



SOME STORIES TOLD FROM THE PROJECT

For a Vietnam with no one left behind amid COVID-19

Case 1 Story of Nguyen Tien Than

Mr. Nguyen Tien Than lives with his wife, Mrs Cuc, his two sons, and his grandson. His first son has got a labor accident and then be diagnosed with tuberculosis and unable to work. The family, thus, just live on Than's income as a sidewalk ice-tea vendor and the second son's low and unstable income as an unofficial labor. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Than could earn



Mr Nguyen Tien Than and Mrs Cuc
(CSOs : SCDI)

about 15 to 20 US dollars per day but, when the pandemic came, he lost most of his income due to the ban of the business and the loss of customers during the social distancing. As a result, his family gets into trouble as he could not provide enough nutritious food for five members of the family. Seldom do their daily meals include beef, fish, or pork.

Moreover, they have to buy medicines for Mrs. Cuc, the first son, and pay school fees for the

kid. Thus, the aid package from United Way Worldwide and 3M Company is greatly significant to their family. "It comes the right time" as Than's word "it can help us survive for a month". During the talk, Than said that he just wishes this pandemic would soon end so that he and his family can start a new normal. He also shared that if he has a chance, he is willing to help other people who get a worse life than him.



Case 2 : Story of Nguyen Thi Thuy

Ms. Thuy is a stunted disabled girl from Vinh Phuc province, living with her single father, and two siblings. Her mother left the family right after her youngest sister was born. Her father now has a stomach



cancer and Parkinson disease. She, thus, is now mainly responsible for the living of the family. She was not allowed to go to school as she had to work as a baby-sister when she was 8 years old. She were physically and humiliating punished by the owner. She then escaped to Hanoi and was saved and protected by Blue Dragon Organization. Before COVID 19, she worked as a kitchen assistant in a hotel with the salary of 150 US dollars which cover her living in Hanoi and her family in hometown.

However, she later lost her job because of the pandemic meanwhile her two siblings are unemployment. To fight for the living of herself and her family as well, she recently takes a casual work with a very low salary at a paper recycling factory. After receiving this aid package, she planned to divide it into two parts, a small part for herself and a larger one will be delivered to her family in Vinh Phuc.

Case 3: Story of Ngan - A 60-year-old woman



Ngan lives with her husband and two grandchildren, 5 and 2 year old kids whose parents left. The 2 year old kid does not have birth certificate yet. Her family lives on her husband's unstable income as a moto taxi driver. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 social distancing has caused a huge loss of his income while he himself has suffered from chronic lung disease. As the pandemic hits, Ngan and her husband have to spend their daily expenditure on food to purchase milk for their grandchildren. "The kids need to drink milk to grow well for their age. We only have enough money to buy soy milk, as it is the cheapest option," she sadly shared. Four people live in a small house in Phuoc Long B Ward, District 9. Ngan hopes that her 2-year-old grandchild will get a birth certificate, as she got identification documents when turning 60, and her son could apply for a birth certificate when turning 30. She understand that "Without a legal proof of identity, life would be much suffering."

Case 4: Story of Ms. Thuy Linh

Both Linh and Cuong, her husband, are visually impaired. They are living in District 6, Ho Chi Minh City. They have 2 children, one is attending a charity school in Binh Duong and the other unfortunately get congenital cerebral palsy. Linh earns a living by solely selling lottery tickets.



Thuy Linh and her family

While struggling to make a living during the pandemic, she was robbed her entire lottery tickets few days ago. The couple can't afford school fees, therefore, they have to send their older child to a charity school which is far away from Saigon and rely on the care of nuns. They work hard to take care for their child with cerebral palsy. The child can only lie in bed, but the



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couple, who are visually impaired, cannot take care of their children by themselves. Besides nutrition, the expenses of diaper and caregivers make the financial burden heavier. Despite several difficulties, Linh hope that her child can access to essential treatment and support for physiotherapy fees, and grow up well like other children.

Case 5: Sharing thoughts of Hoa – A volunteer of the project



Mrs. Hoa – Volunteer of the project

Hoa used to be a diligent officer at the Hanoi Women's Union. Since she retired, she has become a social worker and involved in several projects helping local disadvantaged households. More than anyone, she understands that social work is more than just charity work, but also means understanding people's feelings and concerns to provide the support they need.

In the COVID-19 pandemic, several households were already struggling to make ends meet and now face greater challenges. For that, as Hoa heard about the "For a Vietnam with no one left behind amid COVID-19", she was eager to join the project as a volunteer. In fact, during a visit to disadvantaged families affected by the pandemic, she, unfortunately, had a foot injury. However, she tried to overcome the pain and used crutches to finish the visit as she hoped that aid packages could reach out to these families as soon as possible (these families could receive aid packages).

Longtime afterward, she still recounted this incident as the most unforgettable memory during her journey of dedicating to low-income families: "I'm very cheerful when disadvantaged families were handed aid packages; This support helps them feel safe and confident, as well as ease their burdens in their daily lives. Hopefully, there are more and more such projects to help local residents to have a better life" shared Hoa. "Living with a wide-open heart" - Trinh Cong Son's lyrics (roughly translated) remind us of love, kindness, and the spirit of "good leaves protect torn leaves" from our ancestors. With such dedicated social workers like Hoa, love will continue to be spread, from one heart to another, and the aid packages will be able to reach more people in need.

