

Foundation for Education
and Development
(FED)

Bi-Annual Report
2006 - 2008

Message From the Executive Director

Dear donors, friends and colleagues,

It has been almost 10 years since the conception of the Foundation for Education and Development (FED), formerly Grassroots Human Rights Education and Development (GHRE). It has been a long journey full of both rewarding achievements as well as some considerable difficulties. FED would not have enjoyed such success and longevity without your continued support and encouragement. I would like to express my deep appreciation on behalf of Burmese migrant communities for your support and interest in our work with marginalized Burmese migrant groups.

Burma's long standing civil war and decades of harsh dictatorship has forced tens of thousands of marginalized civilians to migrate to neighboring countries in search of a better life. Migration rates have clearly reached their highest point under the era of military rule during which the people of Burma have been faced with some of the worst living conditions in the world.

Living as informal residents in secondary countries, Burmese migrant workers are faced with grave difficulties and are often marginalized by the resident citizens. In response, FED has provided education opportunities to the children of migrant workers, implemented child protection policy, raised awareness among migrant communities and provided medical care to communities and children attending FED learning centers. FED also provides legal assistance, human rights education, including economic, social and cultural rights education, women's empowerment activities and migrant development projects. FED is also working to bridge an education gap by helping to integrate Burmese migrant children into Thai schools.

Finally, I would like to thank Comité Catholique Contre le Faim (CCFD) who have supported this and other FED publications, and thank you again to all our other donors for your contribution, cooperation, and participation in assisting the marginalized migrant Burmese population here in Thailand.



Htoo Chit
Executive Director



Chapter One

**From Tsunami survival to education and development
opportunities for
Migrant communities of Burma**



On December 26th 2004 a deadly Tsunami destroyed thousands of lives along the coastal region of Southern Thailand. The disaster indiscriminately shattered human lives, killing people of many races, color and religion. However, despite all the negative consequences, like seeing the light of a candle when all around is darkness, the Tsunami has brought about one positive result. Long before the Tsunami, the lives of migrant communities in this part of world had been given no attention. The world chose to forget or perhaps did not know enough about the situation. After the Tsunami however, the situation improved. Burmese migrant communities in Southern Thailand became the focus of international humanitarian assistance groups which were able to provide the migrants with new opportunities for themselves and their children.

Who we are

Grassroots Human Rights Education & Development (GHRE), established in Sangkhlaburi, Kanchanaburi province on December 10th 2000, has been working to educate Burmese people both inside and outside Burma about the obstacles and opportunities for establishing a democratic society that respects humanity, democratic organization, social justice and gender perspectives based on the rule of law. GHRE moved to the Phang Nga Province in Southern Thailand immediately following the Tsunami on December 26th 2004. Since that time, GHRE has been working to improve the quality of life of Burmese migrants in this area by offering the following programs to the Burmese community: Education, Child Protection Program, Women's Empowerment Program, Health Care, Migrant Development, Human Rights Documentation and Legal Aid/Public Relations.

In order to increase the effectiveness of implementing these activities, GHRE registered as a Foundation with the Thai government in November 2007.

Mission statement

- To provide a safe and productive environment for Burmese migrant communities in Thailand.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to achieve our mission statement by carrying out the following 7 objectives;

- 1) Provide an education to the children of Burmese migrant workers in Southern Thailand;
- 2) Promote job opportunities and foster a safe and lawful environment for Burmese migrant workers in Southern Thailand;
- 3) Provide migrant children with a safe and happy environment;
- 4) Build bridges between Thai and Burmese communities;
- 5) Bring justice and social security to Burmese migrant workers in Southern Thailand;
- 6) Educate Burmese migrant communities on Human Rights including Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- 7) Empower Burmese migrant women to improve their situation.

The FED (GHRE) project areas are located across Phang Nga province. The main office was established at Khuk Khak, Takuapa township. All learning centers, mobile centers and nurseries are located in Pakweep, Pakarang, Htokamein, Bang Niang, Kuraburi, Thaplamu and Khok Kloi. Please refer to the Map on the back cover.



Chapter Two

Opportunities for Empowering Children



1. Providing education opportunities to migrant children

Learning Centers and Nurseries

After the Tsunami hit Southern Thailand and several NGOs had moved into the affected areas to assist its victims, the international community began to take notice of Burmese migrant workers in the area. In the immediate post-Tsunami period, affected people were mostly assisted with reconstructing their livelihoods and receiving shelter, food, medical supplies, clothes and other necessities. After a year, as the situation normalized, people's livelihoods became less of a priority as even the livelihoods of Burmese migrants were returning to normal. However, just as before the Tsunami, there were still no opportunities for their children to receive an education. Therefore, this needed to be addressed. It was at this time that GHRE, the locally based Burmese NGO, began





to focus on empowering migrant communities, providing them with legal assistance and educational opportunities for their children.

During these efforts, Grassroots-HRE realized that Burmese migrant children had no right to study in Thai schools. Many children had no place to study and spent their time playing. At the time, establishing schools for Burmese migrant workers was prohibited. Although education became a possibility for Burmese children after the tsunami, the established schools were simply named 'Learning Centers'. GHRE concentrated on setting up these Learning Centers to provide education to migrant children. GHRE educational activities began in the 2005 - 2006 academic year with the opening of 3 Learning Centers in May 2005. Initially, there were only 10 teachers for a total of 159 students at 3 Learning Centers.

In September 2005 two new nursery centers were established, two more learning centers opened in December 2005 and in February 2006, an additional nursery and learning center were also opened. Within the 2005 - 2006 academic year, there were 6 learning centers and 3 nurseries centers with a total of 381 students taught by 4 Thai teachers and 24 Burmese teachers. Normally Burmese, Thai, English and Math are the principal subjects, while other capacity building activities are offered as extra curricular subjects.

The 2006-2007 academic year continued with 6 learning centers and 3 nurseries centers but by this time the student population had already increased to 518 and the teacher population rose to 5 Thai teachers and 26 Burmese teachers. As a result of security concerns, one Learning center and one Nursery had to be closed down before the

end of the academic year so the children from those schools joined the remaining Learning Centers and nurseries. The remaining two nurseries are based in Kuraburi and Bang Niang. The nursery kids are provided with nutritional food, clothes and medical care.

The 5 Learning Centers and two nurseries reopened for the 2007-2008 academic year on 4th June 2007, however, by this time the student population had decreased to 444 along with 5 Thai teachers and 22 Burmese teachers. 49 students were transferred to Thai Schools during this academic year.

