

Children of Vietnam

Vì Trẻ Em Việt Nam

Interim Progress Report for Dining for Women Empowering Foundations for Women & Their Children

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DaNang City, Vietnam
October 2012 through May 2013



Ms. Thuy making a sweet drink from raw sugar cane for a customer. Ms. Thuy runs a small food stall offering cane juice and delicious homemade pancakes wrapped around shrimp and vegetables.

Program Objective and Goals

The objective of Empowering Foundations for Women & Their Children (EFWC) is to help single mothers build a sustainable life by providing a powerful combination of education, healthcare, housing, and microloans. Recognizing the causes of poverty are multifold and that single solutions are often inadequate in overcoming low education, ill health, unstable housing, and limited resources, EFWC works collaboratively with single mother's to assist them in identifying these

challenges and developing a plan for improved life for themselves and their children. Support is tailored to the woman's strengths and focuses on resolving immediate need, developing life-long skills, and providing tools for self-reliance thus also ensuring the well-being of her children.

The main goals are:

- Single mother is equipped to improve life circumstance for herself and her children
- Greater opportunities for the future of her children through education
- Household environment is stabilized and improved

1. A brief description of what has been accomplished so far

The program kicked off a major effort in October 2012 to enroll 90 women. We have completed the first stage of the project (intake/survey phase) and have started the second stage (initiated phase). In the first phase, we surveyed 130 poor single women households in two areas, Hoa Vang and Ngu Hanh Son Districts in Da Nang city. Among these households, we identified 90 single-mother households to receive our wrap-around service. In this first year 2012-2013, we planned to enroll 50 women in both areas, 16 women of Hoa Vang District, and 34 women of Ngu Hanh Son District. So far, we have enrolled two big groups in each district. This May, we will enroll on the final group of 15 beneficiaries in the first year 2012 – 2013.

Hoa Vang District Update

In Hoa Vang District, from October 16 to 18, 2012, we surveyed 40 single-women households in Hoa Phong commune, and identified 16 households selected to join in our program in this first year, and 14 households in the second year (2013 – 2014). On November 15, 2012, in collaboration with the of Hoa Vang People's committee, we held a CMT meeting (Case Management Team) to advice and produce an Empowerment Service Plan for each of these 16 households. The 16 women of Hoa Vang received beneficiary certificates of Empowering Foundation for Women and their Children Program on December 14, 2012 (please see news on link: <http://www.drt.danang.vn/62-57-10698/Trao-phuong-tien-sinh-ke-cho-ho-phu-nu-n.aspx>).

Once the Empowerment Service Plan was agreed upon, we proceeded to implement services as per plan in housing, education, healthcare and nutrition, and livelihood. On November 29, 2012, an important first step was to provide each woman with a health check. The health results are good; none of the women have any serious health issues.

At the end of December 2012, we implemented livelihood/microloan services:

5 household are cow breeding	1 woman is mushroom farming
2 women are pig farming	2 women are selling farm products
2 women are poultry farming	3 women are opening a small grocery store
1 woman opened a food and beverage store at the local market	



Ms. Lien mushroom farming

Ms. Xi poultry & duck farming

In January 2013, these 16 households received house improvements/repairs including roof covering, indoor toilets, kitchen improvement, and facility supporting.

6 new indoor toilets	2 upgraded kitchens
1 new dining table set	1 rice cooker
4 roofing repairs	

Ensuring that the children of the women beneficiaries stay in school and succeed, the following was provided:

5 primary/secondary school scholarship packages of \$48 each
6 primary/secondary school six-month supporting of \$86 each
3 packages of seven-month university scholarship of \$168 each
5 bicycles for school transportation
2 study desks

Lastly, in an effort to give each woman and her family a happy traditional Tet holiday – 2013, we supported the 16 households with special Tet gifts.

In the near future, we will hold social soft skill training courses for all of these women that will include esteem building, business skills and supporting children’s education. Our goal is to build their confidence toward their life and economy.

Ngu Hanh Son District Update

In Ngu Hanh Son District, from Dec 17, 2012 to January 10, 2013 we completed a survey of 90 poor single-women households in 4 wards – Hoa Hai, My An, Khue My, and Hoa Quy. Thirty-

three beneficiaries living in Hoa Quy and Khue My wards were identified to participate in EFWC. The remaining 27 women are scheduled to participate in the second year. On March 11, 2013, in cooperation with Women's Union Association of Hoa Quy Ward, we held a CMT meeting to finalize the wraparound Empowerment Service Plans for 21 single-woman households in Hoa Quy Ward. The 21 women were granted beneficiary certificates of Empowering Foundation for Women & Their Children on April 18, 2013.

Once the Empowerment Service Plan was agreed upon, we proceeded to implement services as per plan supporting the women in housing, education, healthcare and nutrition, and livelihood. We focused first on nutrition and healthcare. All 21 women had received Tet gifts for the Lunar New Year Holiday 2013, and on April 16, 2013, all of the women had a health check with good results.

Our next focus area was implementing livelihood/microloan services. We first held a training course to strengthen their knowledge of business that the women received very well. Livelihood support was provided as follows:

3 women are cow breeding	2 women are tailoring machines
6 women are pig farming	1 woman is making cleaning brooms
8 women are poultry farming	1 woman received a bicycle for transportation

13 households were identified to need housing improvements. The following was provided:

2 new indoor toilets	7 kitchen improvements
5 roofing repairs	1 set of dining table
4 windows and main doors	1 rice cooker and fan

Supporting the single-mothers to keep their children in school, the following was provided:

8 primary/secondary scholarships of \$100 each
14 primary/secondary scholarships of \$68 each
5 bicycles for school transportation
4 studying desks

Advocacy Success

One important aspect and success of EFWC relates to women's advocacy. As part of EFWC, we review the government benefits each woman may be eligible to receive based on government policy. Through this review we called for the government's help to upgrade many of the households. Also, all of women and their children now receive free medical insurance as per government policy. Lastly, some women had not yet received stipends per government policy for poor single women with children 16 years old and under (210,000 VND/ a month; equal to \$10 USD). Currently, their cases are being considered by the government to receive this stipend.



