven't read any of my pre-trip reports describing Phong Nha I'd just like to say that Phong Nha is situated in one of the most pristine picture-perfect areas of Vietnam that I've ever visited, a really layback quite little village of restaurants and small inexpensive hotels.

The village is situated about 400kms south of Hanoi and about 30kms inland nestled on the banks of a beautiful river amongst small mountain outcrops. The area is noted for a series of caves that were discovered about 18 years ago. Just google caves Vietnam and all will be revealed.

OK now back to the trip report. My first impression upon seeing the completed structure of the new kindergarten shell/building was, how will we ever complete the tasks to finish this project within two weeks, however how wrong was I to have ever had those thoughts as our magnificent team all pitched in with their allotted tasks and the kindergarten precinct became nothing short of a dynamic hive of industrial activity.

We had the painters and our electricians along with the ceiling fixers plus of course our movers and shakers all doing whatever was necessary to complete the project well ahead of schedule. This was an absolute credit to all involved. Plus, not to forget the staff that organised our meal breaks and serviced our kitchen come mess areas. No particular names mentioned because you all know who you collectively are.



**Jackie Scott and Glenys Bentley (Fred) having fun in the 'kitchen'.**

I'd just like to briefly mention that we were honoured to have Murray Templeton's 3 sons Darren, Dean and Brett, along with my two sons Nathan and Darren, pay us a fleeting visit and pitch in and do a solid day's work which really set our painting team off in the right direction for an early completion.



**Ian with the boys**

These young men travelled to Vietnam on a venture of closure Murray Templeton's passing last August 2017.



Murray was a dedicated long-term volunteer of 11 trips to Vietnam and will be sadly missed member of our great little organisation.

I'd also like to thank the management and staff of the Phong Nha Lake House Resort for their valuable assistance not only during our March project tenure but also during the months preceding our arrival ensuring all was in place for a smooth transition to complete our project.

The official project handover celebrations were attended by the Chairman of the Hung Trach Commune and also representatives of the Bo Trach District Commune.



**Chairman of People's Committee at handover ceremony.**

Along with the teachers, a large representation of the local community and of course 28 members of Project Vietnam we were all very excited with the final result of the new kindergarten facility, which was nearly 2 years in the making.



**Local entertainment at the handover.**

I'd also like to take this opportunity to let you know that the wheels are already in motion for the planning of our 2019 return trip to Phong Nha next March, more on that at a later date.

As you can see by the size of the newly constructed kindergarten facility it's certainly a project to be proud of.

Even though the construction of this kindergarten has taken nearly two years to come to fruition it's certainly a credit to our small organisation and to our dedicated volunteers that have donated their time, money and expertise to bring about this new facility of which will be utilised not only by the local villagers but also will have an impact as far as education is concerned for a lot of the population of the surrounding districts.

OK I'll finish up this report with a very sincere thank you to all involved with the completion of the kindergarten and I know that the new facility will create a new dimension for the local village people including the overall population within the surrounding districts.

Ian Bath

Project Trip Coordinator

**Tony Van Boxmeer**

In memory of the ongoing service to PVI as building supervisor, a plaque for Tony was unveiled at the handover ceremony.



**New Initiatives**

**Sanitary packs**

Ros Organ travelled to Cambodia this year equipped with 100 sanitary pads and 50 sanitary packs and the knowledge needed to teach the local women how to make up the kits.

Earlier in the year Ros contacted 'Days for Girls' which is a world-wide organisation that increases access to menstrual care and education for girls. Ros joined a local Days for Girls team at Maroochydore and was given detailed instruction on how to trace, cut and sew each of the items that make up the pack.



**Ros at 'Days For Girls' in Maroochydore**

Peter Angell was able to source the waterproof fabric, snaps, girl's briefs, handtowels and soap in Cambodia and was instrumental in organising a local seamstress, Nimnim, to manufacture the shields and more pads to make up 100 kits so Ros could successfully launch her initiative.

Thanks to the Maroochydore Days for Girls ladies, Peter Angell, Nimnim Douch and Anne-Maree Donohue (fabric donation) for so generously helping Ros to deliver the sanitary packs successfully.



**Ros demonstrating how to make the sanitary shields.**

Well done Ros, such a great initiative.

### **Dental Training Program for Phong Nha Kindergarten Children 2018**

When PVI first started at the Phong Nha Kindergarten in 2017 we noticed the lack of dental hygiene with the majority of the kids having either no front teeth or severely decayed teeth.

