



PHOTO: CA/SARAH LONDON

Y Re: Life-long learning

People all over the world have dreams. Many dream of having a home of their own and sending their children to school. For many Australians this dream has already come true.

Y Re, 24, from Kontum in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, is one such person. She is from the Xo-Dang ethnic group, one of the most powerless within Vietnam. Y Re left school when she was ten to work in the fields, helping her family grow enough food to survive. Now she dreams of sending her children to school to learn to read, write, do basic maths and to be able to stand up for themselves. (MDG 2: Primary Education for All). Y Re and her husband also dream of a home of their own.

Your Project Compassion money is helping make Y Re's dreams come true. The Kontum Women's Union Credit Program, supported by Caritas Australia, provides Y Re and the women of her community with loans for income-generating activities. In the past the community has had to borrow from moneylenders who charge very high interest rates. As a result, many poor families have been forced into debt. Caritas encourages *Fair Play Today* by supporting this program giving the people of Kontum a fairer way of borrowing money and helping them out of poverty.

Y Re and her husband share 1.5 hectares of land where they and their extended family work together to grow rice, corn and cassava. Through the program women learn to work the land and to look after the animals to increase their income. In October 2004 Y Re borrowed \$83 (approx \$1 million Vietnam dong) and used her loan to buy ten piglets. She fattened them for six months and sold them for \$418, making a large profit. By October 2005 she had repaid the loan. Y Re was proud of what she had achieved and is now confident about borrowing larger sums to buy more piglets and to grow more crops.

Through workshops women learn basic book-keeping skills, how to calculate, save and spend their money wisely. With increased skills and income, they are more confident about decision-making and are less likely to be taken advantage of in the market place. *Fair Play* is promoted through the program and the focus is on MDG 3: Empowering Women.

Monthly meetings are held where women gather to exchange ideas and experiences. They learn from each other about issues of hygiene and health. (MDGs 4-6: Focus on health). Friendships are built among members of the community as they share knowledge and help each other during difficult times.

Through your support of Project Compassion you are giving communities like Y Re's opportunities we take for granted. You are promoting *Fair Play Today*.



Maths

1. Y Re bought 10 piglets for \$83. How much did each piglet cost?
2. Y Re sold the pigs for \$418. Imagine food for the piglets cost \$63. How much money did she make?
3. How long did it take Y Re to pay off her loan?
4. If Y Re bought 10 piglets for \$83 but borrowed money from a moneylender who charged an extra 30% interest per year (that means you have to pay back all the money you borrowed plus 30% of all the money again each year) how much would she have to pay back?
5. If Y Re sold them for \$418 (with food costs at \$63), how much money would she make?
6. How much less would that be?

God of all, many people in our world do not have the opportunities that we have. Let us always appreciate the opportunities that have been given to us and use them to work towards a fairer world for all. Amen.