

1. Organizational Description

The Foundation for Education and Development (FED) was founded in 2000 in Sankalaburi, Kanchanaburi province under the name Grassroots Human Rights Education & Development (GHRE). Soon after the 2004 Tsunami the organization relocated to Phang Nga province to offer emergency assistance to Tsunami-affected Burmese migrants whose needs that had been largely ignored by the Thai government and NGO's. Since then FED has been addressing the more long term needs of marginalized Burmese migrant workers and their families and has built trust among the disaffected Burmese community. Our staff members work very closely with several Burmese communities living in rubber plantations or fisheries so we never lose sight of issues that are directly affecting them on a day-to-day basis. Our staff members are also predominately of Burmese origin and most have come to Thailand through similar circumstances, which has enabled FED to reach the migrant population on a more personal and intimate level, something larger NGOs are not so easily able to do.

FED now runs 4 main programs: Education; Health; Migrant Development and Women's Empowerment as well as some emergency relief activities when the need arises. FED's activities directly support around 8000 migrants. FED also works with partners at the national and regional levels to advocate and lobby for policy change regarding migrant and labor rights. Additionally, FED recognizes the unique potential of the GHRE education programs to monitor the conditions of children in various communities, as well as to take the lead in promoting migrant protection and in disseminating information regarding children's rights. GHRE teachers and staff members have been participating in workshops sponsored by Save The Children, UK (SCUK) and UNICEF to increase the awareness of children's rights and child protection.

As mentioned, FED came to Phang Nga Province in southern Thailand three days after Indian Ocean Tsunami of December 26, 2004 and started disaster relief activities for Burmese migrant workers who were mostly excluded from Thai and international support. Since then, FED has shifted its goal to community-based support for women's rights, labor rights, healthcare, health education, and emergency assistance. FED opened two Learning Centers in July 2005, which grew to six (6) learning centers and (2) t20 nurseries by October 2006. Currently, FED operates Eight (8) learning centers, two (2) nurseries and one (1) Youth Outreach Program in three districts, Khuraburi, Takuapa, and Takua Thung in Phang Nga Province.

FED's principal focus is providing access to education for the children of migrants. Our learning centers and nurseries are in need of long term funding and support so that they can continue to grow and improve in their delivery of education to these children.

2. Statement of Need

Burma was once known as The Rice Bowl of Asia. The standard of living was one of the highest in the area and education was freely available and of a high level. However since 1986, when military rule came into force, Burma has been thrown onto chaos. The availability and quality of education has dropped to well below acceptable world standards and citizens struggle to survive. Lack of work and opportunity and a soaring inflation rate keeps the people of Burma impoverished and often starving. Coupled with continuous harsh

treatment and discrimination against ordinary people and ethnic minorities by government forces there is often little choice for residents but to leave their homeland in search of safety and improved living conditions. Many of these people cross the border into Thailand looking for a better life for themselves and their children. Most have no money, few skills and even fewer prospects. Life is harsh and Thailand - considering them as illegal immigrants - offers little or no support and assistance. They are illegal inhabitants with no rights to education, healthcare or legal aid.

Access to education for the children of Burmese migrant workers in Southern Thailand is very difficult for a number of reasons; poverty; inability to speak the Thai language; fear of discrimination and a very basic education level. In 2005 FED stepped in and established 3 low-profile learning centers in the Khuk Khak area of Phang Nga province. In just 6 years, GHRE has established 9 learning centers serving over 600 children and integrated over 100 Burmese children into local Thai schools. The children are thriving in their learning environments. Our 33 teachers regularly undergo teaching training, curriculum development and child protection training.

Despite the governmental policy that states that all children have the right to education in Thailand, it is very difficult for Burmese children to attend school in Southern Thailand. There are several reasons for this failure of policy implementation.

The principal reason is that many Burmese children (and parents also) are unable to read or write in Thai, so they cannot keep up with lessons at school. These children require support from Thai schools. Often Thai schools are unwilling or unable to provide support for this transitional period. Another obstacle is that legal Burmese migrants are unaware of the fact their children can attend school. Thai schools also fail to reach out to Burmese communities due to the language barrier and lack of resources.