The mobile education system also started during this academic year with 50 students from different, more remote areas, all of whom were unable to reach a learning centre. A total of 543 students were benefitting from GHRE education programs during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Originally, when we began the mobile education project in 2007, our trucks would collect around 50 children from their homes and then the teaching would be done in a quiet spot in the shade of a tree. A year later, funding provided by the Japanese Embassy enabled us to build 4 teaching units in the following locations; Ban Wan, Bang Niang, Thaplamu and Khok Kloi. The Japanese Embassy also provided us with some trucks and motor cycles.

For the 2007-8 academic year, we changed the process of academic assessment for each child. Instead of having one final examination at the end of the each year to determine whether they can proceed to the next year or not, we began a system of monthly assessments throughout the year. This means we can keep a close eye on the progress of each student.

The learning centers re-opened for the 2008-2009 academic year on 2nd June 2008 with 5 Learning centers, 4 Mobile teaching centers and 2 Nurseries. The student's population increased up to 590 with a total of 9 Thai teachers, 26 Burmese teachers and 3 overseas volunteer teachers. 46 Burmese students were transferred to Thai School during that academic year. On June 7th discussions concerning the curriculum were held. A curriculum development workshop designed to build teachers' capacities was conducted between 24th - 27th of July 2008. For capacity building and to gain an understanding of child rights, the teachers are also given some training during the school holidays.

Child protection and Child rights training for teachers was conducted over 22nd – 25th of April 2008.

Since the 2006-2007 academic year, a children's forum meeting has been held monthly (except for summer holidays) and parent and

teacher meetings have also taken place twice a year in the learning centers. Free transportation for teachers and students is provided.

Student and Teacher Numbers

Students and teachers population in Learning centers and Nursery within 3 academic years

No	Academic years	Student			Teacher			Remark
		M	F	T	M	F	T	
1	2005 - 2006	209	172	381	8	19	28	BT = 24, TT = 4
2	2006 - 2007	276	242	518	11	20	31	BT = 26, TT = 5
3	2007 - 2008	253	191	444	9	18	27	BT = 22, TT = 5
4	2008 - 2009	314	276	590	12	26	38	BT = 26, TT = 9
	Total							VET = 3

BT = Burmese teacher

TT = Thai Teacher

VET= Volunteer English Teacher

The student population had increased over the 3 academic years since 2005 from 381 to 590 students, although the more professional higher education opportunities for students after they completed grade 6, aged 12 upwards, was questionable. FED has established a special school program entitled the "Youth Outreach Project" to cater to secondary school level students. However, we still need more human resources and greater financial support in order to provide the students with an appropriate curriculum which meets the standards that higher education demands.



Burmese Students Enrolled in Thai School

As a result of recent Thai law, educational opportunities for migrant children of neighboring countries, especially those from Burma, have opened up. However, as parents are forced to weigh the costs of education against the family income, most migrant families are unable to afford to send their children to Thai schools. For those areas in Thailand where there are no Burmese schools, the parents often send their children back to Burma for their grandparents or other family members to take responsibility of their education and other living needs.

In Southern Thailand, FED has tried to maximise education opportunities through various activities. One of these activities is our 'School Integration Programme' through which Burmese children are integrated into local Thai schools. Even though the window of opportunity had been opened, the negotiation process between government bodies, education departments and local communities took a long time. Some of the complaints raised by local Thai community members included an unwillingness to share equal education opportunities with migrant children. Some Thai parents didn't want their children learning together with Burmese children and some parents were afraid their children would catch infectious diseases from Burmese children.

At the same time, many Burmese parents worried that they could not afford the many educational expenses, while others worried that their children would lose the opportunity to learn Burmese. The local, regional and global economic situation has also had a significant affect on parents' decisions relating to the continuation of their children's education. Some parents wanted to send their children to Thai school but their ability to do so depends upon their family income. The recent global recession has directly affected the price of rubber which has plummeted since October 2008 from 80 Baht per Kilo to around 25 Baht per kilo. The price per kilo determines the workers wages. As

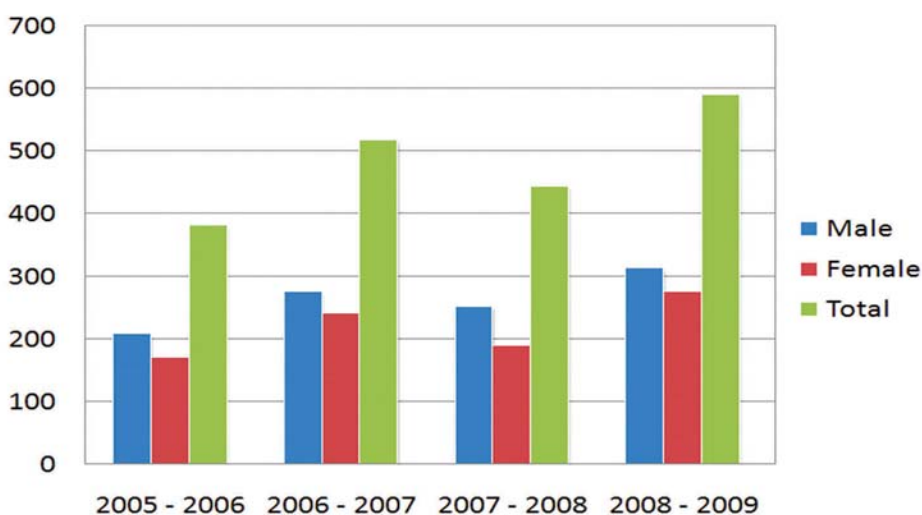


a result, some parents have pulled their children out of the Learning Centers or Thai schools and asked them to work in the rubber plantations; work which starts at midnight and ends at dawn.

The type of work that parents do also affects their children's education. Many parents work seasonal jobs or contractual construction work. These jobs are dependent on their sub contractors and once the building work is complete, construction workers must re-locate to a new construction site. If this new location is too far for their children to continue attending their Learning Centre (or Thai school) and there is no other school or Learning Center for them to attend at their new location, then the children of these workers may never return to education, or at the very least their education is severely disrupted.

A graph showing the increase in student population over 4 academic years

Students population in FED's Learning Centers



Mobile Teaching

Although FED had set up learning centers in various locations within the Phang Nga province, these could not cater to all the Burmese migrants in the area. Most families live scattered over a great number of large rubber plantations, far from either Thai schools or any of our Learning Centers. To fulfill some of the children's educational needs, FED staff began a mobile teaching program at the beginning of 2007. FED staff shared the teaching responsibilities of this new project by dividing the teaching between different areas and different subjects. Being mobile teaching, there was no fixed building for students at the beginning. Initially the teachers would teach under the shade of a tree and had no teaching materials. However, the situation improved in the 2007 - 2008 academic year when the Japanese embassy in Thailand provided financial support for the construction of a mobile learning center building, as well as the necessary transportation required to bring the students to the new centre. 4 Mobile Learning Centers were established at Ban Wan, Htokamein, Thaplamu and Khok Kloi. The students learning at the mobile learning center are listed below.

