

# **DAUGHTERS OF CAMBODIA HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROJECT REPORT**

In November 2024 the Trustees of MSAVLC were pleased to receive the Annual Report for the Health and Wellness Project run by Daughters of Cambodia. The report was compiled by Daughters' Director, Ruth Elliot, and it summarised what has been a very successful year for the organisation.

Below are a number of edited extracts from the report.

*“Over the last year we have been busy conducting regular red-light outreaches to reach new girls in the sex industry, to offer them a route out of sex work.*

*Between October 2023 and September 2024 we reached just over 1,000 sex workers with information about how Daughters is able to help them leave and start a new life. We also gave out condoms, healthy snacks, and sanitary packs.*

*Forty new girls have joined Daughters during this fiscal year, many of them are teenagers. Some of these have come as referrals from partner NGO's following police operations to rescue victims, and some have come directly from the sex industry.*

*We are pleased to share with you some of their stories and show how your funding has had a life-changing and crucial impact on their physical, psychological and social health and wellbeing.*

## **MEDICAL CASES**

*We are pleased to report a high percentage of medical cases with successful outcomes during the last funding cycle.*



*A recent Daughters of Cambodia training workshop.*

*The number of clients who have had successful resolution of medical issues after treatment is ninety percent. This is due to the care and capability of our medical officer, along with the network of referral partners that we have, who bring their specialist skills.*

*The main reason for not seeing successful outcomes in the remaining ten percent is due to treatment non-compliance.*

## **MEDICAL CLINIC**

*There are forty girls who have started work with us since October 2023, and we handle around sixty medical appointments each month. Clients receive on-going health care,*

*including primary care, first aid and reproductive health care.*

*Our medical officer, Monirath, conducts screening assessments of new clients, and three-monthly health checks for all existing clients. She administers treatment and makes referrals as necessary.*

*Monirath has added ante-natal care, post-natal care, gynaecology checks, contraception, menstruation consultations, vaccinations, and first aid to our existing medical program since she commenced working at Daughters.*

*She has been making good use of the new equipment that MSAVLC funding has provided for the medical*

consultation room, including a Doppler machine which is used to check the heartbeat of the baby in the womb, a new gynaecology bed, an instrument sterilization machine, a speculum, a surgical blade and other miscellaneous supplies like scissors and wound dressings.

This has enabled Monirath to provide a quality service to our clients. She continues to make referrals to specialist medical service providers for conditions we cannot treat in-house, such as a recent case of an emergency appendicitis. All of this has made possible the high rate of health recovery for our clients.

### **ANTE-NATAL AND POST NATAL CARE**

We have pregnant girls as well as several babies, infants and toddlers in our program currently. One of our pregnant girls, was in a very unstable condition during the early part of her pregnancy, after her partner abandoned her along with her young children. We have been able to give her ante-natal care, social work support services, and practical help including emergency food and supplies. As a result, she is now thriving in her pregnancy despite the challenges of her situation. We also referred her to a partner NGO for birth preparation and supplies. She is now 38 weeks pregnant and is feeling positive and preparing for the birth.

We have a client who delivered premature twins in November 2023, (two of MSAVLC's Trustees had met her on their trip last year when she was pregnant.) Unfortunately she went into labour at 27 weeks, and twin boys were born. The boys were immediately put into the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

The Doctors told the mother that there was no hope and the babies would not survive as they weighed only 0.9kg and 1.1kg at birth. They refused to allow her to see them, so that she didn't become emotionally attached. The boys were kept in separate cots, rather than together. The doctors said that a scan showed that there was also bleeding in their brains.

After ten days their mother was allowed to see them for ten minutes, but she could not to speak to them or touch them. However, the babies survived, and began to grow and gain



*The premature twins' health 'has been good and they are thriving'.*

weight, and after six weeks they were allowed home from hospital.

Thankfully their health has been good, and they are thriving, although the younger one has had some lung problems recently and this is being investigated. We have been working closely with the mother to give her support and care, along with training her in parenting skills.

As a result of your kind support, our medical program has been providing contraceptive injections, condoms, IUDs and oral contraceptives, along with education about how to use these, and referrals where needed.

We were able to increase our screening for gynaecological conditions, and to offer pap smears, treatment of STDs, and ante-natal care (in collaboration with our partnering ante-natal service providers).

We have purchased new equipment this cycle, which has enabled our medical officer to deliver treatment and screening services effectively."

The Trustees of MSAVLC are delighted to see the excellent work done by Ruth and her team at Daughters of Cambodia. We have already agreed to fund the 2024-2025 Health and Wellness Project and the money has already been sent.

This is a difficult time for many charities, particularly those who work overseas. It is only due to the generosity of MSAVLC supporters that we are able to continue funding this vital work.

### **A CLIENT'S STORY**

Recently one of Daughters' clients came to their clinic to have a wound on her leg checked. During the cleaning of her wound, she shared how, since she started working at Daughters, she had received care, love and encouragement, which she had never received from her family or other people.

This is her story;  
"I had a leg injury one weekend and went to a local hospital. The doctor sutured my skin, about seven stitches, without using any painkiller. I begged for a painkiller as it was so painful, but the doctor and nurse refused. After the suturing was finished, the nurse gave me paracetamol without giving me any other advice.

