

The Hulza delegation visited the Microfinance Project in Ben Tre



On May 6th 2019, Ms Monique Smiers and Ms Hoang Phuong Phi from the Hulza Foundation, the Netherlands visited the MCNV's Microfinance Project in Binh Dai district, Ben Tre province. This trip was special to Monique and Phi because they visited Thoi Lai commune, where the Hulza Foundation started their microfinance support for poor women in 2016.

Ms Monique and Ms Phi took their first visit to Ben Tre in 2016, when the province was suffering the serious saline intrusion that widely endangered the Mekong river delta in Vietnam. After that trip, Monique and Phi decided to join hands with MCNV to expand the microfinance project to Thoi Lai commune. With the donation of Euro 20,000 in 2016, the Ben Tre Women's Union and MCNV were able to expand the project to Thoi Lai commune with inclusive microfinance services and community development support to poor women. Until May 2019, 152 poor women in community have had micro loans and savings from the project in 15 credit groups. Most of them had first loans in 2017-2018 to build high capacity water containers for retaining rain water to be safe during dry season. After having enough fresh water for living, in the second and third cycles of loans, more women tend to invest in their home business such as cow, goat or pig raising or other suitable businesses such as trading and farming their home gardens. 50 poor women could build their home hygienic latrines from this project loans

to keep the environment clean. 13 women borrowed free of interest loans to buy voluntary health insurance for totally 37 family members to protect themselves from health risks. During monthly credit group meetings, poor women are equipped with financial literacy training from the Women's Union and learn more life and production knowledge by compulsory sharing session during the meetings.

This project will continue once the need from poor women for inclusive financial service and community development is still there. Ms Monique and Ms Phi showed their high satisfaction about the beginning results of Thoi Lai commune and looked forward to further cooperation with MCNV in the future to support disadvantage groups in Vietnam.





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