Students learning at Mobile learning centers (August, 2008)

No	Mobile learning centers	Student population			Remark
		M	F	T	
1	Ban Wan	17	14	31	
2	Tonkamin	18	26	44	
3	Trap La Mu	33	38	71	
4	Kawkaloi	17	22	39	
	Total	85	100	185	



Summer Camp

Students have long holidays in the summer season. GHRE carefully considered how students could usefully spend their holiday time and it was agreed that a summer camp would be beneficial. A group of students camp together while engaging in capacity building activities such as computer studies, English language games and general knowledge activities that cover a variety of topics such as human biology, sanitation, entomology, geography and oceanography, among other subjects.

The summer camp started in 2007 and has continued every summer since with great success. The summer camp is held annually for around 60 children. The students that attend summer camp are selected according to their academic progress and effort over the course of the year. All the students are keen to learn and are appreciative of the opportunities given to them.

The 2009 summer camp has recently finished and was attended by 3 groups of 20 children, divided according to ages 8-10, 10-12 and 12-16 (Youth Outreach). The students benefitted from a wide range of extra-curricular subjects that are not normally available to them during the regular academic year. These subjects included human rights and democracy, politics, drama, painting and drawing classes, creative art, 'Words with Art', Burmese culture, Buddhism, life skills, machines (physics), current affairs, biology, geography, animals, debating, problem solving and spacial awareness classes.

Education in Burma does not incorporate interactive games into the curriculum so summer camp is a fun experience for both teachers and students alike. Classes such as problem solving and 'machines' allow the children to learn through experimenting and observation so they are encouraged to think for themselves and draw their own conclusions rather than be led to conclusions.



The many games and activities carried out in the drama classes were designed to familiarise students with the concept of having an audience and projecting their voice so that they are heard clearly; to build their confidence; to understand body language; to encourage them to see things from other people's point of view and to get their imaginative juices flowing.

The Youth Outreach children also benefitted greatly from a field trip where they had the chance to try their hand at Rock Climbing. Rock Climbing is not only good for their confidence and strength but it also encourages children to focus, plan ahead and assess risk. The two younger age groups enjoyed field trips to the Phuket Aquarium and local waterfalls.



Children's Forum

Children's Forum is held regularly and is designed to encourage children to develop the capacity for critical and creative thinking; familiarise students with natural and structured debate; allow students to develop and express their own opinions; to encourage and improve public speaking skills, and to build self confidence while having fun.

For the Children's Forum, students who have been elected as representatives by their Learning Center student colleagues come together and are encouraged to discuss the needs of their respective



Learning Centers. The student representatives share their concerns about or information regarding their experiences at their Learning Centre and they are also able to learn about issues affecting students in other FED Learning Centers.

The students meet once a month except during school holidays. They are encouraged to discuss a variety of issues and complete activities designed to develop their critical thinking and to nurture and build mutually supportive relationships among the younger generations of Southern migrant communities and FED Learning Centres.

Children's Forum student representatives are able to share information and exchange ideas at the meetings, meet children from other areas, understand leadership, and learn about and practice decision-making processes that directly affect their education and classmates. By going through the process of electing representatives, students also learn about voting and democratic procedures.

A principle outcome of the Children's forum is that the head teachers at each Learning Centre are able to act upon some of the issues that the students raise. For example, students may complain about a broken light or toilet, other children were keen to start a library. More serious issues are also raised by the children such as the concern over the safety of pickup trucks overflowing with children which are used to transport students to and from the LCs, and about many students being removed from school as a result of the fall in price of rubber.

Children's Forum is also a chance for the children to show off some of the accomplishments made by students at their Learning Centre. For example if their Learning Center won the GHRE football competition, or if a student at their Learning Center won top prize in any of the GHRE academic competitions the representatives would share that accomplishment with the other representatives.



School Sports Festival

The School Sports Festival has been held annually since 2006 during the school holidays. The Sports Festival normally takes place in the playground of a Thai school. The various sports activities, depending on the available playground, usually include football, 100 meters running, rope-pulling and other fun sports for primary school level kids. Students and teachers from all FED's Learning Centers join the Sports Festival activities. Students have also been trained by some foreign volunteers in some sports such as football for boys and beach volleyball for girls. The winning Learning Centre of the School Sports Festival is that which has gained the greatest number of points in a variety of sports and gaming competitions. An annual cup is presented to the winning Learning Center.





Teachers' capacity building

In order to build capacity among the teachers, many workshops, including education training, are held. The training workshops have included Teacher training, Human Rights and Child Rights training, Community Mobilisation training, School health care training, Legal aid training, a Teaching Burmese language Workshop, Child protection policy workshop, Thai Government education policy, Rural development and project management, Classroom management and education policy, Evaluation and Strategic planning workshop, Training about violence against women and children, Adolescent health care training and First aid training.

Some of the important ceremonies and celebrations such as Student festivals, International children's day, International Women's day and School Sports Festivals are helpful not only for capacity building for teachers but also for raising awareness amongst the children of the many issues that affect them.

Teachers are also involved in ensuring Child Rights policies are upheld not only in the Learning Centers but also in the communities where they live.



Integration in the Classroom

As part of a concerned effort to facilitate the integration of Burmese children into Thai schools, FED has started acting as a liaison between Burmese communities, Thai schools, the Thai Ministry of Education and other International agencies such as UNICEF. In 2007 FED assisted the integration of 50 children into 3 Thai schools in the Khuk Khak sub district. FED has followed up by closely watching these children every week in order to ensure their success and happiness within the Thai schools. FED integrated 40 Burmese children into Thai schools over the 2008-09 academic year and 103 students since May 2009. Although the school integration programme has been implemented with some success, there are still some challenges that face Burmese students and the families of those students who have been integrated into Thai education. For example, some parents are concerned about their children's lack of skill in Burmese languages. Some are worried about the many costs of educational materials, uniforms, fees and other things necessary for enrollment into Thai schools. Many are also afraid that their children face racial discrimination in Thai schools.