When I went back to work, the nurse at Daughters asked me about my injury and she checked my leg. She found out it was not healing up and had some pus inside, so she cleaned and dressed my wound and gave me antibiotics. She taught me how to clean the wound at home and how to look after it. She dressed the wound regularly, and after that I saw that it was healing faster. The nurse cut the sutures off for me as I didn't have any money left to go to the hospital because I had already paid them.

I love the service the nurse at Daughters gave me so much, and I didn't have to pay. She showed care for me. I'm so thankful that I was accepted to this NGO."

# TYPHOON YAGI EMERGENCY RELIEF WORK

Typhoon Yagi was the strongest storm to hit northern Vietnam in decades. It took hundreds of lives, destroyed more than 250,000 homes and devastated entire communities. Thousands of schools were damaged, and roads collapsed cutting off remote villages. Landslides crushed homes, and extreme floods washed away the few precious belongings that impoverished families owned. Power outages and network disruptions made it harder to know what the damage was and who needed help.

MSAVLC's Trustees immediately responded by sending money to The Blue Dragon Children's Foundation, who were helping with the relief efforts. The following report details the relief and transformation that donors like you have made possible.

Within 24 hours of the rain easing, and despite landslides cutting off roads in mountainous areas, Blue Dragon was out helping families, and they have now helped over 1,300 people in northern Vietnam. This includes distributing 563 packages of food and relief supplies containing basic furniture, bedding, clothes and cooking equipment.

In Hanoi, as the Red River flooded parts of the city, 84 people were evacuated to safety, medical aid was provided and wellness checks



performed on families staying in their homes. One woman in labour was accompanied to the hospital. As the flood waters began to recede, Blue Dragon staff and volunteers formed clean-up crews to help 29 families, whose homes had been underwater, clean out the mud and debris so they could return home.

In Hanoi staff used kayaks, small boats and stand-up paddle boards to reach families in need and bring them supplies. For families who lost everything, these acts of kindness provided relief, comfort and reassurance that they were not alone. One family stated "We ate instant

noodles for a whole week. A pack of instant noodles each day for three of us to share. Now, thanks to you we have rice and nutritious food. Today my child can eat some rice!"

In the mountainous regions of Ha Giang and Dien Bien, despite the long journeys on foot required to reach remote families, emergency support was provided to over a thousand people.

## Rebuilding lives and homes:

Every day, a clearer picture of the damage is emerging, allowing plans to be made of how to help families with their long-term recovery. It is estimated that full recovery will take 12 to 18 months. Blue Dragon is collaborating with communities and government partners to provide longer-term support based on each family's needs, and ensure they maximise the impact of all resources available.

Priorities are to ensure that children are safe, healthy and in school, and that families rebuild their livelihoods as quickly as possible so they can earn a decent living near their homes. This prevents people from needing to travel long distances in search of work, putting themselves at risk of trafficking and other forms of exploitation.

Living allowances, food packages and essentials will be provided for at least the next three to six months for families in need. At least 48 families will be helped to rebuild or repair their homes.



In Ha Giang and Dien Bien Provinces, in addition to homes and lives, many hectares of crops were lost and farms were destroyed. Thanks to your kind donations, Blue Dragon is helping people get back on their feet financially by providing grants to restart businesses and farms, including rebuilding animal pens and purchasing livestock.

We are indebted to Blue Dragon for their amazing efforts in helping so many people after this dreadful disaster, and to you, our donors, without whom we would not have been able to give financial help.

*Right: Food and relief supplies given to a family in Vietnam's Northern Highlands.*

*Below: Blue Dragon volunteers taking supplies to a remote village.*



## 'SMILING GEOFF' R.I.P.

Readers with long memories may well remember this picture of Geoff Hill, also known as 'Smiling Geoff', from MSAVLC Bulletin 185, which we published in February 2016.

As an energetic way of celebrating his 70th birthday Geoff, of Harrogate, did a 70-mile sponsored walk along the Six Dales Trail, raising over £1,500 for MSAVLC funds in July 2015.

Sadly Geoff, who had been a supporter of MSAVLC since 1976, passed away in 2019, and we send our condolences belatedly, to his family and friends.

By strange coincidence, in the middle of a meeting of the Trustees in November, our postman delivered a letter from Geoff's solicitors, which not only informed us of his sad death, but also of the news that Geoff had left MSAVLC a sizeable donation in his will.

As the Trustees had just been discussing making a grant to VAVA (the Vietnamese Association for the Victims of Agent Orange/Dioxin), it seemed most appropriate that Geoff's legacy should be sent directly to them.

We have since heard from VAVA that they propose to spend some of the money on purchasing a



*Smiling Geoff Hill.*

number of wheelchairs for victims of Agent Orange, and the remainder will be used to provide victims with small loans for business start-ups.

The Trustees believe that Geoff would approve of the use of his legacy in this way, and we hope that he will be smiling down on the recipients in Vietnam.

### DATA PROTECTION

MSAVLC is committed to making sure that our communications with you are secure, considered and welcomed. We promise to respect any personal data that you share with us, we will keep it safe, and we will not share it with third parties.

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