Once we returned to Australia, PVI decided to put together a project that would help the children get into the practice of brushing their teeth in the hope that when their adult teeth arrived, the kids would be in the habit of good dental hygiene.

PVI went back in March 2018 to the kindy armed with 84 dental packs for the kids. Each included kid's toothbrushes and Milk Baby toothpaste suitable for 4-6 year olds. We put a 'how to brush your teeth' cartoon diagram in Vietnamese, a few cartoon stickers, a small toy and a cup to spit in.

As the kids sat around, Ann Maree used a pair of false teeth to demonstrate to the children how to brush their teeth. Most of the kids followed in brushing their own teeth using the baby toothpaste. They especially loved spitting out the excess into their cups. Sadly, about half a dozen did not know what a toothbrush was so initially they refused to take one. Once they saw what the others kids were doing, they joined in and had a little giggle when it came to the spitting.

When they were given their dental kits, they were highly inquisitive to see what goodies were in their kits.

Japanese Company 'Ki Works' has a manufacturing plant in Vietnam. They very generously donated 300 Disney character stamped toothbrushes that we distributed to all the kids as an addition to the kits we had made up.

They also offered us toothbrushes for the 2019 project, so we will continue to distribute them to the kindy kids and the new school we are going to.

Many thanks to Ki Works, Jackie Scott, Carol Zchoke, Gail Bartholomew, Robert Schmiede, David Findlater, Brendan McKenna and the Kindy teachers for their assistance.

Ann-Maree



## Updates

### **CATCHING UP WITH PVI SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS IN PHNOM PENH.**

Last year we established scholarships in the memory of 2 revered PVI members – John Robertson and Tony van Boxmeer. The scholarships, each of 2 years duration, were awarded to young women from Bospo village (near Battambang in northern Cambodia), Chhoup Saory and Ran Sachim. Saory and Sachim had completed schooling at KNGO at Bospo and, being conscientious and successful students and members of Bospo community, were nominated by KNGO.

Being in Phnom Penh in February in transit to Ream for our project, I took the opportunity to meet the young women in their training environment at the Cambodia World Family (CWF) clinic in Phnom Penh and learn a little more about the work of CWF.

Sachim and Saory are delightful young women who are happily doing well in their training. Whilst a little shy, as is the way with many Cambodians, they are growing in confidence as trainees according to Dr Boran, (local dentist who runs his own private practice and also volunteers considerable time to CWF) and Dr Tom Hallaman, (volunteer retired dentist from London). Dr Boran and Dr Hallaman are pleased with Sachim and Saory's progress, their keenness to learn and their aptitude. The young women have, at this early stage, been offered full time jobs once their training is completed.

Sachim and Saory were excited to meet a member from PVI and wanted me to convey their thanks to PVI and KNGO for providing the opportunity they are now enjoying.

Both young women are from large poor families in Bospo, Sachim has 5 and Saory has 6 siblings. Whilst they completed their schooling at KNGO, unfortunately they had been unable

to find full time work in Bospo. This highlights the importance of effective pathways from completing schooling to good full time jobs.

Through KNGO's endeavours, CWF agreed to accept the young women as trainees. There are no tuition fees but the trainees need to meet their own expenses including accommodation, food and modest basic needs whilst living in Phnom Penh away from their family homes. Our scholarships meet these costs. The young women live at the CWF building in a room behind the clinic. They live with Sachem's older sister, Sareouy. Sareouy together with another young woman from Bospo, Chan Thy and graduates of KNGO, completed training last year and now work with CWF as qualified Dental Therapists. Chan Thy is now married and lives separately with her husband. The 3 young women living together provide friendship and camaraderie for one another and Sareouy supports and mentors Sachem and Saory as they adjust to life in the "big smoke" of Phnom Penh.

**Message** - the scholarships are much appreciated and will assist Sachem and Saory to become self-confident and competent Dental Therapists with good full time jobs when they complete their training. This will provide a good life opportunity for the women and assist their families as Sachem and Saory would most likely support their families once they secure full time positions.

### **Cambodia World Family**

I was pleased to be informed more about CWF. What a great organisation doing good work!

CWF originated in 1997 helping Cambodians in Thai border refugee camps. It established a permanent clinic in Phnom Penh in 2005 with the purpose of helping vulnerable children with dental treatment and training graduates from orphanages as administrators, nurses and therapists. Dr Robert Ogle, a once Sunshine Coast resident and known to many PVI members, became the main driver in 2006. At this time the purpose was redefined as providing dentistry to poor and vulnerable children and teenagers and providing dental training for vulnerable young women. CWF has fully trained 13 young women as Dental Therapists since 2006. The young women, including Sachem and Saory, have all been recruited from organisations visited by CWF when carrying out free dentistry. CWF has 2 external clinics, one at Singing Kites (well known to PVI – we've carried out work at the clinic and school at Tanop), and Sunrise 3 at Ream (again we're well familiar with Sunrise 3 and have observed the clinic).