CHILD
PROTECTION

2. Child Rights

As a reflection of our priority to respect and promote child rights, FED has planned and implemented a number of essential child protection measures. FED looks to protect the children of Burmese migrants facing abuse from within their families or from people in the area in which they live. FED provides measures for both immediate physical protection as well as measures for more long-term protection of the child's developmental needs. By supplying these children with an education we may serve to protect them in the future.

In order to ensure this protection, regular training and workshops concerning the principles of the child protection policy and child rights are given to



Empowering Youth through the
Young Ambassador Camp



Right to Food and Nutrition



Children have the Right to Play



Playground preparation for children



FED staff and teachers by Save The Children UK, UNICEF and other sources. To ensure child rights are upheld in practice, FED formed a committee to monitor the FED Learning Centers and offices which practice these rights and policies.

The Child Protection team was also formed to look after the children under protection cases and to visit the targeted areas for monitoring activities. The Child Protection team met on November 7th 2007 and continued implementing child protection policy with 7 monitoring trips to Kuraburi and Khok Kloy that year. The monitoring trips included regular home visits to children under our protection and involved FED team members negotiating with teachers and local community members to encourage voluntary monitoring and reporting regarding the children in question. The teachers and community members were encouraged to immediately inform an FED focus person of any incidents involving the children, where an action or a particular environment is causing harm or change in the child's behavior. The teams received informal reports on a regular basis from members of the community and are now working with several other communities. The team has implemented new strategies for the watchdog system in Kuraburi, Khuk Khak and Khok Kloy. Currently, 19 out of 26 cases are under the watchdog system.

The child protection measures have also been implemented in the FED Learning Centers so we can monitor and report on children under our protection who are studying at a FED Learning Center. Currently, there are 9 children under our protection studying at FED Learning Centers and 6 children who are studying at Thai Schools. The FED team negotiated with teachers from

the Learning Centers to keep an eye on the children who caused us concern and selected teachers who had finished Human Rights and Child Rights training to set up a watchdog system at the Learning Centers. Through bi-monthly visits the team also arranged a similar monitoring process for the children attending Thai schools who also needed protection.

Community Child Care Center (CCCC)

Under the Child Rights program, FED set up a Community Child Care Center (CCCC) to assist orphans as well as children whose parents are not financially equipped to care for them, and for those children who would have difficulty reaching any of the educational centers due to their parent's remote locations.

Some relatives and community members request that FED care for some of the children from their communities and ask that FED also provide them with an education. Children residing at the Community Child Care Center are also supplied with food, shelter, clothes, school fees and basic health care. We also offer a programme of days out for the kids.



Child Protection Cases



Ko Phyo 10 Years Old

After the tsunami Ko Phyo, then about six years old, was found living alone at a construction site in Khao Lak.

Nobody knew what had happened to his parents. Workers thought his parents were dead. He was receiving food from the workers there and running errands for them in return. FED took him in and placed him at Community Child Care Center in Tonkamin three years ago.

For a while Ko Phyo had difficulty adjusting to his new environment but now he is doing really well. He started going to Khuk Khak Thai School last year. He is very good at art and recently won the first prize in drawing. He is also a brilliant athlete: he won 11 medals in running and other categories on the Sports Day this year. Now he has new athletic clothes and is hoping to win more medals!



**Zaw Win Htun's
14 Years Old**

Zaw Win Htun's father died when he was young. His mother remarried but died in 2006 from unknown causes. His stepfather asked FED to take care of him and he has been living in the Community Child Care Center (CCCC) ever since.

He had attended Khuraburi Learning Center but after he moved to Khuk Khak, he went to another learning center. He then began to attend a Thai school in Khuk Khak in 2007. He is a good student and was the top of his class this year.

Recently, he was awarded the first prize in English. He is very interested in sports, particularly football, and plays at school and for the FED Grippers youth team. He also likes swimming. He has been involved in other activities including the InSIGHT Out! Photography Workshop. He is pleasant, helpful, considerate, and friendly with everybody. He takes care of other children, acting like a big brother at the CCCC and at Thai school.



**Yadanar
8 Years old**

Yadanar came to GHRE in early 2007. Her mother works as a housemaid in Bangkok and her father lives in Nepal. Her mother works long hours and is unable to care for Yadanar adequately. She is in touch with her mother by telephone and her mother has been to visit her once. Yadanar is a very loving child who loves to sing and dance to karaoke DVDs but she also sings to herself when she is alone. She is currently attending Thai School in Khuk Khak where she tries hard and has learned to speak Thai very well.

Yadanar has no chronic health problems, but was hospitalized last year after a mosquito bite on her leg became infected. She also has very badly decayed baby teeth.



Youth Outreach



The Youth Outreach Centre, which was opened on October 31st 2008, has 22 teenage students attending.

The students selected for this project all came from Learning Centers set up more than 3 years ago by FED. The students attending Youth Outreach have demonstrated commitment, determination and they express a high aptitude for learning. Despite the many obstacles and problems facing them and their families, these exceptional students have managed to find ways to stay in school. So strong is their desire to learn that some of the students work at night in the rubber plantations to help their families and attend school during the day.



The Youth Outreach course will run for 3 years and will provide an intensive and comprehensive program of study including: Thai; Burmese and English language training; Math; World Civilizations; History; Geography and some special topics taught by teachers, FED senior staff, guest speakers and volunteers.



Many Burmese children do not get the chance to attend school in Thailand due to language barriers, financial problems and discrimination. Those who do find a place to study (such as FED's learning centers) may only study for a few years before they have to leave school to help their families earn money or move away with them to a new worksite location.



"I would like to see our school progress further and would also like more professional Teachers. If I have a chance, I would like to continue to study abroad after I have completed learning here."

Htun Tit Soe
15 Years Old



"I like the school uniform and am also impressed with the higher level curriculum. I am proud to get the opportunity to learn here"

Win Win Maw
16 Years Old



"I am proud of myself for being a student on the Youth Outreach programme. I would also like to thank FED for establishing the Youth Outreach school. I would like to help the children who will come here to learn in the future."

Soe Kyaw Kyaw
13 Years Old



"I would like to see a perfect school with a lab room in the future and also with international recognized standards"

Yin Yin Maw
14 Years Old



Chapter Three

Comprehensive Health Care



Community Health care



Our Community healthcare activities include the 'School Healthcare Programme' and the 'Community Healthcare Programme'. The medical team at FED have a busy activities schedule. Two senior medics have divided their duties and rotation between regular medical checkups at all the learning centres and nurseries. The school health care activities do not only include medical checkups but they also teach students about basic personal health care such as how to prevent infections from malaria, diarrhea, dengue fever and other common maladies. There was also a special reproductive health education session provided for the adolescent students. The teachers and education staff members also learnt about pertinent health issues in their three month workshops held each year.

