



## **Annual Report 2014**

We launched our first project in August 2012 in Quang Nam Province in Central Vietnam, assisting 100 youngsters on their journey through the school process. This launch was funded by members. We found great support at our inaugural fund-raising dinner in March 2013 that enabled us to add 50 more students in mountainous Ha Giang Province.

Our successful 2014 fundraiser allowed us to help a further 50 students around Meo Vac in the high country region of Ha Giang Province, bringing student numbers to 200. These students are mostly of Hmong and Dao ethnicity. Concerned at the financial fragility of some of the families we support, we set up a modest fund to help families overcome the sort of minor setbacks that might see a child leave school, even temporarily: a short-term absence sometimes leads to a youngster dropping out of school.

We have also commenced a pilot micro-banking project in Meo Vac that has 4 families running small piggeries. This follows the success of a seemingly small gesture by Deirdre, a Perth supporter, details of which appear on our website. The success of our pilot project, together with the level of support we enjoy in fund-raising will guide us in assessing the future merits of micro-banking. We encourage readers to visit our web site for deeper insight into our operations.

We remain humbled at the support our small charity enjoys. Our small but growing network of friends and supporters both in WA and Vietnam enables us to constantly search for ways to support communities we operate in.

The lack of first aid care and training available to some mountain communities concerns us and we are investigating ways of initiating basic first aid training in schools in an effort to reduce the severity of injuries and even save lives in some cases. Local feedback indicates that such training is overdue and will be welcomed. We have had indications of support from WA organisations, but at best this will be a lengthy process. Success is not assured but we will give it our very best shot.

As reported last year, the cost efficiency of charities and NGOs quite rightly remains under close scrutiny. We are pleased to advise that we honoured our pledge that 100 cents of every dollar donated or raised by way of sponsorship or auction will find its way into the hands of a deserving family for purposes of education. Funds raised in that manner total \$45,026 and we have handed cash to families of \$47,765. Support to the VWU for travel and other costs in providing local support (\$4,931), travel expenses of Platypus members in visiting project sites in Vietnam (\$2,534) and overheads (\$1,467) have been met by members' subscriptions and donations and other fund-raising methods. Net overheads for 2014 totalled \$251.

We thank all our supporters for helping make the year a memorable one for hundreds of fine battlers whose appreciation of a helping hand is beyond our powers of description.

Bob Greer  
Chairman

30 October 2014