



Child's Dream

A charity organization supporting children in need

www.childsdream.org



Our objectives

We aim to prevent child exploitation (child prostitution, child labor, child soldiering and trafficking) and migration through

- improving living & health conditions and education standards;
- raising the awareness of child trafficking among families and communities;
- helping children to take pride in themselves and strengthen their self-esteem;
- cultivating a better attitude towards life and society and
- encouraging the children to love and respect their own customs and culture.

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Newsletter

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We knew it would be just a matter of time until we had to face the inevitable reality: As Child's Dream is growing and more staff is joining us, our family-like atmosphere in the office is being challenged. In an environment where people do not work for money but for reasons of compassion, where co-workers are not just colleagues but friends, atmosphere is vital. However, as long as we strive for the same goals, Child's Dream will offer at least an almost family-like feeling to its staff.

Some of you might question why we would want to continue to expand despite these obvious challenges. Since our ultimate ambition is to help as many children as possible, it would be selfish not to take Child's Dream to the next level. A few months ago a friend gave me the novel 'The Kite Runner' with a dedication on the first page saying: 'If all the children whose life you touched would sing just one song, the music would never stop.' I am sure that this music is heard by all of my team members and will let us dance and laugh together, even under changing circumstances. *By Daniel Siegfried*

Organizational News



Ever since we started with Child's Dream, we are surprised how often lucky coincidences helped us. **Manuela Bianchi** is such a coincidence. We got to know her in Hong Kong when we all were slightly younger. We stayed in touch and after her last visit in June 2006 she asked us outright whether she could support us in Chiang Mai. After six months of undoing her life in Switzerland she joined us for good on January 2007 as a **Director** of Child's Dream.

Manuela's first task was to expand our university scholarship programme. In order to individually coach the many new scholars, we hired Atchara Changwong, nicknamed **Anne** in March 2007. It is

important that this person is proficient in English as our scholars are currently Burmese and do not speak any Thai. Anne's "Au-pair stay" in the US for a year let her gain the necessary English skills for the position as an **Assistant Scholarship Programme and HR Manager**.



After he proved himself during the three months of his mandatory practical training after university, we decided to hire Ayu Chuepa, nicknamed **Lee**. His vast knowledge of hill tribes in the North of Thailand as well as his Akha (one of the most populous hill tribes) language skills made him an ideal candidate as our new **Assistant Project Manager** for Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son area.

The saddest news during the first half of 2007 is undoubtedly **Watt's** decision to leave us. Watt, we wish you all the best!

Four volunteers were, and still are, instrumental to the fast progress Child's Dream made during the first half of 2007. During the last 11 months **Andrea** became an important member of the Child's Dream family. With helping us on various tasks for both the project team as well as the admin team, she played a vital role in the co-ordination between the two units. Also **Tina** who, besides developing a teaching module on Burma, assisted us in a range of tasks, was crucial for our organization. We wish both of them all the best in their new (ad)ventures.

Both equipped with valuable IT knowledge, **Ueli** and **Raphael** have been upgrading our IT systems, databases and websites over the last few months. Thanks a lot for your valuable help!



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FSP and SEP

At the time when we received funding requests for the two high schools FSP (Further Study Programme) and SEP (Special English Programme), we had no other options than to turn them down. Neither did we have the financial means nor the required human resources. Fortunately, this situation changed in the first quarter of 2007 as we were asked by a philanthropic consultant about education for refugees. We quickly checked whether the two schools were still looking for funding. In fact, their financial condition had worsened in the meantime as their main donor cut the support



FSP's main school building

by 50%. We were just in time to prevent a significant downsizing or even closure of the schools. It would have been a tragedy for the Burmese refugee community to lose this vital stepping stone to bring graduates from grade 10 to become community leaders.



Accounting training at SEP

Both schools FSP and SEP are quite similar, however, they are located in two different refugee camps. The 3-year curriculum is well balanced between Social Studies, English, Science and Mathematics.

The schools have a proven track record of preparing the students for higher-level studies. Students and wider society substantially benefit from the schools' graduates, who work in their communities and with many of them pursuing well-respected higher-level study programmes.