For our community health care programme, the FED medical team makes regular visits to

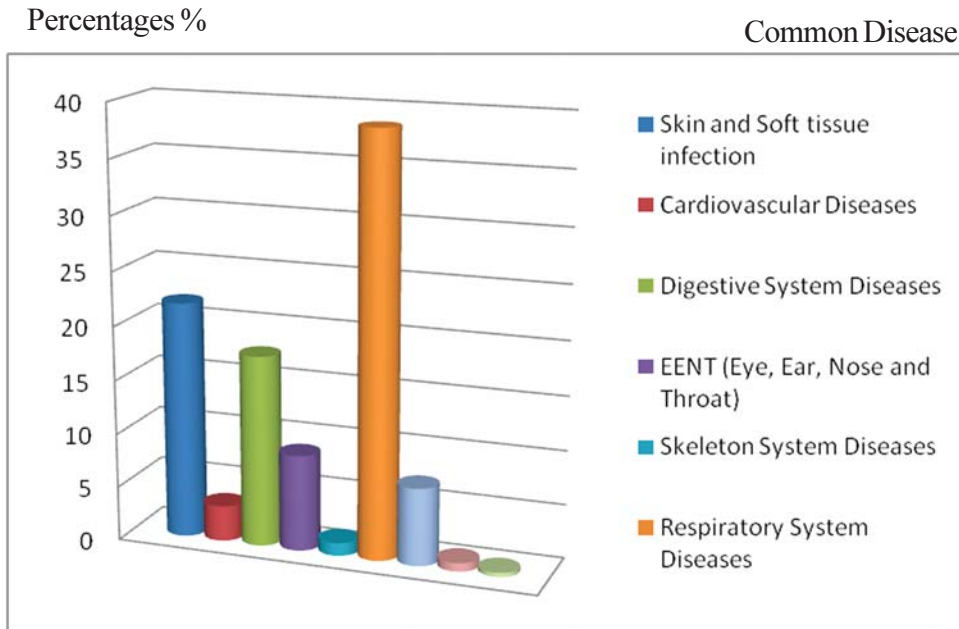
communities to provide medical checkups and sharing basic medical information concerning the prevention of malaria, diarrhea, dengue fever and other common maladies. Other pertinent health issues are also discussed with the communities. As for special health care, the medical team has provided HIV/AIDS information to these migrant communities. In addition, FED set up a health clinic where people in the community are able to access basic medical treatment free of charge.

The health team also gives medical treatment and checkups to those migrants who have temporarily taken shelter at FED's emergency temporary shelter which is designed for those who



are in the most urgent need. This includes migrants with HIV and other severe illnesses, women who have suffered domestic abuse and other migrants who have suffered human rights abuses.

Migrant people's health situation in Southern Thailand



Over the course of a month the health team will visit around 65 Burmese communities living in rubber plantations, construction sites and fishing communities across Phang Nga province. Each community has between 50-150 members. This



means that at least 3000 migrants have direct contact with GHRE staff on a regular monthly basis.

The medical care activities also includes basic medical and health education training for students, teachers and parents. We have over 600 students enrolled in our Learning Centers and two nurseries. The medical care training for parents included topics such as sanitation, family planning, HIV/AIDS and the prevention of serious diseases such as TB and malaria. FED has also provided first aid kits and a range of basic medicines to each Learning Center and nursery as well as emergency medical assistance to the children in the event of an accident or sudden illness. FED has also provided first aid medical kits and regularly needed medicines to migrant worker communities in different areas across Phang Nga. Due to the fact that FED has vehicles for school transportation, FED can also provide emergency transportation to hospital for pregnant women in labour and others who need urgent emergency transportation to hospital.



Chapter Four

Migrant Development



Migrant Capacity Building



As a result of the political nature of Burma, a very underfunded and poor education system has deprived the young people of Burma from reaching their full potential. The young people who came to Thailand from Burma to work as labourers now want the opportunities that they have always been denied. They want to seize the opportunity to learn skills such as computer literacy, Thai and English which would help them to improve their lives in the future.



Legal Aid

Very few Burmese migrants are familiar with Thai law and the majority are unable to access legal assistance of any kind. Often unaware of their rights under the Thai legal system, and with little to no support to maneuver through such a system, migrants have no means to justice if a crime is committed against them or if they are arrested. In some cases, migrant workers have been accused of crimes and incarcerated for up to four months before the case is even investigated.



For this reason, FED has held legal rights and legal aid training sessions in Phang Nga, Phuket and Ranong for different community leaders so that we can train them to better help their immediate communities with any legal aid issues they encounter. Each training session includes a session on sexual harassment. Training sessions were held for three days every two months in small hotels or monasteries. The training sessions included migrants whom outreach workers had identified as natural leaders and organizers. The



training was comprised of around 30 migrant workers from different fishing, construction and plantation worksites. Grassroots HRE staff and 3 Thai human rights lawyers from the Law Society of Thailand conducted the training sessions. Once trained, these community leaders will work to educate their respective communities on their legal rights, identify cases of abuse and be the community liaisons for the legal assistance program.



Temporary Shelter / Emergency Assistance

Emergency Assistance provides assistance to migrants who cannot access Thai services during sickness and unemployment.

In order to safeguard unemployed migrant families, women who have suffered domestic violence and other people who are facing grave difficulties, FED has provided a temporary shelter. This shelter also presents a secure space for those who have no legal documents to remain in Thailand.

Occasionally some migrants, especially women, are persecuted and fall into situations that puts them and their children in danger. This safe house is designed for these victims to stay temporarily in a safe environment.

During 2007 a total of 520 Burmese migrants were arrested and asked if they could take refuge at our temporary shelter. People who are allowed to stay in the temporary shelter are new arrivals from Burma, the unemployed,



severely sick migrants, injured people who are unable to work and victims of human rights violations. Normally the residents are allowed to stay for one week although this can be extended depending on their situation and if we find it necessary for them to stay longer.

In the temporary shelter FED provides clothes, food, some basic kitchen goods and health care for sick people and pregnant women. In some cases employers do not allow injured or sick migrant workers to stay at their construction site, so these migrants ask FED for emergency temporary shelter.

The temporary shelter has 20 rooms. Currently 41 migrants including 21 men, 12 women, 6 boys and 1 girl are taking refuge at the temporary shelter. The occupants also gain the opportunity to have a small piece of land and are provided with seeds for growing vegetables for their daily diet.