Case 6: Story of Mr. Thuc

Thuc, a moto-taxi driver, lives in with his four-member family in Hoan Kiem district (Hanoi). His wife has earned a living as a street vendor for years. . Unfortunately, the only son has bone tuberculosis and even the daughter-in-law suffers from severe depression, the family thus solely lives on the unstable income of Thuc and his wife. Both Thuc and his wife have worked hard to pay for medical treatment for their son, keep food on the table,





and meet other basic needs. As the unprecedented pandemic hit, he has his life turned upside down. He has admitted that the number of daily passengers plummeted due to social distancing, making the financial burden heavier on him and his wife.

Thuc shared his excitement when receiving an aid package, including food and hygiene kit from the "For a Vietnam with no one left behind" project. He hopes that the deliveries will reach other unfortunate lives, so that love and kindness will be spread to a disadvantaged community. Thuc's sincere sharing and a number of inspirational stories of other vulnerable groups have inspired us to devote greater efforts so as to combat the pandemic and to bring communities together.

Case 7: Story of Mr. Thuy – supported through HAA organization



Mr. Thuy - a volunteer for a HIV/AIDS community

In the midst of the COVID-19, several low-income workers have been pushed to the verge of being furloughed, or even laid off. Thuy is among those workers. He had to stop his business in flea market due to the pandemic, then switched to a volunteer for a HIV/AIDS community outreach project. However, he still struggles to make ends meet as the target outreach fluctuates each month. Thuy is the older brother in his eight-member family, including people with disabilities and children. His whole family, lives on his unstable income. Every member relies on each other and become frugal to afford basic

necessities. Although he applied for the government support, he has not received any responses from the authorities yet.

Via HAA Organization in Ho Chi Minh city and perceived the urgency of this touched case, the project "For a Vietnam with No-one Left Behind" has provided food packages and hygiene kits to Thuy's family with the hope that helps his family overcome this pandemic.

Case 8: Story of Hanh – HAA organization



Mrs. Hanh – a diligent social worker in supporting sex workers and HIV/AIDS community outreach

Hanh has been a diligent social worker in supporting sex workers and HIV/AIDS community outreach projects for 20 years. This job brings her the main source of income to raise a seven-member family. Hanh's younger brother used to be a construction worker, but he had to quit his job due to his serious illness. Since then, with only a meager income from social work, Hanh has to take care of the family expenditure, her brother's medical expenses, and the tuition fees of her two grandchildren.



However, as the unexpected pandemic hit, it is hard to reach the sex workers and HIV/AIDS group, her income, therefore, is significantly reduced. She has to borrow money from friends and family to pay for her brother's hospital fees. The power is cut off for nonpayment and her family almost lives off instant noodles. Every night in the dark room, she has always been restless because of the hardships in her life and family.

From the story of Hanh, we understand more about the difficulties of her family and several other families out there. MSD Vietnam hopes that every support package from the "For a Vietnam with No- one Left Behind in COVID 19" project, whether big or small, can make a difference in the lives of those families through tough times.

Case 9: Story of Ms Tran Thi Thich - IDEA



Mrs Tran Thi Thich is typically one of the most difficult cases under the project "For a Vietnam with no one left behind" of MSD. Despite of being a person with congenital hand defects but also the main labor of a four-member family, Thich has never been certified disabled by the authority for the reason: the number of eligible people with disabilities is limited, and she is not among those having the worst conditions.

Her family has 4 members; however, her husband is no longer lucid after an accident, and her two children were still very young. Her whole family solely lives on her unstable income from her street vendor next to Xuan Duc kindergarten, in Xuan Duc village, Tan Minh commune, Soc Son district, Hanoi. While struggling to make a living, Thich has to temporarily close her shop due to the COVID-19 social distancing, making the financial burden heavier on her.

Meanwhile, without certificate of disability, Thich and her family have not got any privileges, support and benefits yet. As a result, her family has not been able to access any local support package during the Covid-19. The support package from the project "For a Vietnam with no one left behind" is the first aid that Thich's family has received since the pandemic. Thich shares that if using this food package wisely, it can ensure her family life for nearly 1 month.



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Mrs Thich is among several cases out there, those are being furloughed and struggling to make ends meet due to social distancing. Despite having a lot of support, many of them are in risk of leaving behind and not able to access the care and help they need.

Case 10: Story of Ms Xa Kim Hue - ICPFAV



Mrs. Xa Kim Hue, whose 2 children are cerebral palsy patients. Hue's family is also a typically mountainous ethnic case with extreme difficulties in Hoa Binh. While her elder child, Hoang Thi Thuy Linh who was born in 2013, had the spastic cerebral palsy due to premature birth and asphyxia, Linh is adorable and a warm hearted person. Her younger boy named Hoang Manh was born in 2018 and he had also the spastic cerebral palsy due to nuclear jaundice.

Hue and her children currently lives in a rented house at 179 alley, Vinh Hung street in Hanoi so that her children can benefit free intervention from a center. This rented house is really tiny and humid with an average rent of 2 million VND per month (including the expense for electricity, water and other things), however, this amount is still an overwhelming problem to Mrs. Hue. Spending fulltime with the children everyday to take care of them and bring them to physiotherapy center has made Hue exhausted. Everytime we talk to Hue, the tearful sadness in her eyes seemed to flow out.

The support package from MSD Vietnam helps Hue's family to alleviate the worry about bread and butter. What's important is that the empathy of society encourage her to accompany her kids on the road of finding back happiness.