

# Oxfam in Vietnam

OXFAM has worked in Vietnam for many years – helping to resettle refugees and distributing medical supplies to victims of conflict in both the north and south of the country during the war years. Since 1975 Oxfam has worked closely with government officials to promote development activities with poor communities.

A large grant – nearly a quarter of a million pounds – was made in 1980 when Typhoon Joe wreaked havoc in the northern provinces of the Red River Delta. Oxfam responded with relief supplies which were distributed by Aidrecep, the committee charged with overseeing aid programmes in Vietnam.

Guided by the Government's development priorities, Oxfam's programme has focused on supporting food production and disaster prevention in the poorest areas of Vietnam, assisting with the small-scale manufacture of basic consumer goods and helping to make improvements in the health system.

In 1988, when Vietnam began to open up to foreign visitors, Oxfam approached the authorities for permission to open an office. Two years later Oxfam's office was established in Hanoi, with a staff of one expatriate and several Vietnamese. Oxfam now spends about half a million pounds each year in four of the poorest provinces of Vietnam.

Since then a number of similar non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from all over the world have established offices in Vietnam, and many others fund programmes from their headquarters. International NGOs work alongside the many agencies of the United Nations, and a gradually increasing number of Western government aid programmes.

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## Further reading

- Beresford M. (1988), *Vietnam: politics, economics and society*, London: Pinter.
- Burchett W. (1965), *Vietnam: inside story of the guerrilla war*, New York: International Publishers.
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- Maclear M. (1981), *Vietnam: the ten thousand day war*, London: Eyre Methuen.
- Mullin C. (1986), *Last Man out of Saigon*, London: Gollancz.
- Snepp F. (1977), *Decent Interval*, New York: Random House.
- Far Eastern Economic Review*, weekly, Hong Kong.

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