MSF also often refers their patients to the FED temporary shelter so that they have a safe place to stay and the support of fellow migrants. Occasionally FED assists MSF in the transportation of their patients to local Thai hospitals.

Currently some NGOs which give medical support, such as MSF and World Vision, are withdrawing their projects from Phang Nga province and are leaving FED to take responsibility for those patients under their regular care. There are 41 patients, 28 of whom are HIV positive patients who need to take ARVs regularly. Most of these patients are unable to work so FED not only provides them with shelter but also their daily food intake.



FED even takes care of funeral arrangement for people who have died at the temporary shelter but have no other relatives to help.



Public Relations

FED's public relations' activities have tried to embrace the traditional celebrations and religious festivals that Burmese migrants would normally carry out in their home country. These activities also have the long term objective of building a better understanding about Burma and Burmese people amongst the Thai community. There is hope that with these efforts the situation for migrants will improve. One of these activities has included collaborating with the local Thai radio station, Kuraburi FM, to broadcast information relating to the Burmese migrant situation in Thailand.

The Public Relations team also created a platform in which Thai and Burmese youngsters were able to meet and build friendships. FED organizes football matches to coincide with celebrated occasions in Thailand, so that Thais and Burmese are able to play together.

The Public Relations team is particularly important in cases where FED needs to negotiate with the local authorities, be it government officers, the education ministry or the local Thai community. For example, when FED is planning to open a new Learning Centre the Public Relations Officer will liaise between the Thai and Burmese communities and authorities to ensure that both sides are happy and their needs are equally respected and understood. Public Relations officers are present and necessary at every stage of the School Integration Project and for many of the migrant development projects, for example to negotiate with prison authorities to allow prison visits; with employers to help find migrants work and to ensure they are treated fairly; and during emergency assistance, to negotiate with hospital staff to reduce the hospital bill for migrant workers with no health insurance card.



Distribution of Journals, Newsletters and Information regarding Migrant Law

FED regularly publishes a bi-monthly journal written in Burmese and has received numerous copies of monthly newsletters and journal publications from other alliance organizations. These publications are distributed to local migrant communities in different areas in order to raise awareness and increase understanding about their own situation. New migrant laws and other relevant information that migrant workers should know are normally included in the FED monthly journal. In some cases when it concerns the urgent matter of new laws, FED translates them from Thai into Burmese and distributes them among migrant communities.

The FED journal is also open to migrant writers who want to send in their poems, articles and novels to the editing board. Those selected are provided with a small honorarium to encourage more writers to submit stories to the journal.

FED also has other forms of media such as a website with articles published regularly about the situation for migrant workers in Thailand. Important laws regarding Burmese migrant worker issues are also uploaded onto the website.

Conducting Religious Buddhist Activities

Most migrant people in the Phang Nga area are Buddhist and most local Thai communities in the area are also Buddhist. Many religious activities follow a localized calendar so special Buddhist religious events take place when local Thai and Burmese migrant communities are able to jointly organize religious ceremonies.



"Even though I don't have a work permit card I feel safe staying in the temporary shelter, but I don't go outside. I have been staying here for a year and a month. I was working at a construction site but I was not paid my wages for regular and overtime work. The rate was 180 baht for regular work per day and 40 baht per hour of overtime work. I worked for two months and twenty days and sixty hours of overtime but I was not paid for any of it. Then I stopped working there as I cannot afford to work for free. I'm okay for food, medicine and accommodation in the temporary shelter. If I had a job I'd earn money and be able to support my children in Burma. The thing I worry about most is the shortage of medicine after MSF's move to another area."

One HIV Patient



"I'm now 55 years old. I have been in Thailand since before the Tsunami. I have been staying in the temporary shelter for a year and two months. Before that I was working in another area. My younger brother is working in Phang Nga. He got shot by the police when they arrested him. I moved to this area when my younger brother was hospitalized. Now he has recovered and is working. I cannot stay with him without working there. I don't have any relatives in the temporary shelter but I'm safe staying here. I sell sticky rice and I earn a small amount of money. I get support from GHRE and I can stay here without worries. I remember my relatives in Burma. I want to go back there but I can never save money for travelling costs as my younger brother is often arrested so I have to pay money to get him out of jail."

Daw Own Tin
Migrant Worker

FED planned seasonal Buddhist ceremonies according to the schedule of the local calendar in order to allow the Burmese community to celebrate alongside the Thai Buddhist community.

FED also arranges for a Burmese monk to visit 2 - 3 times a month for social ceremonies such as marriages and funerals. These visits have included visits to rubber plantation sites, construction sites, shrimp farms and fishing ports in Ranong, Phuket, districts in Phang Nga and Surattani communities.

Special Buddhist events such as Dama Sakkara day, Swan Gyi Laung (Rice offering for Monk), Abidama day, Kathein were held at a Thai monastery by organizing with migrant communities and supporting of local Thai communities.

Every year in April when the Burmese and Thai traditional New Year takes place, both the Buddhist religious migrant worker population and the local Thai population celebrated the new year at the same time.

Other FED Buddhist religious activities include teaching children about basic Buddhism, the mythology of lord Buddha, basic Buddhist perception, the stories of Lord Buddha's life, the misery of greed and anger and the value found in the spirit of contentment.

Chapter Five

Empowering Migrant Women





Women's Empowerment

Within FED, the Women's Education and Development Association (WEDA) programme empowers and encourages capacity building for women of migrant communities. The women's program is comprised of courses on women rights, basic health care, vocational skills development and fundraising for womens programs. The education program shares knowledge with migrant women on women rights and the prevention of domestic violence. The health care program teaches Burmese migrant women about issues such as family planning, HIV/AIDS education and basic health. Vocational skills development activities include training sessions for migrant women looking to increase their income earning capacity for the family. Some of the women's income generation projects include sewing training and mushroom plantation work.

Through the WEDA programme FED has also conducted research on the status of migrant women living in Southern Thailand. The data was collected from surveying 100 women in different locations.

"Women cases"



Rape Case

Date : 21st January 2008.
Name : Moe Moe Ei
Age : 26 years old
Marital Status : Married
Location of incident: : Htokemein, Khuk Khak
Address in Burma: : Myate Town, Taninthayi
Division, Burma.
Arrival Time in Thailand: : June 2007
Reason for coming to Thailand: To find a job to ensure her survival

Case detail

Moe Moe Ei was working in Thailand as a construction worker. She arrived in June 2007. After one month of arriving she married a man who was also a construction worker. In December, when she was four months pregnant, her husband disappeared. She was paid 150 baht per day to work, however, work was unstable and her monthly income was only around 2,000 baht. As time went on, she could no longer continue work at the construction site due to her pregnancy so she would have to work as a domestic worker.

