

Reporting Period: October 1 through December 31, 2000

Name of PVO: Health Volunteers Overseas

Grant Agreement #: 492-G0098-00011-00

Title of Project: Vietnam Rehabilitation Project

Date of this Report: January 15, 2001

I. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

A. Organize Workshops for Rehabilitation Groups

1. Program Activities:

The most recent workshop, "Employment for Disabled People" was held August 10 and 11 in Danang as a joint effort of ODTA and HVO. The next is tentatively planned for March of 2001 and will probably deal with Education issues. It is hoped that an NGO working with the Ministry of Education and Training will agree to work with HVO as a co-planner of the event.

2. Actual Versus Expected Results:

In Danang, as in earlier workshops, virtually all of the small discussion groups came back with recommendations that a nationwide multi-sectoral coordinating body be formed, including all regions of the country. In December, Mr Nghiem Xuan Tue, MOLISA's representative at the Danang workshop, announced that a National Coordinating Committee for Disabilities has been formed. It includes nine Ministries and one PWD group, the Blind Association.

B. Pilot Test Team-based Approach

1. Program Activities

A team of volunteers conducted the second phase of team training November 6-10 in Danang (Danang Rehabilitation Center) and November 13-17 in Hanoi (Bach Mai Hospital). The team consisted of a rehabilitation doctor, a physical therapist and a nurse. Dr. Heidi Klingbeil is the Outpatient Medical Director, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver. Dr. Elizabeth Kay is Associate Professor in the Physical Therapy Program, School of Allied Health, at Northern Illinois University in Dekalb. Dr. Jill Derstine is Professor and Chair of the Department of Nursing, College of Allied Health Professions, at Temple University in Philadelphia.

2. Actual Versus Expected Results

The team spent a week each in Danang and Hanoi, working with the local staff to review patients' care. Most of the patients were the focus of at least one team conference. Dr. Klingbeil shared an expected format with the staff so that the necessary information could be provided for the team conference. By the week's end, the local staff teams were exchanging more information and the participants were pleased with the interaction. The director of the Danang Rehabilitation Center indicated that they would begin implementing weekly team conferences and would keep a notebook of their meetings to share with HVO volunteers on future visits. Unfortunately, that is not expected to happen in Hanoi. As Dr. Kay noted in her report, "The conferences were quite improved by the end of the week, but I did not see any signs that the conferences or team interactions would continue after we left..... even the March team workshops had only attracted residents, people without much power to implement change. I have been advised that the more senior staff physicians will not participate without stipends, but I doubt that even this would improve their willingness to participate or to change how things are done at Bach Mai." She urged that we "Try to reinforce the team approach with the people at Bach Mai when we do activities related to teaching orthotics. This would include us inviting therapists, technicians, and physicians to attend the same workshop, but would not guarantee acceptance of the general team concept." Dr. Derstine was pleased with the progress the nurses at Bach Mai had made noting, "I believe that the team workshop made a difference to the nurses at Bach Mai Hospital. They are quite knowledgeable about the principles of rehabilitation nursing even though they are often so busy with other activities that they cannot devote time to their patients...I feel that HVO has played a big part in transforming these nurses."

C. Promote and Support Professional Associations

1. Program Activities:

a. HVO supported the Vietnam Nurses Association (VNA) in their annual meeting and tenth year anniversary celebration October 11-13. HVO provided material, logistical and technical assistance. A special edition of the VNA journal was printed and a 15-minute documentary filmed and televised before the event. In addition, HVO volunteers who over the past year have been working with the association to prepare the agenda attended the conference and presented papers. These volunteers were Dr. Robert Piemonte, the former Executive Director (now retired) of the National Student Nurses' Association, Dr. Marie O'Toole, Program Coordinator and Director of Camden Services at the Nursing Department of Rutgers University, and Dr. John Allegrante, Professor of Health Education at Columbia University and a past president of the Society for Public Health Education.

b. After several delays, the Vietnam Rehabilitation Association (VINAREHA) finally organized a training course for participants in MOH's Community-based Rehabilitation program, December 18-22 in Thanh Hoa. HVO provided materials and covered the cost of travel and accommodation for the participants.

2. Actual Versus Expected Results

a. The conference was highly successful in highlighting the achievements of the VNA over the past decade. Some 250 participants attended the conference and 400 attended the anniversary celebration. HVO volunteers spoke on topics related to association management. Members of the VNA provincial and city branches exchanged experiences and hospital representatives spoke of their institutions' activities. During the celebration, a national "Safe Injection Campaign" was launched. Dr. Piemonte noted in his report, "The meeting was very successful. I was extremely pleased to note the progress made since my first visit in October, 1999. It was clear that their need to be accountable in terms of finance and end product was better understood. They worked very hard to put on a first-rate meeting and conference. In my judgment they succeeded on both counts. They did an excellent job."

b. Officials from the Thanh Hoa chapter of VINAREHA report that the training course was very successful.

