

Improving education for girls and minority groups in Viet Nam

Viet Nam **direct** funding target: £72,000

Sapa and Bat Xat districts in the remote Lao Cai province, are amongst the poorest in Viet Nam. They are also poor in terms of educational attainment, particularly amongst women and ethnic minority groups. Regionally, of people aged 15-25 years, more than 20 per cent are illiterate. Problems include poor teaching methods, run-down facilities, and a lack of awareness of the value of education.



Girls from ethnic communities in class, Sapa District

The Project

Good-quality pre-school, primary and lower secondary education will be made widely available to poor children – particularly girls and those from ethnic minority groups – across Lao Cai Province. Parents will also be encouraged to send their children to these ‘new’ schools.

Our ‘Child-Centred Methodology’ (CCM) approach, based on active learning to engage children, has already helped improve primary school teaching in Sapa district. It will now begin to be integrated into primary schools across the province, and expanded into some pre-schools and lower secondary schools in Sapa.

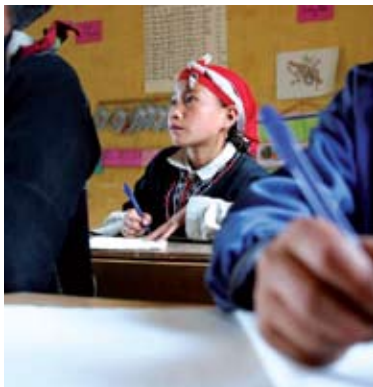
Project aims

The overall aim is to improve education for girls and minorities in Viet Nam:

- to give boys and girls equal encouragement and educational opportunities
- to improve the quality of teaching by expanding the use of CCM across the province and reinforcing the educational gains already made in Sapa district
- to demonstrate to the government how CCM can be integrated across pre-primary, and lower secondary schools
- to encourage communities to send their children to school at the correct age
- to promote the teaching of Vietnamese as a second language at pre-primary level, to give ethnic minority children a head start and enable them to progress more easily
- support ethnic minority children, particularly girls, in lower secondary education, the level at which they are often withdrawn because of poverty
- found and support Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and activities to build community-school links and encourage school attendance and enrolment at the appropriate age
- improve education management and monitoring by training and supporting head teachers and education officials.

Supporters, communities, local partners and Oxfam – working together to change lives

Background



Pens and notebooks are provided by the Government for children of ethnic groups

Ethnic communities living in poor areas, have some of the lowest enrolment rates in Viet Nam. Teaching is often poor using traditional, non-child friendly methods, and comprehension is generally

low, often because of language barriers. It results in low levels of learning, and high repeat and drop out rates.

Problems arise because of inadequate teacher training, and a shortage of basic learning materials. This situation is allowed to continue because of ineffective government education management.

Ethnic minority families in these areas are extremely poor. Although tuition fees are waived, and the Government provides books and notebooks, still many parents cannot afford the associated costs of sending children to school such as warm clothes and meals.

Also children's help in the fields or at home is often seen as more valuable.

These children traditionally start primary school at an older age with little understanding of Vietnamese, so they often have to repeat classes. Many do not complete primary school until they are 15, or drop out altogether.

Providing education is difficult in this sparsely populated, remote area, and existing schools tend to be poorly equipped, and badly maintained. It is hard for children to reach schools in the main centres, and local authorities lack resources to build localised satellite schools.

The Plan

Activities:

Train teachers in CCM:

- **Lao Cai** – train 104 teacher trainers, who'll train 3,600 teachers, and 491 principals/vice-principals
- train 50 head teachers and education department managers in effective school management and monitoring
- assess teachers' CCM skills at 'teaching festivals'
- **Bat Xat** – train 40 school grade heads, who'll train 112 teachers
- **Sapa** – provide refresher courses for 30 trained teachers/195 existing grade heads, and train 45 more grade heads.

Improve schools in remote communities:

- **Bat Xat** – overhaul one main school and a linked satellite school in four communities.

Help ethnic minority children progress:

- **Sapa** – pilot a new approach in three communities to integrate CCM across all educational levels – training 18 lower-secondary, and 27 pre-primary level teachers
- offer nine-month scholarships for 80 poor, ethnic minority, lower-secondary school students
- launch three new community PTAs, and train 60 representatives to establish better cross-educational/community-school links
- finance volunteer-run community activities on the benefits of education to encourage more ethnic minority parents to send their children to pre-school
- provide three pre-primary schools with teaching resources, books and toys for 200 pre-school children



Mixed-age pupils at a Sapa school

- support the Department of Education and Training (DOET) to manage and monitor progress, and increase future CCM take-up.

Support campaigning action:

- fund one annual skills-sharing workshop and participation in the Global Education Week and Education Forum.

