

SAIGON CHILDREN'S CHARITY

SCHOLARSHIP PROJECT PROPOSAL



Global Giving Challenge

2010

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(A) ABOUT SAIGON CHILDREN'S CHARITY

Founded in 1992, SCC is a Cook Islands registered charity working exclusively in Vietnam. We received our full Cook Islands license in 1996 and our US affiliate received 501 (c) (3) status in 1999. The vision for SCC is to work towards the elimination of poverty in Vietnam through education. Our mission is that:

“SCC enables disadvantaged children in Vietnam to reach their full potential through receiving a quality education relevant to their needs.”

Education is, we believe, the most lasting and effective way we can help children and their families to escape from the cycle of poverty. It also represents a double investment – an investment in the children but also an investment in the future of Vietnam.

SCC builds schools where there are none or only the most basic provision, and we provide scholarships to individual children. We work with the children to adapt our support to their changing needs, including offering vocational training or university scholarships when these become important.

Increasingly SCC will be targeting the very young through work with kindergartens as well as children with a disability, 90+% of whom are not receiving education of any kind.

SCC's achievements over the last five years (2005-2009) include: 127 classrooms built or renovated for about 5,871 children studying each school year; 3,487 children supported through SCC's Scholarship Programme; 1,500 children studied at our vocational training school based in Ho Chi Minh City; 134 teenagers joined Saigon Hospitality training course; and 293 jobs placements for students at the vocational training school and Saigon Hospitality course.

We currently work in Ho Chi Minh City, mainly in the rural fringes such as Can Gio and Cu Chi but also in difficult areas like District 4. In addition SCC works in 5 provinces surrounding HCMC – Dong Nai, Binh Phuoc, Tay Ninh and in the northern provinces of the Mekong Delta, Tien Giang and Tra Vinh.

Our accounts are audited annually by an independent auditor and are lodged each year with the UK Charity Commission.

(B) ABOUT SCC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The scholarship programme operates primarily in rural areas in Southern Vietnam where the poor make up nearly 20% of the population and where children have little access to education due to their

poverty and the shortage of schools. It was established in 1992 in the mangrove forest of Can Gio District in Ho Chi Minh City with only 50 students. The programme has grown over the years and now

enables over 3,000 students in Southern Vietnam to go to school.

These students are from poor families who cannot afford their schooling, over 60% of whom are girls.

These children tend to drop out of school early because:

- The cost of an education is high compared with the income of families who are poor. These costs include school fees, school maintenance, insurance, books, pens and uniforms, many of which have to be paid at the beginning of the school year. It is common for people in this area to have jobs which pay by the day; therefore it is difficult for parents to pay out large sums in one go, especially in families with three or four children.

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- Children themselves are often relied upon to bring home some income that can help to support the family, however meagre it may be. They may gather snails, catch fish, tend the buffalo, weed the rice or baby-sit their sisters and brothers. The poorest families cannot afford to forego this income and, after just a short time these children have difficulties retaining what they have learnt in school and many remain illiterate like their parents.

It is our aim to break this cycle of poverty for children who are eager to learn.

Their benefits:

- 10 kg of rice per month for the duration of the school year
- A new school uniform
- All the books, exercise books and pens they need for the school year
- Additional help in the event of crisis or special need: the death of a parent, or a need for a bicycle to go to secondary school, special reference books, reading glasses, tuition fees for extra courses, etc.
- Vocational guidance: every two years SCC organises meetings where students who are leaving school and the SCC programme can discuss possible careers and further education opportunities with consultants

(C) BENEFICIARIES

Direct beneficiaries: 200 children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are in urgent need and cannot afford their schooling.

Indirect beneficiaries: Their families, in particular their brothers and sisters that also go to school.

(D) EXPECTED OUTCOME

By providing scholarships, SCC reduces the cost of education to families with many children, enabling parents to send all their children to school. Education will enhance their social standing, economic independence and empower their decision making. Thus they will be able to contribute more in educating the next generation.

An SCC scholarship does not pay for all the educational costs of a child. Parents must pay for their children's school fees as a direct responsibility in their child's education. This and the long-term support of SCC will change the family's and the child's attitudes towards education.

(E) ESTIMATED BUDGET: US\$20,000 per year

For one year of sponsorship:

USD100 per child per academic year x 200 children = USD 20,000

**We encourage sponsors to commit to long-term support of the children they sponsor*

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(F) RISK ASSESSMENT

Local partners: SCC chooses partners that we can trust and with whom we can work closely. They have understood our philosophy and therefore entirely support our activities. Partners include local Women's Unions and local provincial government.

- Funding: If the current sponsor decides to stop funding their student(s), SCC will temporarily sponsor the children while looking for alternative support. This has not happened to us in the past but SCC is completely capable of finding new sources of funds. SCC will not stop sponsorship after three years since we are committed to providing long-term sponsorship to each child.

(G) MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Attendance rate (monthly): This reflects a child's effort and helps us follow up if any new crisis threatens to jeopardize his or her education. Children's attendance rates typically improve after they join the programme. Attendance rates normally translate directly into higher levels of school achievement. We look for rates of 99% and above.
- Assessment of school exam results and school reports (twice yearly): We assess school reports, exam results and academic achievements at school. Again, these normally improve once children are enrolled in our scholarship scheme. Vietnamese school reports tend not to be very helpful, therefore we have created our own reports which teachers write for us.
- Drop-out rate (annually): In many areas where we work this figure is around 5%. Among our scholarship recipients we can cut this to less than 1%.
- Attitude survey: When we recruit children, we conduct a brief survey on the attitudes of children and their parents towards education. We repeat this every two years to assess how effective the programme has been in changing the attitudes of the participants.

(H) PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- August-Sep 2010:
 - Deliver textbooks, notebooks and pens for the new school year
 - Attendance reports collected
- October 2010 – December 2010:
 - Monthly scholarship presentation
 - Attendance reports collected
- January-February 2011:
 - Monthly scholarship presentation and Tet (Vietnamese New Year) presentation: each child receives 10 kg of rice, notebooks and pens for the second semester, a school uniform and some Tet presents
 - Attendance reports collected
- March-May 2011:
 - Monthly scholarship presentation
 - Attendance reports collected
 - Review sponsorship with sponsor

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(I) PROJECT INFORMATION

Project name	SCC Scholarship Programme
Project site	Southern Vietnam
Implementing organisation	Saigon Children's Charity
Address	Floor 1, 59 Tran Quoc Thao Street District 3, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.
Telephone and Fax	Tel: (84 8) 3930 3502 – Fax: (84 8) 3930 3503
Contact Name	Ms Kimberly Brennan
E-mail	info@westpak-offshore-bank.com
Budget requested	US\$20,000/schoolyear (September 2010 – June 2011)
Beneficiaries	200 disadvantaged children