In Mae La Camp FSP and its 13 teachers are offering a credible post-10 education to 130 students, whereas in Umpium Mai Camp SEP and its 14 teachers care for 135 students. Supporting two additional high-schools besides LMTC, will allow us to leverage the resources of these three schools.

Laos Expansion

The hardest part about our work in Laos is to prioritize our help we provide for schools. Whenever we go there, the same devastating scene is awaiting us; school buildings just held together by a few

termite-infested wooden beams and so close to collapsing that we are even reluctant to go inside. Ironically we often do not have to enter the school to have a look at the classrooms since normally there are no walls! The picture inside is equally gloomy; sunrays pierce through the countless holes in the roof illuminating muddy dirt floors, on which a few rotten benches, desks and a blackboard littered with cracks stand.

Since most of the schools we started to erect last year are completed by now, we decided to look for additional schools that needed to be repaired or replaced. Again, it is not difficult to find them but to decide which ones are in the worst condition and should be helped first. We identified the following five schools in Champasak province:

Bung Kaew School, located in the Sukuma district, is the biggest of the five schools and offers nursery, primary and secondary education to about 700 students from eight



villages. We decided to build a new nursery with three rooms, a new primary school with 12 rooms, a new secondary school building with three rooms as well as two toilet buildings with six toilets each. The total estimated budget is THB 3.2 mio. or approx. USD 95,000.



Kud Ta Boon School, located in the Sukuma district, was destroyed in 2005 by a devastating storm. Ever since, the 200 students were studying at the nearby temple. We decided to build a

new primary school with five classrooms. The total estimated budget is THB 734,000 or approx. USD 21,600.

Dong Lan Kham School, in the Sanasomboon district, is located not even a hundred meters from the main road connecting Southern Laos with Vientiane, but remained unnoticed. Even though this school





Child's Dream

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was built using mostly cement, it poses a very high threat to the security of its 70 students. We agreed to replace the existing 3-room building with a new primary school with 5 classrooms. The total estimated budget is THB 978,000 or approx. USD 29,000.

Khan Yang School, located in the Champasak district, lies beautifully on the bank of the Mekong next to Khon Kaen village, where we just completed a primary school. The school's central location is ideal to allow 130 students from four villages to obtain secondary education. We decided to build a new secondary school building with 5 classrooms. The total estimated budget is THB 1.2 mio or approx. USD 35,000.



Baan Kok School, located on an island in the Mekong in the Sukuma district, has been a construction site for about seven years already and poses a security risk to the 180 primary and nursery students. Whenever the villagers could collect some money, they would buy some material to continue with the construction. Unfortunately, they were not able to complete the building. We agreed to complete the unfinished school with seven classrooms. The total estimated budget is THB 550,000 or approx. USD 16,000.

KAKO (Khmer Akphiwat Khmer Organization)

With the help of KAKO we built our first school in Cambodia last year, not too far away from Siem Reap. We were impressed not only by their down-to-earth approach while working with the community but also by their diligent administration. Since KAKO faced financial problems, it was forced to downsize several times until only the couple who was running KAKO was left. Given our good impression of their work, KAKO's financial challenges, and our strategic objective to continue to grow in Cambodia, we decided to fully support KAKO and the following three of their programmes:

- ✓ Scholarship programme with 59 beneficiaries who otherwise would not be able to study
- ✓ Operating 13 village libraries to reduce illiteracy
- ✓ Offering literacy classes to illiterate children and young adults in 6 villages

We also plan to build more schools in the coming months and further intensify our relationship. We hope to re-build KAKO's capacity and to make its operation sustainable. A full integration into Child's Dream might be a viable option for the future.

Support to Thai hill tribe schools

Approximately 550,000 people from different hill tribes are living in Thailand. Most of them migrated to Thailand from Tibet, China, Burma or Laos in the 19th and 20th centuries and live in the mountainous areas in the north and west. The government recognizes nine ethnic minorities under its umbrella term "hill tribe". Although the majority of these people were born in Thailand, many of them do not have birth certificates, which means they have no citizenship, no identification cards, and thus no legal identity and are, therefore, considered illegal aliens in their own country. Access to basic entitlements like education, health care and land ownership are restricted. Being marginalized, these families, and especially the children, are very vulnerable.