It is beneficial for Burmese children to learn Thai in an unthreatening environment before transferring to Thai schools. An active effort to bridge the divide between Thai schools and the Burmese community can, and has, gone some way in encouraging Burmese children to attend Thai schools. However, due to the nature of their migrant status, families often plan to return to Burma so they wish their children to be educated in Burmese and receive an education compatible with that in Burma.

Other factors that prevent Burmese children attending Thai schools are that illegal migrants are simply too scared to send their children to a Thai school, especially as it is not uncommon for Burmese children to be discriminated against by some Thai children and in some cases, by Thai teachers.

Furthermore, illegal and legal migrants alike usually are unable to afford the school tuition fees, transportation fees, uniform costs and other continuous costs. During FED's tsunami relief activities in 2005, FED realized that no schools were readily available in Southern Thailand to take on Burmese students. As a result, many children stayed at home or, worse, they worked with their parents. For example, there were more than one hundred children between two and twelve years old in just one fishing community in Khuraburi, Phang Nga Province, all of whom either stayed at home or worked at fisheries.

The drive for providing an education to Burmese migrants is so that education can be used as a tool to break the cycle of poverty that afflicts these children and their parents. Most of the families of migrant children have themselves received little or no education and as such it is extremely difficult for them to find any work other than low paid, unskilled labor jobs. The jobs that migrants tend to do in Thailand are referred to as the 3 D's; dirty, dangerous and difficult. These worksites usually include rubber plantations, construction sites, fisheries and sawmills. Providing a learning space for the children not only improves their future prospects but it also keeps them safe from harm by removing them from dangerous worksite environments. This also offers peace of mind to busy working parents.

Due to severe economic hardships in Burma and also in Thailand, migrant parents cannot afford to educate their children and are unable to do so themselves. Without education this cycle of poverty will continue. Providing Burmese migrant children with an education also means that the time at which they enter the labor force is delayed, and when they do begin to work, we hope that a good education will provide them with the skills to demand better job opportunities and a decent living wage. Being at school also offers the children a safe environment in which to study, play and socialize, instead of them being left at home all day or becoming child laborers whose health and safety is put at risk in a dangerous workplace.

3. Program Background

In July 2005, at the behest of the Burmese communities and with the support of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), FED opened two learning centers and two nurseries for the children of Burmese migrant workers. Since then, the operation has expanded to 8 learning centers, 2 nurseries and 1 teenage high school project. FED learning centers now provide an education to 626 children with 36 salaried teachers teaching Thai, Burmese, English, math and basic science. FED has also integrated 100 Burmese children into local Thai schools and continues to support and monitor them.

The Ban Niang, Pakarang and Pakweep Learning centers have been very successful in hosting students and providing them with an education and opportunities for extracurricular sports and dance activities. However, whilst FED built these learning centers, they are where on land rented from Thai landlords on 5-year leases. At times these landlords had requests that FED was unable to fulfill. Renting on short term lease and being subject to fluctuations in rent and the sentiments of landlords did not offer stability for the learning centers, and thus for the children. Many disruptions to the teaching can be detrimental to the children and their ability to learn, especially if we were not able to find the funding to open a new learning center in time for the beginning of the academic year. It also meant that FED's attention and resources were focused on dealing with these issues e.g. finding funding for new buildings and rent etc., when they could be far more efficiently used on improving the standard of education, curriculums, teacher capacity at existing learning centers and improving access to education for other children.

Having seen the success of the learning centers in providing so many children with an education, FED felt appropriate and necessary to secure the long-term sustainability and security of our education facilities. Ensuring the long-term security of our learning center program allows FED to plan better for the future. Instead of having to fund the rebuilding of

our learning centers from scratch every 3-5 years, we will now be able to focus our energies and resources on expanding our operations in other areas and improving our proposed building structure, curriculum and student base over many years.

With the support of KLCA, ALF and Child's Dream FED was able to buy the land and fund the construction of our unified Learning center. The Unified Learning Center will be available to start operating for the 2012-2013 school year.

