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MEDIA RELEASE

PROGRAM LAUNCHING WORKSHOP

REACHING THE FURTHEST BEHIND IN QUANG TRI AND HOA BINH PROVINCES

On the morning of August 26, 2022, the consortium of three organizations, Plan International Vietnam, CARE International in Vietnam and the Center for Research on Initiatives of Community Development (RIC) held a workshop to introduce the program ***"Reaching the Furthest Behind - Improving the quality of life of especially disadvantaged community groups in Quang Tri and Hoa Binh provinces"*** in Dong Ha city, Quang Tri province. The event creates a premise for cooperation with relevant agencies during the upcoming implementation of activities for positive changes for communities.

The ceremony took place in a solemn and cosy atmosphere with the presence of about 60 delegates from the Irish Embassy in Vietnam, the Committee for Ethnic Affairs, the Ethnic Council of the National Assembly the Women's Union, the Department of Planning and Investment, authorities of districts and communes, schools and people's representatives of the program sites and leaders of three organisations of Plan International, CARE and RIC.

The program ***"Reaching the Furthest Behind - Improving the quality of life of especially disadvantaged community groups in Quang Tri and Hoa Binh provinces"*** with the sponsorship of the Embassy of Ireland in Vietnam will be implemented during the period of 6/2022 - 8/2023. The program aims to support ethnic minorities with special difficulties in six communes of Dakrong and Huong Hoa districts of Quang Tri province, and three communes in Da Bac district, Hoa Binh province, through the support of livelihood development, disaster risk prevention and application of community-centred and decision-making approaches.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mr. Seán Farrell - Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Ireland in Vietnam, shared about Ireland's support strategy in Vietnam as well as expectations for this program: *"The FBF program is among the most important engagements of Ireland in Vietnam and the region. It addresses the multiple development challenges faced by 'furthest behind communities', including poor ethnic minorities, disadvantaged women, and vulnerable to climate and disaster risks, and people living with disabilities. Its objectives are fully aligned with key priorities of A Better World, Ireland's Policy for International Development. The program builds on Ireland's legacy of strong support to ethnic minorities and the most vulnerable groups in Vietnam and the region."*

Ms. Pham Thu Ba, Acting Country Director of Plan International Vietnam – Leader of the consortium, emphasised: *"Ethnic minority communities, especially children, will benefit from this program. Girls, people with disabilities and women in nine extremely disadvantaged communes in Hoa Binh and Quang Tri provinces will have their capacity enhanced to cope with and adapt to climate change. They also can access basic services and participate in economic development models to improve their status in the family, community, and society. The Program's intervention will contribute to the commitment to support two million girls in learning, leadership, decision-making and development in Plan International Vietnam's 5-year strategy for the period 2020-2025."*

The three consortium members through the "Reaching the Furthest Behind" program will provide the support that is comprehensive and multi-faceted, such as supporting livelihood models, developing disaster risk and climate change adaptation, safe school models, and implementation of new construction and maintenance of micro-community facilities that help people improve their lives.



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Mr. Le Van Hai, Director of RIC, further discussed the program's approach: *“The program will be implemented on the basis that the community is the centre of the activities. The community proposes initiatives, participates in the planning process, develops the initiative, and implements the activity. We will apply the self-governing community approach to the community-based microstructure construction and operation and maintenance component regarding. This is an approach where people are the subject of the development process; they have the right and capacity to self-assess their needs, rank their priorities, and plan and organise the implementation of operation and maintenance. Through this approach, people will be strengthened with capacity and responsibility to implement local development initiatives to improve their living conditions.”*

In addition to direct activities in the community, the program also implements specific activities to connect resources and leverage changes systematically at the national level. In this regard, Ms. Le Kim Dung, Country Director of CARE International in Vietnam, said: *“The program also promotes learning and partnership building with central agencies, strengthens the implementation of the National Target Program for Socio-Economic Development for ethnic minority groups and mountainous areas along with other programs to support communities and the most vulnerable population to respond to economic fluctuations and effectively adapt to climate and environmental challenges.”*

Please see more photos of the conference [here](#).

For press information, please contact:

Pham Trang Nhung (Ms.), Press Coordinator, Plan International in Vietnam via email nhung.phamtrang@plan-international.org or phone: +84906252213.

Nguyen Thi Kieu Trang (Ms.), Marketing and Communications Manager, CARE International in Vietnam, via email at nguyenthikieu.trang@care.org.vn or via handphone +84904879991