



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIRIAM MOELLER

A Sense of Community

IN JANUARY 2013, I traveled to Lao Cai province in Vietnam. Many ethnic tribes live in this mountainous region making crafts and growing food to sell in the town of Sapa. Most tribal women walk about dressed in traditional head scarves and modern rubber boots. I encountered this particular group of women outside of Sapa on a very cold and foggy day. I was fascinated by the juxtaposition of the modern world (motorbikes and winter jackets) next to the ancient world (the women in traditional head gear making traditional crafts around on open fire)—a reflection of the state of life in Vietnam and so many other Southeast Asian countries. I was also touched

by the sense of community among the women. Although they lived in poor and tough conditions, they laughed and appeared happy. I thought about my own life in the “modern world” that is quite comfortable, yet often lacks that sense of happy community I felt among these women. This photograph inspired me to spend less time at work or on my smart phone and spend more time with the people I love and the people in my neighborhood to hopefully create a sense of my own community.

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YOU'RE INVITED! We invite you to submit your photos along with a brief (approximately 200 words) description of why these images are important in your understanding of a person, place, idea, or incident from your experiences in international education. The photos could be of a simple moment on your home campus involving international students, a major event in an exotic location, or anything in between. The editors of *International Educator* will run selections on this page throughout the year. Please contact us for submission details at elainal@nafsa.org.