

**Operation Day's Work – USA**  
2004-2005 Funding Application

**A. Project Information**

Name of Project: Youth At Risk Project in An Giang Province, Viet Nam

Name of U.S. PVO: Heifer International

Address (Street, City, Province/State, Country, Zip Code):  
1015 Louisiana Street  
Little Rock, AR 72202

Contact Person: Ms. Rebecca Alderfer, Asia South Pacific Program Officer

Phone: 501-907-2655

Fax: 501-907-2602

E-mail Address: [rebecca.alderfer@heifer.org](mailto:rebecca.alderfer@heifer.org)

Project Site in Country (Where implemented): Phu An village, An Giang Province

Collaborating Organizations: Heifer Viet Nam

Project Director: Dr. Chau Ba Loc, Country Director

Project Start and End Dates: April 2004 – March 2007 (Funding requested is for first year)

Amount Requested: \$30,000

Briefly answer the following questions. Application should not exceed **5 pages**.

**B. Organizational Background**

Heifer International's mission is to work with communities to end hunger and poverty and care for the earth. Heifer does this by providing animals and training to low income families around the world. Heifer's resources help families develop small-scale sustainable agricultural businesses and become self-reliant. By passing on the gift - giving the offspring of their animals to their neighbors - they spread the benefits throughout their community. Families and community organizations involved in Heifer programs benefit on several levels: economic growth, the protection of natural resources, and development of the community through sharing and caring.

For the past 60 years Heifer International has been alleviating hunger, poverty and environmental degradation. Providing livestock, agricultural supplies, and training to hungry families is Heifer's unique approach that originated with one simple idea “not a cup, but a cow.” During the Spanish

Civil War, Heifer's founder Dan West served as a relief worker handing out cups of powdered milk to children on both sides of the conflict. When the supply ran out but the line of children didn't, he reasoned, "If families had a dairy cow they could be spared the indignity of depending on others to feed their children." His friends back home agreed. In 1944, the first shipment of 17 cows left York, Pennsylvania, for Puerto Rico, going to families whose malnourished children had never even tasted milk before. Over the years, Heifer and its supporters have touched the lives of more than 7 million families in 128 countries. Hungry families from Zambia to Appalachia have used Heifer livestock, agricultural supplies, and training to alleviate hunger and poverty in their communities.

In 2004, Heifer International received the Conrad Hilton Humanitarian Prize, the world's largest humanitarian award, for significantly relieving human suffering around the globe. In making the award, Steven Hilton said, "Heifer International's success proves that it is often the simplest ideas that are the best. Providing poor families with cows and other livestock, along with agricultural training, helps people become self-sustaining. Ideas on how to help the poor in the world come and go, but Heifer has produced a model that has endured for 60 years."

Heifer Viet Nam started work in the country in 1987. From the beginning, Heifer Viet Nam collaborated with Cantho University to carry out projects in the Mekong Delta region. To this date, Heifer Viet Nam has initiated 12 projects with local villages in the region to develop long-term sustainable livestock programs. Through these projects over 3,200 families have received livestock.

Heifer Viet Nam has enjoyed close relationships and collaborations with the local governments in the region and the program has been recognized by the Government of Viet Nam as a model for livestock development activity in the entire Mekong Delta region.

### **C. Project Description**

Phu An is a village along the Mekong River in southwestern Vietnam. This village, with a population under 13,000, is one of the poorest in the country. Twenty percent of its people live have incomes of less than \$1 per day. In this primarily agricultural region, the lack of investment, technical assistance, and education contributes to this high poverty rate.

In order to help their impoverished families earn a living, many young teenage girls in this village have been deceived by promises of good pay to leave their homes and travel across the nearby border to Cambodia. However, in Cambodian cities these girls face a number of perils, including child labor and other abusive situations.

The main reason these young teenage girls leave their homes is because their families live in dire poverty and cannot support them. Many are also illiterate and lack the education needed to have a better future. The solution is to increase the ability of these girls to contribute to the family income while living at home. As a result, this project is designed to increase the incomes and education of the very low income girls in Phu An. The combination of animal and crop production will increase family incomes and reduce the need for girls to leave their homes and seek work in other countries.

The overall goal of the project is to reduce the incidence of trafficking of young teenage girls by increasing the incomes of poor families whose daughters are at risk of being targeted.