CWF provides free dentistry to many thousands of disadvantaged children and teenagers (12,000 treated in 2015), at low cost to CWF as the dentists and others provide their services at no charge. The Dental Therapists trained by CWF are the only staff to receive modest remuneration.

**Message** – CWF does good work providing free dentistry to thousands of poor and disadvantaged children and teenagers. It also provides training opportunities for young

women identified through the organisations CWF works with. Our scholarships for such training are “winners”.

David Williams



**From left: Dr Tom Hallam, Sachem, Dr Boran, Chan Thy, Sareouy, Saory**



**Hard at work at CWF clinic**

## KNGO LIBRARY

KNGO would like to express our sincere thanks to PVI for supporting our quest to build a library at KNGO Cambodia.

It never ceases to amaze me how, in Cambodia, one minute something is just an idea and within days of funding being approved, holes for the columns are being dug and before long the foundation has been laid and the walls are going up. Of course, this is all done without modern machinery, just hard work and determination.



The children happily played their part by shifting basket loads of dirt into the building. We are very excited about this wonderful new addition to our school's facilities which will provide a space where the children can practice English conversation and participate in activities such as reading, drawing and colouring. Teaching resources will also be available to the teachers.

Our goal is to make a difference to the lives of the children of Bospo Village and their families and through education, improve the living standard of the desperately poor.

Our major sponsor Komatsu, together with PVI and Rotary Noosa Daybreak have been instrumental in enabling KNGO to continue to advance its mission of improving the education of the children of Bospo Village.

The building of the library is well underway and will soon be ready to be fitted out and stocked.

Thank you once again PVI for your generous support and for making a difference.

Judy Malzard

## A big thank you

As always in our organisation there are many people and companies that contribute to the success of a project either financially or with donations of equipment, materials and manpower. Some of our sponsors have been supporting us for years while others have come on board recently.

We would like to send a big thank you out to these people and companies by highlighting the contributions they have made.

### **BHP**

For the past 5-6 years BHP has supported PVI through their Matched Giving Program.

Nathan Kemp and his wife Rose have been members of PVI for the past 7-8 years. Nathan is an employee of BHP and it is through Nathan's contributions that BHP has supported us by donating \$2 for every \$1 that Nathan contributes to PVI.

This financial year BHP has donated \$5200.

Thank you Nathan and BHP



### **Chem.Supply -Jeff Goss and Ann Deaton**

Chem-Supply is based in South Australia, it is a private Australian owned and operated company that supplies chemicals to all facets of Australian industry, research and education. They believe in supporting sustainable aid programs and charities through their Employee Giving Program. The company matches dollar for dollar their employee contributions to selected charities. Our sincere thanks go to the staff of Chem-Supply who for the past 8 years have participated in the Employee Giving Program.

### **TLC Construction -Alistar Sawyer**

Alistar is the CEO of TLC Construction. TLC has been successfully involved in building and construction since 1995. TLC works in partnership with major foreign construction contractors in Vietnam and abroad. For the past 5 years Alistar has provided materials, labour and expertise for our projects in Vietnam.

We would like to thank him for his ongoing support and interest in PVI.

### **Brian Clancy**

For the past 5 years Brian Clancy, the logistics manger from Ironman Australia, has handed over his excess stock of singlets and tee shirts to PVI to take to Vietnam and this year was no exception. Ian took around 80 shirts to Vietnam and distributed them to the local communities.



### **David Clements**

David Clements, who is based in England, has been a committed supporter of PVI for 6 years and works tirelessly to raise much needed funds for PVI. David conducts motorbike rallies through Asia. After each tour of Vietnam, he donates the motorbikes to PVI to sell and keep the profits. We also receive donations from his team of riders. His continual support and

ongoing work for the organisation means that more children receive an education and communities have improved access to health services.



**David Clements**

#### **Sad passing of PVI member, Mick Kershaw**

We were sad to be informed of the passing of a generous and kind hearted PVI member in February.

Mick and his wife, Wendy lived in Ballarat, Victoria. Mick was a returned Vietnam Vet and together with Wendy, they had enjoyed touring Vietnam. They wanted to help poor Vietnamese communities in practical ways to improve future opportunities for young Vietnamese.

