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VIETNAM
DISPLACED CHILDREN PROJECT

29 December - 23 January 1993

Prepared By Emmett Turner
of Atlantic Resources Corporation
Contract # DPE-5929-C-00-0049

26 January 1993

To: Lloyd Feinberg
Atlantic Resources, Inc.

From: ~~Emmett Turner~~
Child Welfare Consultant

Subject: Vietnam Displaced Children Project Trip Report
29 Dec 92 to 23 Jan 93 (Vietnam 4-16 Jan)

The team, Gene Morris, Denny Robertson, Susan Palmer, and myself arrived in Hanoi on 1-4-93. Meetings were held with Mr. Tue of MOLISA and Mr. Thong, MFA Assistant Director of the Americas, soon after arrival. Ms. Tuyen, USAID Coordinator was present during our MFA meeting. As you may know, Mr. La Bang has been promoted to Ambassador to the United Nations.

The team visited project sites in the Hanoi area. Mr. Robertson, Ms. Palmer, and myself visited sites at Ba Vi, Thai Binh and DaNang. Ms. Palmer and I visited sites at Quang Ngai, Ho Chi Minh City, and Bien Hoa.

The team met with Holt, World Concern and its subgrantee East Meets West, and World Vision field directors, with the WV project manager and one WV project management person. Expatriate project managers for Holt and WC are not yet in place.

Upon return to Bangkok I spent the week of 25 January debriefing and field report writing, and returned to Phoenix on January 23rd.

EKT

c/D. Robertson, AIDBKK
S. Palmer, AIDBKK -

Attached: 4-16 Jan 93 report draft

PS to my report -

- ① VN met its 1992 economic goals - 1st time.
- ② VN became 2nd ranking rice exporter. Thailand is 1st. They bumped US into 3rd place!!!
- ③ Spirits in Hanoi - at all levels are upbeat. People move faster - more determined - greater purpose.

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DRAFT
22 Jan 93

VIETNAM DISPLACED CHILDREN PROJECT
JANUARY 4 - 23, 1993 FIELD REPORT

The Displaced Children and Orphans Project is an outcome of a March 1992 AID assessment team visit to Vietnam. The team recommended A.I.D. funded services to children living without, or under imminent threat of losing the benefit of family care, street children (both on or of the street), orphans, children residing in institutions, and handicapped children. Grant agreements were subsequently signed with Holt International Childrens Services (Holt), World Concern (WC) and its subgrantee, East Meets West (EMW), and World Vision Relief and Development (WV).

This report is the result of a January 4 - 16, 1993 A.I.D. team visit to Viet Nam. Purpose of this visit was to assess grantee relations with the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (GSRV), to seek GSRV attitudes and desires for present and future projects, and to assess grantee project status and capacity to meet conditions of the grants. Meetings were held with GSRV, provincial and local government officials, project agency field directors and support staff, and visits were made to project sites in the North, Central, and South Regions of the country.

General Findings

The host government is generally pleased with its relationships with project agencies. Attitudes appear to be mutually ^{respectful and cooperative} with the common goal of the best interests of at risk children in Vietnam.

Start up activities, including GSRV registration, site location, memoranda of understanding between agencies and local governments, staffing and implementation plans were for the most part completed during the first quarter of operation. There are exceptions, but they do not appear to pose serious threat of planned for project outcomes.

At the request of GSRV some planned for project sites have been changed in favor of locating outside of greater Hanoi, Danang, and Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC). Some of those sites are located in Thai Binh, and Quangnai provinces and the city of Bien Hoa, 30 kilometers from HCMC. Grantees are studying other locations and are receptive to responding to the interests of the national government.

Activities that address sustainability of project effort include development of a social work child welfare practice curricula with the Open University at HCMC. Students from throughout the country will have access to this training. The curricula development process, required field work at operating childrens services sites, and the generation of technically prepared childrens services practioners each has a multiplying effect on the depth and breadth of services to children from this point forward. Other activities include planned for inter-agency staff training in street children services, vocational training, and group child care practices, as well as joint development of protocol for needs assessment (situational analysis), and employment market research.

Service delivery has begun in some site locations, with other locations scheduled to begin operation soon. Second quarter operation should reflect an acceptable increase in service delivery.

Findings and Observations

The GSRV, through Ministry of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs, International Relations Department Acting Director, Mr. Tue, expressed appreciation for the U.S. Government's contribution to displaced and orphaned children of Vietnam. He expressed a positive attitude toward project goals and activities and stated his desire for additional funds for services to children in rural and remote areas of the country, and for development of Vietnamese project management staff to replace expatriates in these positions. Mr. Tue's preference of priority for

continued and expanded services are in this order: street children (some of whom are engaged in prostitution), vocational training and perman^ycy planning for orphanage placed children (i.e.: return to family, extended family, community of origin, adoption in Vietnam, adoption abroad), or independent living skills (interpersonal relationships, health, personal care, employment, and vocational training).