DFW group with 16 EFWC single women in Hoa Phong Commune – March 2013



DFW group with 21 EFWC single women in Hoa Quy Ward – March 2013

2. Has anything changed in regard to the original program goals and objectives?

During the process of program implementation, we have followed the goals and objectives described in the proposal. No changes have been made.



Rita Dickenson – a DFW member, visits EFWC beneficiaries – February 2013

3. Have you experienced any significant challenges or obstacles in implementation? If so, how are you addressing them?

In our opinion, the EFWC Program is so meaningful and full of humanity. During our first survey, it was so hard to access our beneficiaries. All of them were afraid and lacked confidence toward the life. Poverty makes their life more and more difficult, and leads to problems that they must face such as a lack of food, poor health for working, lack of knowledge in self-controlled economy, children without school. Moreover, they felt ashamed of being a single-mom for different reasons such as divorce, unwed, or husband death. Particularly, they were also scared of being in debt. They told us that they are so poor and have no money for pay the debt. Little by little, we came to share and explain to them the EFWC's purposes and objectives. We want them to be more confident and have independence in family economy so they can build a good future for their children. The loan they need to pay back is a way for them to make a habit of saving money. When they complete the loan, they should keep the habit to save money for the family's future. After the second time of surveying, we saw the happiness and smiles on their faces. They were ready to join the EFWC with us.

Since the program came into their life, gradually, they have changed. Their children are encouraged to stay in school and make their dreams come true with the scholarships. The livelihood support is bringing to them a foundation to set up their own economy. They are learning how to save the money for the loan repayment and for the future.

Challenges And Successes From The Field

When invited to have a health check all of the women refused. They worried that if there was any problem they would not have money for treatment. They would rather not know than to have the stress of knowing and not being able to afford appropriate care. In response, we explained that they have free insurance because of their poor status. This fact was completely unknown to them. Further, we promised that if they received a serious diagnosis, we would work with the local medical center to ensure free treatment, and we would also help them to purchase medicine and vitamin supplement.

A second challenge concerned their lack of health-care knowledge. They often used herbal remedies and traditional ways in treatment for any kind of disease. Among them, is Ms. Cam – one of the beneficiaries from Hoa Quy Ward. Since she was born, she had not taken any kind of drug. Ms. Cam told us that if she had a headache she used a stone to beat on her head. Then, the headache disappears. After lengthy explaining about the usage of medicine and drugs, she said she would take appropriate drugs if a headache comes back. We were amazed that Ms. Cam happily joined with the other women for the health-check.

Comments From EFWC Women:

From Ms. Thu: *“My dream came true. I had wished to have money to repair the kitchen and pig cage. I thought that I cannot do it. From the program, I have the kitchen and cage upgraded. I also get one more pig to improve the economy.”*

From Ms. Lien when we gave her an amount of 5 million VND (about \$240 USD) for livelihood support, said with tears in her eyes: *“Since I was born, I had not ever received a big amount like that. I want to say thank you so much.”*



DFW group visit one of our beneficiary's home



Mr. Ben Wilson, COV Founder & President, with 2 beneficiaries

4. Has the timeline for the program changed from the original funding application?

We are meeting all of our milestones as per our proposal. To accomplish meeting these milestones, we spent the three months prior to October 2013, recruiting a new staff person to assist with program implementation, working to select partners, conducting meetings, and agreement signing.

Intake Phase	Activity
3 to 6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of single head-of-household mothers based on selection criteria • Interviews, assessments, and invitations to participate • Empowerment plans for self-sufficient living developed collaboratively with head-of-household mothers • Baseline: Household Surveys (see <u>Addendum B</u> for example)
Initiated Phase	Activity
6 to 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training groups • Services initiated
Continuation Phase	Activity
12 to 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training & support groups • Services continue • Assessment #1 (12 mo.): a) Household Survey, b) Microloan payment history review
Concluding Phase	Activity
18 to 24 months <i>(may extend to 36 months depending on loan payment terms)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services continue • Assessment #2 (18 mo.): a) Household Survey, b) Microloan payment history review

5. Has funding changed for this program? For example, have you received unexpected funding from another source?

EFWC is funded by three main grants and from COV individual donors:

1. Name of Agency: Dining for Women
Contribution Amount: \$60,098 USD
2. Name of Agency: International Money Fund
Contribution Amount: \$10,000 USD
3. Name of Agency: Alternative Gift International
Contribution Amount: \$13,000 USD
4. Name of Agency: Individual donors to Children of Vietnam
Contribution: \$10,560 USD

6. How much of the original DFW restricted funds have been disbursed and how much remain?

Total Budget Funds

The budget for the first grant year is \$29,567. As of May 2013 we have expended \$15,834.76 or 54%. Remaining funds total \$13,732.24 or 46%.

Direct Service Funds

The total direct services budget for first grant year is \$21,423. As of May 2013 we have expended \$12,223.01.

Services	% Spent	# of services / beneficiaries
Healthcare	5%	21
Housing & Repairs	32%	15
Nutrition-Temporary/Emergency	6%	21
Microloan/Livelihood	56%	19
Beneficiary Training	1%	21



21 single women in Hoa Quy Ward have their health checked and, as a special treat EFWC provided lunch.

Thank you to all Dining For Women members!!!!