Their research led them to PVI. PVI's hands-on approach to working with local communities in Vietnam and Cambodia was aligned with their ideas. Being near 2,000kms from the Sunshine Coast they had little opportunity for face-to-face contact or involvement with members.

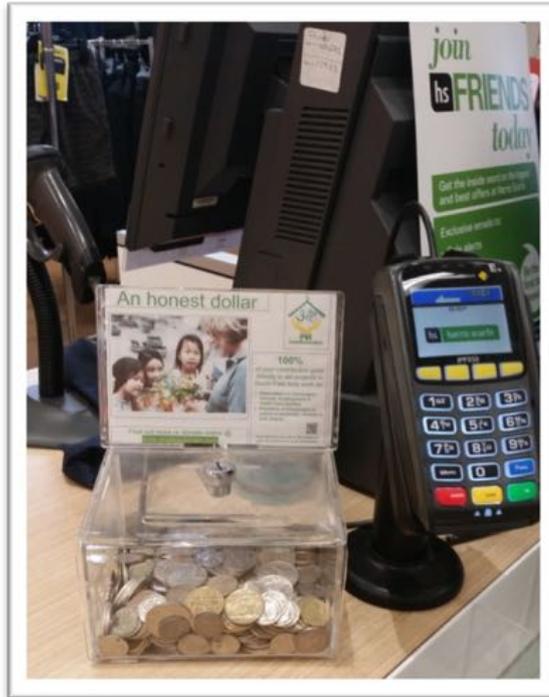
They joined PVI 3 years ago and started fundraising. Wendy organised annual shopping bus trips before Christmas to Melbourne factory outlets as enjoyable social and shopping events as well as fundraisers for PVI. Daughter Melanie was able to convince her manager at Harris Scarfe Ballarat that a PVI donation box on the checkout counter was a good idea. As a result, we received periodic donations from their work.

David Williams had the opportunity to visit the Harris Scarfe shop in Ballarat to see the PVI donation box and enjoy lunch with Mick and Wendy in 2016 – generous hearted people working to support our projects in Vietnam and Cambodia.



Thanks Mick & daughter Melanie.

Our thoughts are family.



Wendy Kershaw and  
with Wendy and the

### June Canavan Foundation

This year's very successful project in Vietnam was generously supported by June Canavan Foundation.

We enjoy the results and feedback from our hands on work to improve life opportunities for mainly children in poor communities in Vietnam and Cambodia. This year's work involving the completion of the construction of a new kindergarten at Phong Nha project was no exception. The local community was immensely pleased and proud of the new kindergarten which will provide a much improved development and learning environment for the 80 children attending the facility.

This follows generous support for our Vietnam and Cambodia projects in 2016.

This year's project was possible with the generous donation from the June Canavan Foundation.

Thanks from PVI members and the local Phong Nha community.

### **Small Improvements Software GmbH**

We were pleased and surprised to receive a donation of US\$3,000 from a Berlin company, Small Improvements Software GmbH.

Past member Lucas Arundell lives in Berlin and works for the company. The company donates to various charities and worthy organisations. The company's employees are invited to nominate worthy recipients. Lucas nominated PVI and the company agreed and made the donation.

Some members would recall Lucas, son of immediate Past President and PVI stalwart Glenn, as a member of Vietnam building teams in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Lucas also looked after our website for a time including when he was living overseas.

Our good work in Vietnam and Cambodia depends on the generous donations from our great supporters and we thank Small Improvements Software for their support.

### **Sue Daley**

Over the past 3 years Sue, who has an international patchwork business based in Eumundi, has had her team of ladies sew sundresses for the young girls at the AllKids Day Care Centre in Ream and also to Vietnam. Sue donates the fabric needed to make the dresses. She has also provided Ros with fabric to make more sanitary packs for next year.



### **Sunshine Coast Mitre 10**

Donated boxes of paintbrushes, stirrers, and rollers which were distributed between both project. This donation was very much appreciated by the painters.

### **Members**

It is also important to acknowledge the contribution that PVI member make to the success of the organisation. Members pay an annual membership fee and participants on a project pay a contribution of \$200 pp or \$300 per couple which is a donation and is tax deductible. 100% of these contributions and membership fees go directly to fund our projects. All members are volunteers and receive no payment.

In addition, team members also pay a levy for travel insurance.

PVI members who travel to Vietnam or Cambodia pay their own airfares, hotel accommodation, meals, visa applications, PVI shirts and a levy to cover transport to and from the work site as well as meals on the work site.

Without our valued supporters and members PVI would not be able to carry out their humanitarian work.