Mr. Tue would also like A.I.D. funding for community based services at points of departure from family care and entry points to abandonment, street life, etc. Such locations would be hospitals, police departemnts, peoples committee offices, provincial Departments of Labor, Invalids, and Social Affairs.

Topical Status by Agency

(+ = yes, - = no, na = not applicable, 0 = unable to determine

	<u>EMW</u>	<u>Holt</u>	<u>WC</u>	<u>WV</u>
- MOLISA registration secured	-	+	+	+
- Field director on the job	+	+	+	+
- Field director appointed or arrived before 12/1/92	-	-	+	+
- Expatriate project manager on the job	NA	-	-	+
- VN program staff on the job	-	-	-	+
- Project sites determined	+	+	+	+
- All project site agreements signed	+	+	-	-
- All or some project sites activated	-	+	-	0
- Project activities on schedule per implementation plan	0	-	0	0
- Project goals and methodologies appropriate to priorities, resources and ability to implement	0	+	+	+
- Vietnam child welfare are experience in:				
Services to street children	-	-	+	+
Vocational training	-	+	+	0
Permaculture planning	-	+	-	-
Family preservation	-	+	-	+
Developing and delivering Child Welfare service training	-	+	0	+
- Attitude toward interagency skills exchange, cross training, resources sharing etc.	+	+	+	+
- Demonstrated willingness for agency dialogue with, and reporting to A.I.D.	+	+	+	+
- Grantee's projected ability to expand present services with increased A.I.D. funds	0	+	+	+

Holt: Holt has had an official presence in Vietnam for three years. It was established by the present field director and enjoys creditability at the national and provincial levels. Until December 1992, for reasons known only by Holt, it had planned to reassign the field director to a secondary level position in Vietnam and to replace him with a new hire. After MOLISA rejected a proposed candidate for the position and questioned Holt's wisdom for the proposed change, the original field director has been kept in place and has been authorized to initiate the project. An expatriate project manager is yet to be hired, as are Vietnamese project staff.

Each project agency has committed to permacy planning, while Holt is the only one with this experience. Three of the four agencies have already agreed on the need for cross training on this subject. EMW has expressed interest to participate in this and other training to the team. Holt is planning a national permacy planning workshop to which its associate agencies will be invited.

The Holt field director advised that its grant agreement for burn center establishment and treatment of 1,100 child burn victims has not been addressed and awaits home office guidance on implementation.

Based on Holt's creditability with the GSRV through three years of experience in Vietnam, and its demonstrated child welfare skills, it is believed that A.I.D. funding for project services expansion would be judiciously and effectively used.

World Concern: WC has assisted projects in Vietnam from its Bangkok office for several years. Since receiving this grant WC has become officially registered with the national government, and placed an experienced field director in Vietnam in October 1992.

MOLISA registration, site feasibility assessments, negotiating memoranda of understanding with site location officials, compounded by illness of the field director, has slowed WC's project initiation. Considering the magnitude of tasks for a newly arriving agency in the country, WC's accomplishments to date appear reasonable.

An expatriate project manager has been identified and is expected to arrive in Vietnam within the next several weeks. This addition should be highly significant to the progress of WC's project. VN project staff are yet to be identified.

WC has agreed to share its experience and skills in vocational training with the other project agencies. The field director has many years experience in service delivery and interagency cooperative efforts in the US and abroad.

Based on WC's experience in other places and the quality of its field director and backup officers in Bangkok it is the team's impression that children of Vietnam would benefit from A.I.D. funding for project expansion.

World Concern Subgrantee:

East Meets West: Regardless of WC urging EMW, San Diego to do so, MOLISA registration has not been initiated. The degree of understanding by, or attitude toward, MOLISA registration by EMW San Diego is unknown. The field director's expressed understanding and willingness to attend to this was convincing. The fact that she needs San Diego authorization to fly to Hanoi to start ~~the~~^{the} process demonstrates a serious lack of authority in the field to accomplish necessary tasks in a timely manner.

The field director is a volunteer employee who arrived in Vietnam with no position position description. The EMW budget shows a \$19,800 project coordinator salary. ~~the~~^{the} A.I.D. RFP authors ~~to be~~ the intent was that this salary was for payment to the project manager.

As of this date the EMW field director has asked for: Permission to fly to Hanoi to meet with Mr. Tue and initiate MOLISA registration; for a job description; and clarity on the present or planned use of the \$19,800 budget item.

EMW has been provided with an abandoned teachers college campus in the greater Danang area for use as a 200 bed center to care for street children. Renovation has not begun and it is understood that final details of payment for, and degree of, renovation is being negotiated with local government officials.

The proposed campus will have room for 200 residents, phased in on a time schedule. Some extra room may be offered to project agencies and others as a central location for individual or multiagency training.

EMW has requested A.I.D. permission to reduce a projected 200 children served in the project year to 100, which may be realistic, yet ambitious, considering start-up delays, lack of service delivery experience, the need for staff, personnel training, etc.