4. Program Outline

This project is designed to provide a high quality and well-rounded education, including academic and non-academic subjects, to Burmese migrant children in the Khuk Khak area, Phang Nga Province, Thailand. 300 students aged 5-12, will be relocated from 4 existing FED Learning Centers in the Khuk Khak area.

The new learning center was built on land that FED owns. Owning the land grants FED the sustainability and security of this project and will allow FED to focus on the quality of education rather than finding funding for rent, new building construction and finding new site locations. The new Unified Learning Center was designed and constructed according to Thai Government standards.

The new school has a computer lab, holding 10 computers so that each class can benefit from computer skills classes. It also contains a library so that during their lunch break children are able to practice their reading, read for leisure or to complement their studies. A librarian will be in charge of the library each day so that children are able to take books out of the library for reading at home.

Currently the students only receive tuition in Burmese, Thai, English, Math and Basic science however the new learning center will support a whole range of subjects which would match the standards of education in any Thai government school. We will teach a much wider range of subjects as teachers from 4 different learning centers (Ban Niang, Pakarang, Pakweep, Htokemein) will be relocated to this centralized learning center. This means that teachers can divide classes between themselves according to subject rather than grade.

Teachers will also initiate and lead their own after school clubs and extra-curricular activities, if they so wish. For example, journalism club, photography club, sports clubs, traditional dance classes or reading group.

Ex-FED learning center students who are now integrated into local Thai school will also attend this new building after school hours for their supplementary Burmese classes. They will also be permitted to join in with any of the after school club activities on offer. Their parents often worry about them losing the ability to read and write in Burmese. We can assume that the number of children attending this class will increase over the years as we help to integrate more children into Thai schools. In addition the school will be used on the weekends and after school hours for intensive Thai classes in order to meet Thai School Language standards and subsequently integrate more Burmese students into the Thai School system.

Other extra-curricular activities include the children's forum, which is held every month. This is held between representatives of all the FED Learning Centers. Each learning center learns about democracy and voting whilst they elect their representatives and then these representatives speak on behalf of their fellow students about issues affecting their learning centers. For example, some have asked for a library, others have complained about a broken light or lock, and some have brought up the issue of classmates dropping out of school as a result of their parents not earning enough due to the rubber price slump.

The Learning center will also be used as the location for our annual summer camp. 3 groups of 20 children will each spend 2 weeks camping at the learning center and during the day time they enjoy a wealth of extra-curricular activities, classes and field trips to develop new skills and interests.

5. Program Objectives

- a. To provide access to a structured education for 300 children of Burmese migrant workers in Southern Thailand.
- b. To provide transportation 5 days a week for the entire school year to all 300 students.
- c. To ensure the health and well being of all 300 children by providing nutrition program 5 day a week for the entire school year and continuing the implementation of our health program.
- d. To ease the transition for students from our learning centers or from no school into Thai school.
- e. To provide a safe environment for children so they do not have to work and so their parents are free to work.

6. Activities

a. Education

This project is designed to provide a high quality and well rounded education, including academic and non-academic subjects, to Burmese migrant children in FED's Unified learning centers across Phang Nga Province.

FED will continue to employ Burmese and Thai teachers to teach the curriculum of Burmese, Thai, English, Math and Humanities. Monday-Fridays 8:30am – 3:30pm.

b. Transportation

FED's students live in very remote, mountainous and difficult to access areas. It is essential that FED continues to provide its school pick-up service to take children to and from their learning center. For some children this can take up to 2 hours each way.

All 300 Children enrolled in the Learning center fall under FED's child protection program so their welfare can be constantly monitored. FED's staff and teachers staff originally received training in Child Rights and Child Protection from Save the Children UK in 2005 and the two organizations continue to work in close partnership, child monitoring and protection training is repeated regularly. Teachers have also been trained in child-

centered education and regularly undergo curriculum development training and further teacher training.

Funding will cover the cost of the school bus fuel and the services of a driver. This will allow for the students to be picked up and dropped off at their homes safely and affordably.

c. Health and Well Being

Children will also be supplied with what is often their most nutritious meal of the day. They will be taught about and experience the benefits of healthy eating. Additionally, FED health team will provide health education and bi-weekly medical checkups.

7. Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of this project are the existing **300** students who will be relocated to the new learning center building where they will receive a higher standard of education, which covers more essential academic topics. Students will also benefit from a larger friendship base and access to extra-curricular after school activities, which they currently have no access to.

By providing education and transportation to Burmese migrant children we are in effect supporting their parents and other family members by relieving the pressure on them to provide these expensive but essential things to their children themselves. As a result this project will benefit impoverished ethnic minority families who are unable to provide their children with access to education.

The teachers and volunteers who will be relocated to the new learning center will benefit greatly from sharing a common staff room where all the teachers can share teaching experiences, ideas and resources. Currently there is no common space for FED's teachers neither at the main office nor in any of our existing Learning centers. A computer and printer /copier will also help the teachers better prepare their classes and thus the students will also benefit.

The Education Program Coordinators will also benefit from having a centralized base for learning center activities in the Khuk Khak area. This centralization will facilitate and consolidate logistical arrangements such as truck management, financial expenditure and staff management. This will allow FED to re-direct our resources to improving the standard of education whilst reducing our overall expenditure, benefiting the organization and the students.

8. Outcomes or Expected Results

a. Education

The key outcome of this project is that the education of 300 students will not be interrupted. With this project the children will still have access to education and will not be forced to return to work as a result of there not being these facilities available to them. If the children in question are unable to return to their learning center for the next academic year they will almost certainly start working and are unlikely to return to education or at the very least their education will be seriously disrupted.

We expect that the quality of education offered to our students will be improved by the greater number of facilities that will be available to students for them to develop a wider range of skills, both academic and non-academic. In particular these children will benefit greatly from having access to a library where they can spend their private time immersing themselves in a range of fiction and non-fiction books. The children will all also benefit from having regular access to computers where they can familiarize themselves with the Internet by conducting class-based research. They will also develop their typing and computer literacy skills, which are crucial for so many jobs they may hope to find in the future. The children will also have access to a range of educational CD ROMs, which they will be free to use in their spare time for self-study and to develop their interests and understanding in a range of academic and non-academic subjects. Currently none of the children have regular access to neither computers nor the Internet.

Through a better quality of education we can increase the numbers of Burmese students who are able to sit exams and gain recognized qualifications which will enable them to go on to further education, including university.

Another expected result is that the children's concentration and ability to learn will improve, as they will be separated into classrooms divided by solid walls that will reduce noise and distractions external to the classrooms. Screens and boards separate currently different grades in the learning centers and as such the noise from the next 'classroom' is extremely loud. This can be very distracting for both students and teachers alike.

b. Centralization

The centralization of learning centers in the Khuk Khak area is expected to directly result in a drastic improvement in the quality of teaching and curriculum structure. Teachers will be able to work together more easily and share resources among themselves. More crucially, the large pool of relocated teachers will be reorganized into teachers by subject and department rather than by grade. This will mean that teachers will be responsible for teaching one subject in which they have expertise, many to a university level, rather than several subjects to one grade. Meetings between same-subject teachers will be much easier to facilitate, and communication between them will certainly increase, as they will be sharing the same staff rooms everyday so they can discuss lesson ideas daily. At the existing learning centers students learn Burmese, Thai, English, Math and basic Science. The pooling of teachers in the new learning center allows us to teach a variety of subjects, with each

teacher's skills being used much more effectively. These subjects are: Burmese; Thai; English; General Science including basic Biology, Chemistry and Physics; History; Physical Geography; Human Geography; Art; Music and Dance; Sports and Computer skills. As each teacher is dedicated to one subject the quality of the teaching and curriculum structure of each subject can be vastly improved and standardized. As a result we expect student understanding in most subjects to increase dramatically.

c. Community Development

By supporting the parents and other family members in sending their children to school we are allowing them greater time to work without having to look after their children in what can often be dangerous work sites. By paying small fees they are still directly contributing to their children's education and are thus empowered by not being fully dependent on FED. Providing education to their children is also an investment in their long-term development. With an education the children can hope to get better paid and more stable jobs in the future, contributing to the wellbeing of their families and the development of their community.