The objectives of the project are as follows:

1. Increase the incomes of participating families by 50% over three years;
2. Increase the number of girls attending school by 50%;

3. Increase production of beef, vegetables and watermelons by 20%.

Heifer Viet Nam will work with the local Women's Union to develop this project. The Women's Union plays an important role in assisting women with economic development activities, including a micro-enterprise lending program. This partnership with the Women's Union will create favorable conditions to prevent trafficking of girls in this village.

#### **D. Project Beneficiaries**

The primary beneficiaries of this project are the very poor young teenage girls at risk of being trafficked in the Phu An village in Southern Viet Nam. Through this project they will receive a basic education in reading and arithmetic, as well as training in agricultural production – both livestock and gardening. After the girls receive their animals and the training, they will be fully integrated into Phu An's existing Heifer project where they will become part of the decision-making group.

This project will increase the ability of these young teenage girls to stay at home with their families. The project will help them develop confidence, character, connection and competence. As the primary owners of the cows and gardening supplies, they will be able to provide food and income to their families. The training they will receive to care for their animals will increase their knowledge and competency and enable them to maintain healthy livestock. By attending the intensive training program, they will gain the education and knowledge to operate a small microbusiness helping them gain control over their lives. Through a process called "Passing on the Gift" each girl will give the first born offspring of her cow to another low income girl. Making a gift to another girl in need will increase her sense of self-worth as an important participant in her community.

#### **E. Project Implementation**

Initially this project will assist 40 very low income teenage girls and their families in Phu An village of An Giang province in the Mekong Delta of Viet Nam. Over the course of time, this number will double and triple through "passing on the gift." Each girl will receive two 8-10 month old beef heifers and the village will be provided with 2 young breeding bulls. These girls will receive training and technical assistance in animal nutrition and health care to improve beef production for their families. The girls will also receive a micro-loan of \$40 and training to produce vegetables and watermelons for home consumption and sale at the local market. When they have earned enough money, they will pay back the loan into the community pool, so other low-income girls can receive loans.

Before receiving the livestock and the micro-loans, the girls will attend an intensive 3-month residential program on the campus of Cantho University. There they will attend classes in reading and arithmetic. They will receive training in animal nutrition and general care, gardening, and handicrafts. Some of the girls will be trained as animal health workers. These animal health workers will help maintain the health and well-being of the animals in the village.

The project will set up a managing committee comprised of the village Women's Union, representatives of the local Department of Labor, Social Welfare and Invalids, Heifer Viet Nam and a veterinarian to oversee the project. The girls in the recipient families will have leadership roles and responsibilities on the managing committee when they return from the training program.

Specific activities of the project during the first year include:

- The managing committee is organized.
- 40 impoverished teenage girls attend a 3-month intensive residential education program.
- Girls participate in exchange visits with members of more established Heifer projects to learn from their experiences.
- Heifers are distributed to the girls when they complete the education program and return home.
- Grasslands and vegetable gardens are planted.
- Girls are trained on how to market their products.
- Girls participate in the village's Heifer managing committee and continue to receive training on animal care and well-being.

Improving the local environment is an important part of this project. By planting trees, grasses and using ecological agricultural practices, this project will contribute to an environmental renewal of the area. Participants will receive \$20 to replant grasses for their cows. 2,000 nitrogen fixing trees will be planted to reinvigorate the soil and to make living fences for cattle enclosures. Manure from the cattle will be used as fertilizer for the grasslands and the vegetable gardens.

“Passing on the Gift” is an important component of Heifer’s projects. Each recipient of a heifer agrees to pass on the first born female offspring to another poor family and then train them how to care for it. In this way, the benefits of the project are spread from family to family throughout the community. In addition, low income girls have the chance to give to another family in need. We have found that being a donor for the first time in their lives is a powerful self-esteem builder for these young women.

Passing on the gift also makes the project self-sustaining. The 40 girls who receive the original heifers pass the first born female offspring of those heifers and the training to another 40 girls and they pass theirs on to another 40 girls, so that the original gift multiplies throughout the community.

## **F. Project Evaluation**

While we are requesting funding for one year of this project, the results of the project will be measured over three years. The expected outcomes of the project are:

1. Increase the incomes of participating families by 50% over three years;
2. Increase the number of girls attending school by 50%;
3. Increase production of beef, vegetables and watermelons by 20%.

After the baseline information on the girls is gathered at the beginning of the project, the outcomes will be measured through semi-annual progress and financial reports. At the end of each year, project participants will evaluate the progress through a self-review of the project. The staff will collect information on training sessions, committee work, the girls’ production records and passing on the gift contracts. Heifer staff will continue to monitor the project for 5 years, to insure that the project is self-sustaining.