A Burmese man, over 50 years old, told her that he could get her a job at his boss' house. His boss, a Thai woman, gave Moe Moe Ei a job as a domestic worker in her house. After the boss left, the man attacked and raped her twice. She then escaped from the house and tried to contact GHRE to help her.

GHRE took her to the women's center to stay there and sent her to the hospital to check for HIV and other STDs. GHRE continues to care for her and is teaching her English and Thai as well as other skills such as vocational sewing training. She gave birth to her baby on June 4th 2008.

Robbery and Throat Slash Case

Date : 23rd February 2008.

Name : Mi Pu

Age : 15 years old

Marital Status : Single

Location of incident : Pakarang.

Address in Burma : Tawine Town,
Taninthayi Division, Burma.

Arrival Time in Thailand: January, 2008

Reason for coming to Thailand: To find a job to ensure her survival

Case detail

Mi Pu is a 15 year old girl from Tawine Township, Taninthaye Division of Burma and is now a migrant worker in Thailand. Her father died when she was a child and her mother was left with 6 children to care for by herself. Two of Mi Pu's siblings married so they were no longer able to support the



A Case Study

On September 16th 2008 at around midnight, Ma Tin Moe Nwe (25) of Tavoynee, was working with her husband at a rubber plantation when 2 men attempted to rape her.

While she was working the rapists approached her from behind and pulled her down to the ground, covered her mouth with their hands, and tried to rape her. She tried to escape but was struck by the rapist's knife in the head when she started running.

She hit her head and fell to ground so the two rapists, thinking that she was dead, left her laying there. In fact, she pretended to be dead so they would leave her alone. She called her husband after they left and went to hospital. She had major lacerations and needed 23 stitches.

"She has been released from the hospital, but is suffering mentally from the trauma. She is not able to go back to work as she is too afraid to go out. She told me that she feels that there are shadows following her and is worried for her safety."

In many such cases, the victim does not dare to report the incident to police because they are 'illegal' migrants in Thailand. When a migrant worker is faced with violence and it is not reported, no action can be taken against the attacker. Even in cases where it is reported, the punishment recieved by the attackers may not always match the severity of he crime.

family. As a result Mi Pu left for Thailand in January 2008 to support her elderly mother, two brothers and younger sister.

After 9 days working in a noodle shop, Mi Pu had a horrific experience. One night, after the noodle shop had closed, Mi Pu and her employers returned home and saw some strange men in the house. The men attacked Mi Pu and her boss. During a struggle her boss was stabbed with a knife after which both she and her boss were beaten. She requested them to stop and gave them 170,000 Thai baht and 12 grams of gold. Then they took Mi Pu in her boss's car and drove off.

They stopped along the way to drop off one of the robbers with all the money and stolen goods. The other two men then tried to rape her in the car, but she struggled and fought against them. They slashed her throat 3 times with a knife and left her alone in the car. An old man near the rubber plantation found her bleeding on the side of the road.

The old man helped her to get to the hospital. When she awoke in hospital her first worries were about the money that the men had taken from her. She was worried about how she would make the money to send to Burma for her family's survival. She also, as a migrant worker, had no health insurance, so she had no way to pay for her health care at hospital.

She is better now however she cannot work yet because she has to give evidence in court as a witness of the robbery. Now she is living in the police station and her employers taking care of her security. After her situation becomes more stable the GHRE women's program coordinator will arrange counseling for her and help her to find work.



"I felt a shadow behind me"

*Tin Moe Nwe, 25
The victim*

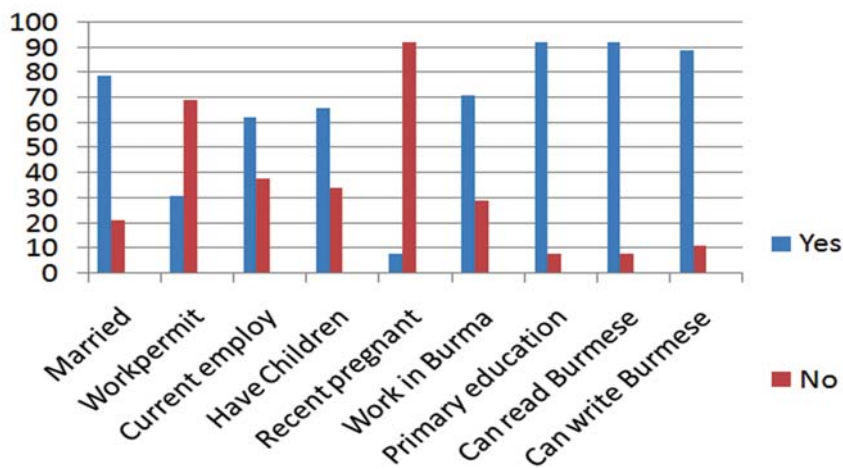
The women's group also carried out a survey to better understand migrant women's situations in Southern Thailand. The women's group selected 100 migrant women in Phang Nga province and collected data related to their situation in Southern Thailand.

The following Charts show some of the findings concerning migrant women in Southern Thailand.

Graph- (1)

Burmese migrant women situation in Southern Thailand

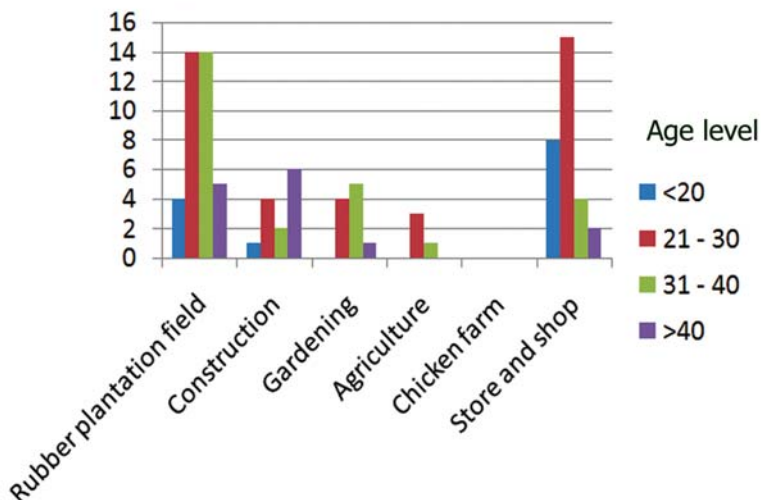
% Percentage



Graph- (2)