9. Project Implementation and Management

As the topic of learning centers for Burmese migrants is a highly sensitive issue in Thailand our Public Relations officer, Phi M, will liaise and negotiate with the local Thai authorities and community to ensure that their needs and worries are also addressed. This is an incredibly important part of the implementation process as without local Thai community and government approval this project is unlikely to proceed. It is important that we do not upset the local Thai people and respect the wishes of both them and the Burmese migrants who we serve. Meetings are also often held between FED and community members and parents so that they also have a voice in the decision-making process and so we can ensure that our projects meet their needs.

All learning center teachers have undergone child protection, teacher capacity building, curriculum development training and lesson planning workshops in the past. To facilitate implementation of this project, an advanced teacher training will be given prior to the Khuk Khak learning center opening. A curriculum development and writing workshop will also be held prior to opening the LC and every 3 months thereafter. Lesson planning workshops will also be held every 3 months. Teachers will group according to their subject department to compose a thorough subject curriculum for each grade that will be implemented and followed over the course of the academic year.

The **Executive Director** is ultimately responsible for the management of all programs and projects however the **Deputy Director**, is responsible for ensuring that the program runs smoothly in the field.

The **education coordinator** (school head master) reports to and updates the Deputy Director regularly. He/she also coordinate the Day-to-day operations of the Education Program and it is responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of this project which will be carried out through checking evaluation indicators, collating qualitative and quantitative data and assessing this information through monthly meetings held between themselves,

the financial officer and Deputy Director. Funding reports are the joint responsibility of Education Coordinators, **Financial Officer** and the **Development Director**.

FED is comprised of trained and experienced project coordinators and logistical staff, all of whom have experience in implementing similar projects successfully. The financial staff have also undergone training specific in NGO financial procedure. As the staff is predominantly Burmese, communication with our 'clients', the Burmese migrant workers and their children is smooth. It also means we are highly effective in mobilizing teachers, staff, activities and hardware use. It also means that if problems arise we can adapt quickly to serve the Burmese migrant children.

The teachers who will work at the new learning center all have at least 2 years experience in teaching. They have all undergone teacher training and child protection training on a regular basis (every 6 months and every year respectively) so they are well aware of the needs of the students and of their own responsibilities. Curriculum development workshops are also carried out every 3 months. Teachers are expected to attend all training and workshops so they can continuously increase their teaching capabilities.

We can be sure that the project will be successful in educating growing members of students as student enrollment in all of our learning centers has been increasing every year. Teacher parent meetings are also held at all learning centers every 3 months so FED is constantly receiving feedback and ideas directly from Burmese migrant community members. It is very clear from dialogue between FED staff and Burmese migrants, that many parents are deeply grateful and appreciative for the opportunity to give their children an education. As these parents and other community members trust FED staff we can be sure that they will continue to send their children to our learning centers. We can assume that with the increased quality of education that the children will receive at the new center, parents will be even more encouraged to allow their children to attend.

10. Monitoring

Monitoring the new project will be carried out in a number of ways:

- a. **Teacher-parent meetings** - teachers are able to get feedback from the parents concerning issues about the school or of an individual student.
- b. **Teacher meetings** - are also held regularly where teachers are able to discuss positive and negative issues at this new learning center.
- c. **Progress Tests** - Students' academic progress will be monitored through regular assessment tests in all subjects. Results of all students will be noted down so we can track their progress. If a good students starts to show under performance, the teachers will investigate the causes of this.
- d. **Children's Forum** - The children's forum, held monthly, elected student representatives from each of FED's learning centers come together on behalf of their Learning center colleagues to discuss positive and negative issues affecting their LC and to learn about the activities and issues of other LC and their students. This gives the students their own voice in determining the running of their learning center and the direction of their academia.

- e. **Child Protection** - All teachers are trained in child protection and are aware of the signs of an unhappy child and know how to follow up and monitor a child who has been identified as vulnerable.
- f. **Enrolment Figures** – These will give us an idea of the success of the project. For example, if enrollment figures fall drastically we would have to identify the cause of this.
- g. **Financial Documents** - Through Financial management and audits we will be able evaluate if our resources are being used effectively. These will particularly help us to determine whether the total running costs are lower than the total running costs for the 4 separate learning centers as planned.