The EMW field director expressed eagerness to learn technical skills for serving street children in a residential setting, and related issues; from the other three project agencies.

The team was impressed with the EMW field director and believes that given appropriate authority and support by her home office she will achieve positive project outcomes in the time allotted.

Lack of experience in service delivery and social services administration prohibits a recommendation in favor of, or not in favor of, EMW receiving additional A.I.D. funds for this project.

World Vision: WV has operated A.I.D. funded prosthetics projects in Vietnam for several years. It has been registered with, and enjoyed a positive relationship with, MOLISA during that time. The field director who has been, and remains in position, operated WV street child projects in the south prior to April 30, 1975 and has directed WV funded street children's projects since his return to Vietnam.

An expatriate project manager arrived in Vietnam in December 1992. He has worked for USNGOs in Thailand for several years, but is new to street children, vocational training, permaculture planning and family preservation projects. He holds a Ph.D in child development with emphasis on developmentally delayed and other special needs children, and has experience as a university educator. Delay in filling this position has delayed project initiation.

An acting VN project officer with several years experience with WV is in place. She will return to her assistant to the field director position when another VN is located and placed in the project officer position. There are plans for three assistant project officers who will oversee operations in the North, Central and South Regions.

WV has determined its project sites and is in the process of completing memoranda of understanding. To date the only activated site is at Danang, which is in cooperation with a local NGO, one of the very few in the country. This street children program operates three sites.

The Danang street child project is highly unique in its design, which groups 10 children around a husband/wife houseparent team. These groups are referred to as "families" in which each child has personal and corporate responsibilities. For instance, each youth is responsible for his/her personal space and has additional age appropriate responsibilities, such as meal preparation, marketing, cleanup, etc.

The team has urged promulgation of this model with the other project agencies. It is being emulated at a planned for WV project site in Hue.

World Vision has expressed its intent to offer services to street children training and experience sharing with the other project agencies.

The WV project manager has established a working relationship with the Women's Studies Department of the Open University in HCMC for development of a social work curricula for those preparing to, or currently working with, children at risk. WV has been urged to utilize Holt's expertise in family preservation, permacy planning and adoption, and of WC's expertise in vocational training, in this curriculum development project. Such involvement promises enrichment of the curriculum and all participants.

Social workers completing the 2 year training will receive a Ministry of Education sanctioned certificate. Field work (practium) in various child welfare settings will be an essential of the training.

WV's established record in services to displaced children and the quality of staff project the agency's ability to expand services to at risk children in Vietnam with additional A.I.D. funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Invite selected project agencies to submit proposals for additional year two A.I.D. funding for rural and remote area project sites, and which include a plan for developing and putting into position Vietnamese project managers by the end of year two.

It is not recommended that proposals for new services be funded during the second year of the project. This recommendation is made because each agency has committed to develop services for which it lacks substantial experience during project year I and needs time to acquire, assimilate, and activate such new information before assuming responsibilities for yet more new services.

Request original or revised implementation plans by objective/outcome time schedule etc., from each project agency. Urge that agency work plans include monthly dates or days (i.e. 3rd Thursday, 2nd Friday, etc.) for interagency project meetings which include information exchange and service training. Incumbent in this recommendation is provision for facilitator designation.

Schedule project management visits for after the end of a quarter and after, at least drafts of that quarter's reports are available to the visitor(s).

Promulgate and attend quarterly project information and skills exchange sessions in Vietnam.

Promote interagency child care and supervisory staff training opportunities for all project staff and host agency staff.

Prepare and deliver a session at a quarterly project meeting on benefits to children from reporting, project reporting protocol, the need for accountability, and reporting techniques.

It is recommended that funding for Holt burn center establishment and operation be discontinued by the end of the second quarter of the project unless the agency is able to initiate those services by that time.

Promote development of common protocol for: Situational analysis; employment market research; permanency planning; and child care worker and supervisor training.

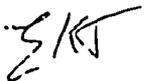
Promulgate the WV street children residential "family" grouping model.

Promote use of volunteer "grandparents" to augment institutional child care staff.

Promote free education for all children, at the national level, and through project agencies. NOTE: The team learned that enrollment fees are charged for children to attend school at any level. "Love Classes" for the very poor are tuition free, but are not available to every child in the country. The fee requirement appears to be a contradiction to equal access to education and the opportunity for increased social and economic advantages for children of the less privileged elements of Vietnamese society.

SUMMARY:

The Displaced Children and Orphan Project funded on October 1, 1992 has, as typical of most projects, been slower than hoped for in getting activated. Filing critical positions, negotiating host government agreements and authorizations, site location assessment and operating agreements have for the most part been achieved within an acceptable time frame. The team has confidence in expatriate and Vietnamese staff and anticipates that each of the four agencies will realize acceptable project outcomes within the time allotted.



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