

## Davis 100 Projects for Peace Final Report - Summer 2007

**Title: A Step Towards Health, A Step Towards Peace**

**School: Mount Holyoke College**

**Student(s) Information: Mufaro Kanyangarara- Zimbabwe – did not attend UWC  
Getrude Chimhungwe-Zimbabwe – did not attend UWC**

1. **Project Summary:** Describe location, timeframe, participants, other funding involved, scope of work, and goals intended.

With an adult HIV prevalence rate of 25%, Zimbabwe has one of the most severe epidemics in the world. HIV/AIDS has increased poverty at household, community and national levels, making it difficult for the extended family to meet basic needs. As a result, orphans face a greater risk of early termination of schooling, loss of inheritance, and many physical, mental, social, and spiritual health problems. Our project pursued the vision of assisting Tsungirirai, a community-based organization in Norton, Zimbabwe, to meet the healthcare needs of orphans and vulnerable children. Our main objective was to provide ongoing access to healthcare for 500 orphans. To achieve this we proposed to initiate a long-term income-generating project in the form of a chicken-farm project. With additional funding from the Dorothy Ann Foundation and in collaboration with the Director, Accountant, and Program Manager at Tsungirirai, we set out to achieve our goals over a ten-week period in summer 2007.

2. **Project Results:** Self-evaluate the project; your assessment should enumerate what goals were and were not accomplished.

Our primary goals were to set up the chicken project and to build consensus and commitment for the development of the project. The trying economic situation in Zimbabwe posed enormous challenges for the implementation of our project, but we are proud to report that we did achieve our goals in the end.

To begin with, we focused on building a team to oversee and evaluate the progress of the project and ensure its sustainability. We met with the Director, Programs-Manager and Accountant at Tsungirirai to discuss roles and responsibilities for project implementation. We all committed to ensuring the success of the project despite hyperinflation and shortages in commodities and made essential modifications to our project implementation to achieve our goal. While we had originally proposed to raise egg-laying chickens (layers), we decided that it was more pragmatic to concentrate on raising and selling broilers (chickens for meat). Because of shortages of chicken layers and their feed, egg production had become prohibitively expensive. Within a week, we identified land in which to construct a chicken run, and we solicited the services of a qualified builder. Initially, we had projected that the construction of the chicken run would be completed in four weeks. However, hostile economic conditions and water shortages set us back.

We cannot overstate how challenging and trying the conditions were in Zimbabwe, especially with the inflation rate rising to nearly 8 000% at the time of our project. In early July, the Zimbabwean Government mandated both the private and public sectors to lower prices of commodities and prohibited price increases without government approval. Lower prices created high demand that resulted in the rapid exhaustion of supplies. The project faced shortages of supplies in the areas of building materials, chicken feed, and day-old chickens. These shortages and our limited amount of time forced us to acquire the necessities on the black market. The availability of electricity for only 8 hours a day, from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., also posed a challenge for our project. Typically, day-old chickens need adequate light and heat 24 hours a day for the first four weeks, and refrigeration is

essential to keep chicken produce fresh until it is sold. To guard Tsungirirai from losing chicks and produce, we purchased a refrigerator and a generator and equipment to secure these appliances. Construction of the chicken run, originally planned to be finished by mid-July, was completed by the end of July. The delay in the completion of the chicken run, and fuel shortages set back the purchasing of day old chickens to mid-August.

Although we bought medical supplies such as antibiotics, cough syrups and painkillers for the Tsungirirai clinic that provides services to the orphans and their families, time constraints prevented us from carrying out health education workshops, which we had originally planned in our proposal. For the same reason, we also did not manage to develop a manual on how to start a chicken farm.

Despite the challenges, Tsungirirai will be selling its first batch of chickens by the end of September. Given a three-month supply of chickens, vaccinations and feed and an experienced chicken manager, we are confident that Tsungirirai will soon be reaping profits. Although shortages posed a challenge in the implementation of our project, we believe that meat shortages have created an even higher demand for chickens, which will ensure high profits for Tsungirirai. This will enable Tsungirirai to provide medical care to orphans and vulnerable children: our greatest goal.

3. **Implications:** What are the project's implications for peace? What are the future prospects for the project? What have you learned?

Although our project proposal was well researched, the unpredictable situation in Zimbabwe taught us to be flexible in the implementation of our project. Our project was very dependent on purchasing building materials and poultry supplies in a market where supplies were low and prices continuously and dramatically increased. We learnt to make decisions on the spot about whether to purchase a commodity at what seemed like a high price, or look for a cheaper supplier and risk finding the commodity out of stock or even more expensive. Despite the challenges of readily obtaining resources, we remained dedicated and committed to our goal. Achieving the goals we set for ourselves in the economically hostile environment in Zimbabwe has shown us that no situation can hinder us from carrying out anything that we are committed to.

The instability in the country's economy: the hyperinflation rate, commodity and cash shortages did not prevent us from implementing the project. The Tsungirirai team, including the Director, Programs Manager, Accountant and Chicken Manager were instrumental in the implementation of the project. Based on their commitment, we are certain that they will continue well with the project.

The profits of this project will benefit the health clinic at Tsungirirai. With a projected annual profit of US\$ 7,200, we are confident that our project will address the health care needs of orphans by establishing a long-term means of sustaining medical support for orphans at Tsungirirai. By enhancing the ability of orphans to access health care they will have greater happiness and freedom in their lives, which will in turn improve their access to education and contribute to the stability of the families, the community and by extension, the country. Ultimately, this project will take a step towards the most important goal of all - PEACE.