Therefore, we continue to expand our support to these marginalized children. We agreed to implement the following two projects:

Mae Nam Khun School

is located in the scenic mountains of Chiang Rai and offers nursery, primary and secondary education to approx. 1,000 students from various ethnicities. Besides building a new boarding house for about 30 students from



Renovation work at a classroom

very remote villages, we also agreed to replace eleven one-classroom buildings, which were constructed on a slope next to the school ground in order to accommodate more students. The total estimated budget is THB 1 mio. or approx. USD 30,000.



Using the DIY-bridge

Lum Nam Wittaya School

is located in a picturesque valley in Mae Hong Son province. During the rainy season the school cannot be reached by car since the temporary DIY-bridge, which is re-erected every year by the villagers, is washed away by the river.

Therefore, the material will be brought to the river by truck and then hand-carried through the river to the other side, where it will be collected by pick-up trucks from the village. Despite these



Child's Dream

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challenges we agreed to build three boarding houses including furniture, to renovate three classrooms as well as to construct a school kitchen. The total estimated budget is THB 700,000 or approx. USD 21,500.

Baan Gua Fan

Due to severe problems and misunderstandings with the management of the ChildsArt project in Mae Sai, we had to intervene.

Although we repeatedly visited the project to discuss these problems with all staff members, we finally had no other option than to close the project and to look for an alternative solution for the affected teenagers.

With the well-being of the youngsters in our minds, we had to act swiftly as many of them were too scared to stay on at ChildsArt. We invited all of them to join us in Chiang Mai, where we established a safe house called Baan Gua Fan (Dream Home) under great time pressure and under the supervision of our newly hired manager, Pi Rung.

In a supportive, family-like environment, the youngsters have the opportunity to develop their academic and vocational skills, and consequently, increase their employability and chances in life. After just a few months, all of them have remarkably grown in confidence. They are highly motivated, their academic performance is continually improving, and the house is filled with happiness and laughter.



The teenagers are doing their homework

Project Round-up

LMTC – After building a new library, a new girls' dormitory and a new school building with two classrooms, LMTC was ready to welcome a new batch of students.

Hsa Thoo Lei School – During the summer holidays we renovated the school building and asked the students to decorate it with their artistic paintings.

Khon Kaen – In April we officially opened the primary school in Khon Kaen in southern Laos.

How you can help us

Despite our expansion in the first half of 2007, we were able to keep our administration costs ratio below 10% of the donated funds. As it is our ultimate goal to effectively and efficiently provide direct help to the children in the Mekong Sub-Region, we utilize our vast network as much as possible to achieve this goal. Therefore, should you, your company or your employer, be able to assist us in some ways, please get in touch with us. We are constantly looking for airline miles, hotel points, second-hand laptops and mobile phones, transportation solutions, etc. Unfortunately, donating used clothes, toys and books by mail not only is uneconomical, but also triggers a lot of bureaucracy with the customs department. However, should you be able to bring your donations into Thailand during your business trip or your vacation, we are happy to receive them or pick them up at your hotel in Chiang Mai or Bangkok. Thank you!

Unconventional ways of supporting us

Shifting gears for a good cause - As a charity with the mission of helping as many children as possible while maintaining a lean cost structure, we rely heavily on word of mouth as our main marketing effort.

However, we are always keen to explore other cost-effective ways to address new audiences we could not otherwise reach, and share with them our passion.

In Adrian Fu, we have found someone who shares our commitment to helping children in need. Adrian is also the principal of a racing team competing in the prestigious "Porsche Carrera Cup Asia". For the remaining races of this season, Adrian and his team will be "Racing for Charity", with a car liveried in the Child's Dream's logo and colours.



During a recent trip to Mae Sot, we spotted this slogan on a whiteboard in a Muslim migrant school.

'If you cannot be the sun, you can be a star. If you cannot be a gardener, you can be a flower Always be your best, whatever you are.'

Your Child's Dream Team