

# RISING RESTRICTIONS IN VIETNAM

## 2020

### SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

In January, local authorities in Lam Dong Province announce a \$3.3 million fund to help with the resettlement of 79 displaced Hmong Christian households. This announcement, supported by the Vietnamese government includes plans to build roads, a medical clinic and other facilities. In September, A Dao, a pastor who was arrested after presenting at a 2016 religious freedom conference in East Timor is released.

## 2019

### CONTINUAL HARRASSMENT

Members of unregistered religious groups including the Cao Dai, Khmer Krom Buddhists and Duong Van Minh continued to experience harassment from Vietnamese authorities. House churches in the Central Highlands were raided, Montagnard Christians were detained for attending conferences overseas and for speaking with U.S. officials. Hmong funeral practices were prohibited and Duong Van Minh funeral sheds were burned. Property belonging to religious minorities were destroyed.

## 2018

### NEW LAW ON BELIEF AND RELIGION

A new Law on Belief and Religion comes into effect on January 1, 2018. Registered religious groups receive legal persons status under this law. The law requires religious organizations to register with the state and outlaws those who do not register. Religious organizations are also required to gain approval from the government before proceeding with routine religious practices. 10,000 Hmong and Montagnard Christians in Central Highlands become stateless because of this law. They are denied identity cards. Pastors who tried to register their house churches were told their applications were denied because of 'occupancy limitations'. Places of worship continue to be seized without just cause. As of 2018, Vietnam has 244 prisoners of conscience, 20 activists have been detained because of their faith.