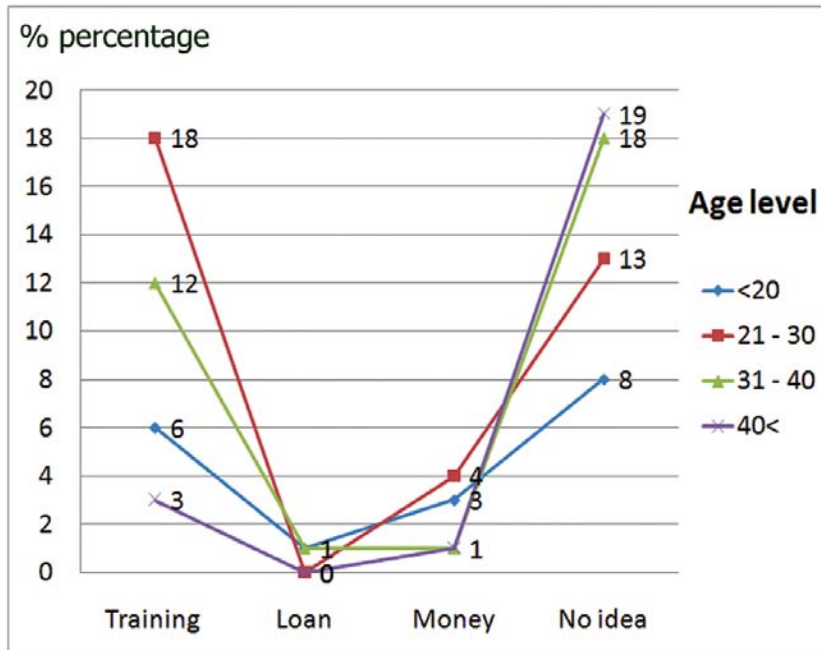
Burmese migrant women chosen work according to their age level

% Percentage



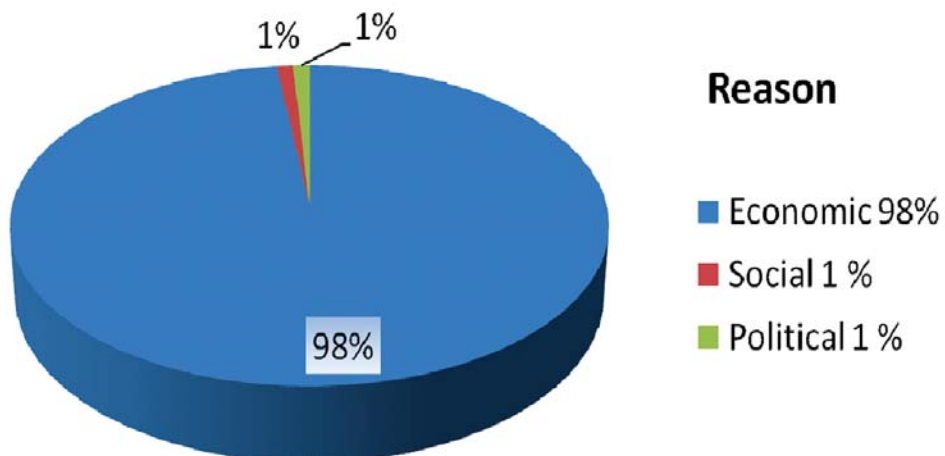
Graph- (3)

Support that Burmese migrant women want
According to their age level



Graph- (4)

Reason that migrant women come to Thailand

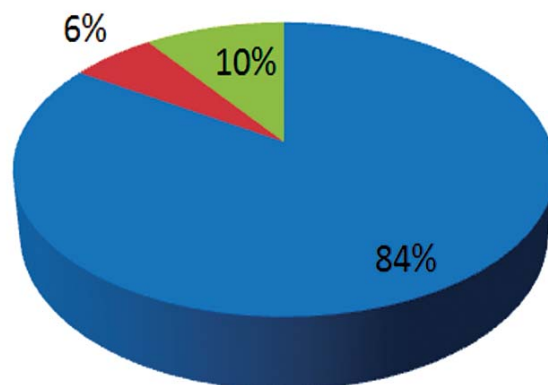


Financial Narrative

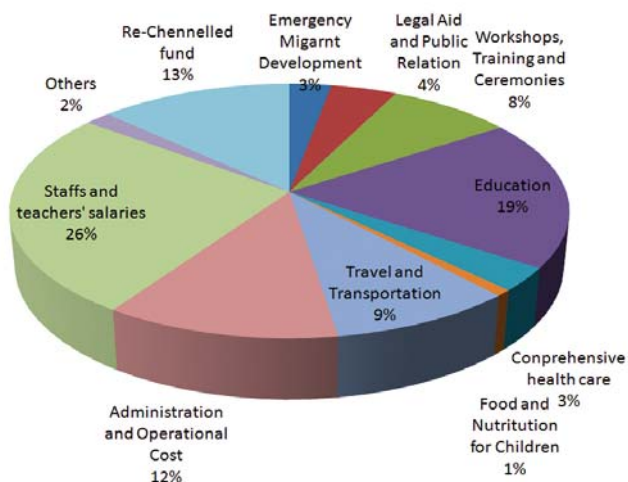
FED's income sources can be divided into 5 main groups which include educational support groups, migrant & community development, comprehensive health care, womens empowerment and Human Rights education which in itself includes child rights, economic, social and cultural rights.

FED's annual income in 2008

- Project grants
- Donation and Fund
- Re-Channelled fund



FED's Annual Expenditure, 2008



FED needs your support

FED is working to provide educational opportunities to Burmese migrant children and will continue to focus on these efforts until all these vulnerable children have been granted sustainable education opportunities. While these children have the inherent right to education it is not always easy to find funding to help realize their rights. FED has collected some contributions from parents, but these amounts are only enough to cover some teachers' salaries, lunch for the children and transportation that was not able to be covered from grant support.

Many NGO's which have been supporting health care in the area since the Tsunami have since withdrawn from the area and left FED to continue caring for patients with special care needs such as patients suffering from HIV and TB.

With your contribution, FED continues to support migrant children's education, comprehensive health care for children and migrant communities, women's empowerment and the promotion of human rights, women's and child rights and economic, social and cultural rights among migrant communities in Thailand.

Ambassador His Excellency Mr. Kyoji Kamachi (Third from right) and Ms. Tamami Kubo (Fourth from right), Coordinator for GGP; Embassy of Japan with FED board director Kraisaak Chunabon (Second right), FED Treasurer Chalida Thajareamsak (Third from left) Join Titit mobile learning center of Khok Kloi, opening ceremony on 16/3/2009.

