



Christmas Newsletter 2021



Urgent Funding Needs

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FROM THE FOUNDERS

By Daniel Siegfried

Managing Director Programmes-
Co-Founder

Determination and Solidarity Carried Us Through 2021

Last New Year I thought that 2021 can only turn out better than 2020. How wrong I was! The year started promising with the rollout of the vaccination plans and it looked like that Covid-19 could be soon a thing of the past. But then the delta variant spread in Asia before the vaccines were ready and bodies started to pill up in front of crematories. At the same time the Myanmar military unlawfully tried to take over the control of the country, but the people unitedly opposed the coup. Tens of thousands joined the civil disobedience movement preventing the

military to govern the country. However, the military soon deployed its old tactics of spreading fear and terror by indiscriminately arresting, torturing and attacking civilians. The result is that we are now in a civil war in Myanmar and already almost 250,000 people had to flee to seek shelter and became internally displaced persons (IDPs).

Although Child's Dream focuses on improving health and education for long-term and sustainable development, our mandate also allows us to provide emergency relief if needed. And the need is enormous and still growing! Because we are able to reach half of these vulnerable internal refugees through our local network of community-based partners, Child's Dream committed USD 1.5 million from its reserves for food, shelter, medicine, warm clothes and blankets. Luckily thanks to the solidarity of our donors, we could recuperate about USD 1 million and hope to raise the remaining amount by the end of this year.

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Without a doubt the last 8 months have by far been the most challenging and demanding period since the inception of Child's Dream in

2003. And despite all the sleepless nights caused by Covid-19 and the coup (internally known as CC), I am once again optimistic for next year. I believe that the will of the people will prevail against the Myanmar generals as long as they stay united and have solidarity. In the long run it is simply not possible to take a country and its population hostage against its will.

For me, there are two other reasons to be optimistic. First the inspiring engagement of our partner organisations as well as the camaraderie among our Child's Dream colleagues. The challenges truly bonded us together even more and the team supported each other across countries. Secondly, the steadfast support and commitment of our donors despite all the uncertainties. For this I am eternally grateful! Thank you very much!

We all now wish you a magnificent festive season with lots of wonderful moments with your loved ones also if the circumstances might still be difficult. Let's be optimistic and hope for 2022 to be the 'good and more normal year' we all crave for.



THAILAND

By Shane Rabideau

Youth Connect Foundation – Picturebook Guesthouse

In the border-town of Mae Sot, Thailand, local youth have the possibility to gain professional hands-on experience in innovative ways. What started as a youth employment research project in 2007 turned into the Youth Connect Foundation (YCF): a non-profit aimed at providing Thai and Myanmar youth in Mae Sot with vocational training.

The research project results were multi-layered: Businesses in Mae Sot voiced a need for more reliable and trained employees, while youth entering the job market needed more opportunities for quality employment, but lacked the skills or qualifications for such positions. The gap between youth and employers was identified and a bridge began to take shape in the form of the YCF.

In 2008, the YCF initiated two programmes to bridge the gap: Transitions and Picturebook Guesthouse. Transitions is composed of in-school training at migrant high schools, a 12-week intensive training tailored to a chosen field, a three-month apprenticeship at a local business and a career centre to assist with permanent job placement and career advice. Students now have the opportunity to gain vocational

training with over 70 local business partners and organisations.

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With the support of Child's Dream, YCF opened the doors of the Picturebook Guesthouse: a hospitality training centre for apprentices. Students are involved in every aspect of running a guesthouse, from hospitality to business operations, while offering a comfortable stay for guests whose bottom dollar goes right back into the foundation.

Guests have been overwhelmingly moved by the intentional social development goals of Picturebook Guesthouse. Ever since it opened its doors, Picturebook Guesthouse has been receiving heartwarming reviews while ranking number 1 continually on TripAdvisor.

YCF will continue to bridge the gap between youth and employers in Mae Sot by helping students to gain hands-on experience enabling them to land quality employment with local businesses.



MYANMAR

By Meghan Jones

Community Partners International COVID-19 SOS Project in Myanmar

Following the military coup earlier this year, the people of Myanmar have experienced a near collapse of the economy and public health system. Many public hospitals have shut down throughout the county and the number of COVID-19 cases have skyrocketed, leaving the people of Myanmar in desperate need of support. The hospitals that remain open, as well as the COVID care centres, are overrun with patients and regularly need to turn patients away. There are reports of oxygen shortages at care facilities and drastic increases in the price of oxygen, making it nearly impossible for Myanmar's poor to have access to this basic and lifesaving resource.

In response to this devastating situation, Child's Dream has partnered with Community Partners International (CPI) to support four local organisations in border areas of Myanmar offering immediate relief and desperately needed services to help vulnerable communities coping with the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Utilising a multi-phase initiative, the COVID-19 SOS project aims to alleviate the impact of COVID-19 through life-saving support and intervention, and strengthen community health facilities and

health workers to respond to the COVID-19 emergency.

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We are currently in the third phase of the COVID-19 SOS project, which involves risk communication, infection prevention and control in communities and facilities, providing oxygen support, and setting up COVID-19 Care Centres for comprehensive clinical care. In addition, partner organisations are receiving support to procure and provide medicines, equipment and supplies, including oxygen cylinders and concentrators, enabling them to provide centre-based care for patients who require clinical treatment. Nutritional support is also being provided, optimising recuperation for beneficiaries.



CAMBODIA

By Aidan McAuliffe

Healthy School = Healthy Community (School Health Programme Cambodia)

In spite of lengthy school closures in Cambodia throughout 2021, our bespoke school health programme in the country still strives to instil healthier habits and a greener outlook for Cambodian children, while simultaneously fostering a stronger sense of community in villages around the country.