The Impact

As a result of the project:

- Teachers at all levels will be trained in CCM, which will provide high-quality education for children in Lao Cai province - including those from poor ethnic minorities and girls.
- There will be greater community participation, and parents will take part in decision-making and budgeting in schools through PTAs.
- Education events will also demonstrate the benefits of keeping children in school – particularly girls.
- Head teachers will receive school management training, alongside district and provincial officials, who will also be trained in project management, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure

that educational standards are maintained.

Who will benefit?

The project will directly benefit ethnic minority children aged 5-14 years in Lao Cai, including 500 pre-school children, 4,500 primary school pupils and 800 lower-secondary school students.

Others to benefit from CCM training will include government teacher trainers, teachers, and principals/vice-principals, who can apply their skills in teaching future generations of children.

Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed with partners, based on enrolment, retention, and completion at school.

Local programme officers will carry out monthly and

quarterly monitoring, and Oxfam will carry out mid-term reviews and final project evaluations.

Sustainability

The Lao Cai Provincial Department of Education approached Oxfam to scale-up introduction of CCM across all educational levels for the whole province.

The project will be progressively handed over to partners, with a full takeover after three years. The teaching methods can be replicated without extra funds from Oxfam. There should also be additional government finance due to revised budgeting - a result of the influence of our research into education financing, which also gives more control to individual schools.

The People



I like to see partners taking the initiative

“Since CCM has been introduced at my school, both teachers and pupils have become increasingly active during lessons. The old teaching method was ‘teacher talk, pupils listen’. But now we talk and listen to each other.”

*Binh,
Key resource teacher*



I plan to study to become a teacher

“My house is 40 minutes walk away. I like school, I learn many subjects, make friends and sing songs.”

*Hang Thi Seng, aged 10,
Grade 4 Sapa 2 Primary School*

Seng is lucky because her parents support her. Many H’mong people believe that girls do not need education as their lives will be spent caring for their families.



CCM makes teaching easier

“It can be hard to manage students in a multi-grade class. I had to work at night to prepare lessons, and had few chances to train. Now I apply CCM and divide my Grade 1 and 2 pupils into two groups and give them different exercises.”

*Ngo thi Loan, Teacher,
Xeo Ta Le school, Bat Xat*



*Vu Thi Than Hoa, Oxfam
Education Co-ordinator
Photo: Mark Cameron*

The Partners

Our partner at provincial level will be the Lao Chi Department of Education and Training, in close co-operation with state District Education Departments.

About **direct**

By supporting direct projects you're joining a global network of supporters, local people and partner organisations, all working with Oxfam to end poverty and suffering for good. From helping whole communities to protect themselves against disaster, to working with national governments to transform a country's schools, to helping individual families to earn a living, all direct projects offer you the chance to change lives.

Our commitment to you:

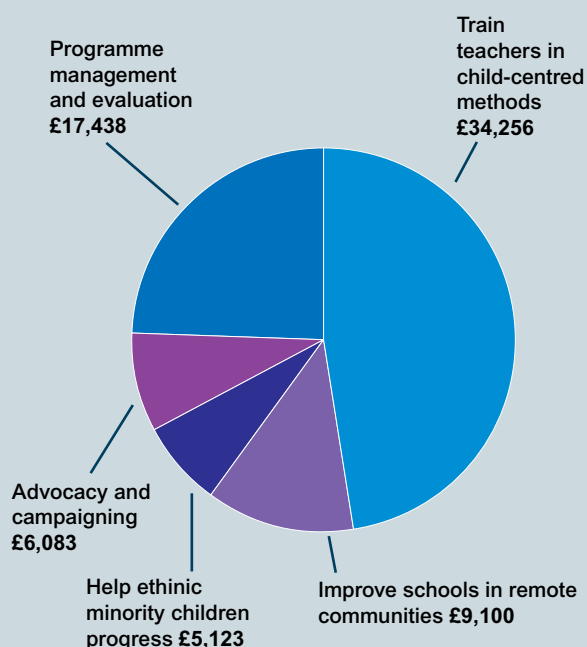
- One hundred per cent of your money is invested in your chosen project
- You'll receive 6 and 12 month progress reports on your project
- Email alerts when new information is posted on the website
- A dedicated account manager to answer questions and keep you informed.

Other countries needing your support:

Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Honduras, India, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Nepal, Philippines, Sudan, Tanzania, West Africa regional, Zambia.

The Budget

Total £72,000



Viet Nam: country profile



Population	85 million
Development	Ranked 105th (of 177) on the HDI ¹
Percentage of the population living on less than \$1 a day	64%
Percentage of the population living on less than \$2 a day	87%
GDP per capita	\$3,071
UK GDP per capita	\$33,238
Adult illiteracy rate (% aged 15 and older), 1995-2005	10%
Net primary enrolment	88%
Net secondary enrolment	69%

¹The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite measure of three dimensions of human development: life expectancy, education and standard of living.

All data is sourced from the UNDP Human Development Report 2006.

Photos: Tran Viet Tuan 2006 unless stated otherwise.