



April / May / June 2008 No.18 Solar Serve News

Dear friends,

At the beginning of this year the weather has been very cold in parts of Vietnam. During the Lunar New Year celebrations very low temperatures kept many people at home. In the mountain region near the border of China there was even ...snow! It was very unusual. Many cattle died and farmers feared for their crops. Cooking with the solar cookers was difficult. Only clear sunshine makes it work, even in a very cold but clear Tibet where one of our solar cookers is working very well.

Parabolic cookers for transport

We told you already about our four-part parabolic cooker. Here are some other pictures of the new cooker. We are considering to make them with long reflecting panels, but also smaller ones as in the original parabolic cooker. The stand is also foldable. It weights 23 kg and takes only 100 x 90 x 30 cm of space for transport.



Made by our deaf workers

Today we have five deaf workers working at our workshop near the entrance of the Danang airport. Mister Tuan is their supervisor. They are building the foldable parabolic cookers with lots of enthusiasm. After the opening of our new Solar Serve Center they will all work at the center. Also other deaf workers will be employed. We hope the new center will become their home and for many others. We are planning to shuttle all workers by bus daily from Danang to the factory. Please get to know them a little bit and try to understand that life as a deaf person in Vietnam is not always easy:



Cuong (30 yrs) is the oldest of our five deaf workers and has been working for Solar Serve almost 8 months. He was born in Danang. He lives with his mother and younger brother. He became deaf when he was young, but can hear a little with one ear. It took him awhile to learn welding with electrodes, but now he is able to weld the frames for the cookers well without any problems. He finds his work not too hard. He will try to do his best to earn and save money for his life and future.

Vu has been working with us for 6 months. He is 20 years old and was born in Danang. He lives with his parents and one older sister. He became deaf when he was born. He loves to work with us. It also gives him a job. The work is not too difficult for him. Till now he needs money for his living and was not able to save any money. He wants to have a stable job for the future which can help him and his family.



Hoa (17yrs) is the youngest of our five deaf workers. He has been working with us for 6 months. He was born in Danang. His mother is still alive. He became deaf when he was born. None of his brothers and sisters are deaf. Life for deaf people is difficult. But now he is happy with his work because he is able to save some money. He doesn't know what the future will hold, but he hopes that he has the ability to work well in order to support his family and to deal with difficulties in life.

Cuong (2) has been working for 3 months with us. He is 23 years old. His mother, father, three sisters and two brothers live in Nghe An (North Vietnam), but in order to work with us he lives with his relatives in Danang. He became deaf in both ears when he was born. His life was difficult, because he could not find a job and it was difficult to communicate with people. He just started to work with Solar Serve and loves to make solar cookers. It is light work and suits him very well. He hopes that his work becomes stable.



Vu (2) has been a new worker since February. He is 22 years old and was born in Danang. He lives with his parents and two younger brothers. He became deaf when he was still young. He can hear a little with one ear. Life has not been easy for him as a deaf person. When you are deaf it is very hard to find a good job. He loves his work, but he has not been able to save any money yet. When he thinks about his future he wants to supports his family and himself.

Solar Serve Center

In our last newsletter we told you that we finished the foundation of the building. We felt that the factory was just a part of the building, so we renamed it Solar Serve Center. After the walls and pillars were built and the second floor was laid, things happened fast and if you see the pictures, maybe you will not believe your eyes. It's wonderful and so exciting. We made an agreement with the contractor to finish the construction work within 6 months. That will bring us almost to the end of May.



Wonderful visitors

The last three months we already had dozens of people visiting our Solar Serve Center, including 15 students from the USA, and also three Asian women who were working in China. They traveled almost 1450 km by bus to see our work. They heard and read about us and wanted to know everything about the solar cookers and our project. When they visited the Center it inspired them. This was the same with three other foreign visitors and eight project leaders from Saigon and Hanoi. All of them agreed that it was great to have our own center. Knowing that the value of the land raised three times as much since last year and prices of material increased recently, they marveled with us about the perfect time.

Workgroup

We have been blessed by people who helped us to support our project and pay our bills for the construction of the center. Lately we heard of a workgroup of nine people (see picture). They have been organizing all kinds of events in order to sponsor us, for example a sponsor run, selling plants, walking a four day march, selling on fairs, introducing people to solar cooking, selling second hand things, etc. They also created their own website for people to join the events. It is wonderful to have a group like this with 'solar' hearts of compassion in order to serve and help us.



Short news

- The owner of the workshop near the airport told us that she wants to build a new house at the place of our workshop. This means that we have to move. It is a similar situation to one year ago, when we had to move our factory in Tamky. But everything worked out for good. It is possible that we have to move a little bit earlier to the new factory in our new center.
- The landlord of the information room also told us that we have to move in October. Maybe this will be another way to move everything to the center.
- We are planning to give tours and presentations of our work at the new Solar Serve Center as soon as we open the center this summer. We love to welcome tourists and guests after their visit to the famous Marble Mountains.
- In cooperation with the Danang University we would like to establish a village near our Solar Serve center to become the first solar cooking village in Vietnam. We will provide at least 50 box cookers and 20 parabolic cookers in the coming weeks and hope to add more in order to establish a good model. What do you think?
- On March 19th our website welcomed the 10.000 visitor www.vietnamsolarserve.org Our Youtube video clip (1) has been watched by 1000 visitors <http://youtube.com/watch?v=qn6oCLiw2ik> and the Vietnamese News clip has been watched by 600 people: <http://clip.vn/watch/RQm.vn.Bep-nang-luong-mat-troi> We are very thankful for all those visitors.

This is all the news we have for now.. Thanks for your solar friendship and stay in touch.

Warm greetings,
Solar Serve Team

Called to Serve