D. Support Groups of People with Disabilities

1. Program Activities:

a. The Disability Forum Monthly Update newsletter has been distributed each month and monthly meetings organized.

b. The Hoi An computer training pilot project which was initiated in September neared completion this quarter. Ten disabled people have been receiving computer and English training at the Tienbo Center in Hoi An and will complete the course in mid-January.

c. HVO printed and distributed a poster calendar in December. It depicts an above-knee amputee playing volleyball with the caption: "Disabled persons shall enjoy ...favorable conditions for participation in cultural, physical training and sport activities." --Decree No. 55/1999/ND-CP of July 10, 1999.

2. Actual Versus Expected Results:

a. An expanded web site is being developed by Le Nguyen Binh which will incorporate Monthly Update announcements as well as other relevant information.

While the original plan was for Forum members to host monthly meetings in

rotation, the preference of the group now is that the Project Coordinator, Nguyen Hong Ha, prepare the agendas and organize the meetings.

b. Le Nguyen Binh reports that all ten computer students are expected to pass the final examination and will be considered for employment by several internet cafes and government offices in Hoi An. At present there are sixteen job vacancies available, so it is likely that all of the graduates will obtain employment.

c. Distribution of 2,000 calendars will be completed in January.

E. Develop Professional Capacities of Physical Therapists, Nurses and Physicians

1. Program Activities:

a. The selection process for the VIETCOT one-year orthotics course was completed in late October and the course inaugurated in mid-November. HVO has paid the school full tuition for all fifteen students and is providing room and board for those who do not reside in Hanoi.

b. HVO provided financial support for a two-day Nursing Science Research Conference and 40th anniversary celebration at Nam Dinh Medical College, December 14 and 15. HVO volunteer Dr. Patricia Jones, a Professor from Loma Linda University School of Nursing, attended the conference and gave a presentation, "Enhancing Nursing Practice in a Global Village."

c. In preparation for the approval of new curricula for nursing, physical therapy and other technical fields of study, officials from the MOH conducted an orientation course for teachers December 4-8 with HVO's support.

2. Actual Versus Expected Results:

a. VIETCOT reports that the course is proceeding satisfactorily. After several weeks in a nearby hotel, all of the students are now accommodated in boarding houses near the school.

b. The conference at Nam Dinh was held in honor of the 40th anniversary of this school for allied health professionals. Having visited the school on previous occasions, Dr. Jones was pleased to participate in this acknowledgement of the school's success. "I sensed a tremendous feeling of achievement, growth, and excitement about the future. The strong support of the provincial and federal government was evident in the presence and participation of official representatives in the celebrations and even more concretely in the development of school facilities and educational programs". The conference was of an interdisciplinary nature. "Doctors and nurses were each presenting their clinical empirical investigations to an interdisciplinary audience. There was excitement

about their studies, their findings, and the opportunity to showcase what they had done and its relevance to impact clinical practice." Dr. Jones noted that an additional benefit of the conference was the opportunity to meet with a Swedish consultant who had been working with the Vietnamese nurses over the last 15 years. "It was gratifying to both consultants to find congruence regarding the issues and recommendations." During the event, Dr. Jones and several of her Vietnamese colleagues were interviewed by a reporter from Voice of America, to discuss the conference, nursing education in Vietnam, and the role played by NGOs.

c. The organizers of the orientation course for medical secondary school teachers were very satisfied with the outcome of the event. It is anticipated that the new curricula will be approved by the MOH and MOET in the near future.

II. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PROJECT IMPACT

In large part because of the outcome of last quarter's workshop in Danang, the government of Vietnam has responded by establishing a new Disabilities Coordinating Committee --a major step forward although the body includes only one PWD association (the only one legally recognized in Vietnam) and no non-governmental organizations.

In the private sector, the pilot project in Hoi An is expected to provide a model for training and employment that might be replicated and expanded to include other areas.

III. SUMMARY STATEMENT OF PROGRESS MADE IN TERMS OF SUSTAINABILITY

It is hoped that the new Committee mentioned above (which will receive support from ODTA) will enter into dialogue with the Disability Forum on issues of mutual concern. One likely topic for discussion might be planning for the "Campaign 2001" conference which is scheduled for Hanoi in December 2001.

HVO's Vietnam project has been extended from the end of this quarter through 2003. A major program focus during this period will be the development of a network of organizations and individuals involved with disabilities issues. As it develops and matures, the Disability Forum should become more independent and sustainable as a factor in the facilitation of PWD and NGO participation in decision-making.

IV. ANALYSIS OF QUARTER

HVO's Permit of Operation which expired in mid-September has yet to be renewed by PACCOM. In addition, the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding, negotiated with the Rehabilitation Steering Committee of the

MOH this quarter, is still pending. That MOU will cover the 2001-2003 project time frame. It is expected that both of these processes will be completed in the first quarter of 2001.

Project Manager Linda James visited the program in late October. She was able to meet with the Rehabilitation Steering Committee, VIETCOT School, and a number of recipients of the communications packages. She was pleased to note the positive developments that had occurred in the past year.

V. DATA COLLECTION

VNA Conference 400 participants

Nam Dinh conference 450 participants

Thanh Hoa training course 75 participants

2 Team workshops 25 participants

VIETCOT course 15 participants

Hoi An computer course 10 participants

Teacher training 35 participants

VI. FINANCIAL/EXPENDITURE