

WRITE A LETTER TO BONDS

Minh's story



Minh, 39, lives and works in a rural province in northern Vietnam. The garment factory she works for makes dresses and jackets for global fashion brands. For six days a week, at least nine hours a day, Minh sews the sleeves on to approximately 500 jackets a day, earning around AUD \$1 an hour.

“If my wage increased, our lives would change a lot. To be honest, I really want to repair our kitchen and ‘toilet’. I would invest more in my son’s education.”

When Minh met with Oxfam, she was married, but her husband, was unable to work due to chronic illness. Minh was the sole income earner for her household which also includes her elderly mother-in-law, and her 11 year old son. Minh had no choice but to work overtime each day in order to make ends meet, with little money left over once she has paid for essentials such as food, her husband’s medicine and her son’s education. Minh’s husband has since passed away.

“I can make money when I’m healthy, but my family will have no one to rely on when I’m sick. We can borrow some money to build a toilet but how to repay it is a big problem. I do not dare to borrow money to build a toilet because I have my son’s school fees to pay.”

For Minh, her biggest concern is how the family will pay their expenses if she falls ill and cannot work. As the sole income earner, this puts a lot of pressure on Minh and leaves her and her family vulnerable to being pushed deeper into poverty.