The School Health Programme Cambodia (SHPC) aims to improve fundamental health practices for primary school children, such as hand-washing and basic dental hygiene. A second element of the programme focuses on improving schools' grounds and surroundings by nurturing environments that are clean, green, and safe – features that are conducive to high attendance and participation rates.

The programme stems from Cambodia's consistent low ranking on the Human Development Index, which takes health, education, and income into account. In the most recent rankings, Cambodia occupied 144th place on the table out of a total of 189 countries. Rankings like these compelled us to initiate a pilot programme in 2013 during which 1,291 children benefitted

from basic health activities. The success of the programme, and the persisting need for it, means that we currently have almost 6,000 children from 27 schools enrolled in the programme.

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Our SHPC Programme Manager, Sophean Un, believes that the success of the programme reaches beyond the classroom; the community plays an integral role in its sustainability. Mr. Un says that by involving locals in regular meetings and activities, such as planting flowers and improving waste disposal facilities, they can see the benefit of adopting healthier and more environmentally friendly practices not only for the children, but also for the entire community. He says they will be encouraged to continue taking steps towards a clean, green, and healthy Cambodia under the mantra, "Healthy school equals healthy community".



LAO PDR

By Shane Rabideau

Village Focus International – Home of Dreams

As one of Child’s Dream’s higher education partners, Village Focus International (VFI) has been empowering vulnerable girls, young women and communities in Lao PDR since 2000. Their strong determination and focus has led to the success of their programmes and their recognition as the leader in Lao PDR in the fight against human trafficking.

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In 2008, VFI established the Home of Dreams, a residential vocational training and education centre aiming to improve the quality of life of human trafficking victims in southern Lao PDR. The shelter offers a safe, healing environment with quality health services, vocational training, education and societal reintegration assistance. To date, VFI operates two out the only three trafficking shelters in Lao PDR.

Child’s Dream has been partners with VFI since 2019 by

supporting the training activities and services offered at the Home of Dreams. Residents are introduced to a non-formal education programme with language and math classes. Vocational training is available, based on interest and community needs, while nutrition, sex education and human rights are also an essential part of the programme. Business training is available for learning how to manage the finances of a small business and a grant is even offered upon graduation for those with the volition of creating a business to help better their own community. Formal counselling services ensure psychological and social support while safe accommodation with food and basic provisions offer the comfort and security needed to encourage a healthy, sustainable recovery.

The success of the Home of Dreams is due to the strong determination and leadership of VFI and from the strategic partnerships they have built and fostered along the way. Sharing similar core values and a common mission, Child’s Dream and the Home of Dreams continue making significant impact together in empowering vulnerable communities in Lao PDR.



STORIES FROM OUR TEAM

By Khanittha Trakarn (U)

My Journey to Social Work

I have been working with Child's Dream since 2006, when Child's Dream had only six or seven staff. My memories are of the variety of work, together with the variety of stakeholders, which gave me new challenges every day as an accountant, and also all the administration tasks including HR and legal foundation. Marc let me to work quite independently, facing the challenges, taking the risks, problem solving and it helped me to improve my management knowledge and skills in many ways that, I'm sure, I couldn't get from the other organisations. These are high value knowledge, skills and experiences that I have gained from being on the administration team at Child's Dream for many years.

However, my dream to be a social worker was still there. In 2016, I had a first trip to Mae Sot, Tak Province, with Thomas (Head of Higher Education Focus Group)

with the purpose of checking the financials for the CD programmes at Mae Sot. That's how my new stage in life started. I shared with Thomas about my dream of wanting to be a social worker and he helped to make my dream come true by welcoming me as his team member together with a big "Sustainable Development Source Book", give me the time for read the book and data of all the programmes that HE have in Myanmar, Cambodia, Laos, and Thailand. After then he took me full working in fields with him to have meeting with the partners' organization, give close coaches and monitor. Additional with let me take the challenges, do the mistake, working independent and do problem solving. To me this seems to be the way of capacity building for me to be a programme manager and...and that was so meaningful to me.

After that, I tried hard to do my social work without the exact educational background and experience. Currently, I work hard as a Programme Manager for our Thailand and Lao PDR programmes. My main responsibilities include, collaborating with partner organizations, designing and developing the programme,

and following up to make sure they are on track and ensure programme success.

I learned a lot from Thomas, but was still able to be independent and take the challenges and risks to learn and improve my own capabilities. Managing a programme involves a lot of collaboration and travelling. As a single parent like me, I always have to strike a balance between family and work. And that, together with traveling

and opportunities to meet other social workers, grew my social work knowledge and experience. Child's Dream made my dream come true!

I would like to say thank you very much to Child's Dream. Thanks, also, to all the colleagues, who stood beside me and gave me the necessary support. My passion today is to continue to support others and that will never change.

FROM THE OFFICE

Our New Partners for Tax-Exempt Giving



For U.S. donors

Aside from Give2Asia U.S., you can also donate through [Omprakash](#), our new tax-exempt partner in the U.S.. You can donate by credit card, check, BitPay, wire transfer, stock and other securities, or via PayPal.

For donors in Australia

If you would like to donate to Child's Dream, not exceeding 10,000 AUD, you can give through Give2Asia Australia, our tax-exempt partner in Australia. You can donate by [credit card](#), [wire transfer](#), [cheque](#), or [money order](#).

For donors giving more than 10,000 AUD, check our [website](#) for details or [contact us](#) and we are more than happy to assist you and guide you through the process.

Awesome News!

Child's Dream was one of the first organisations to be named a 2021 Top-Rated Nonprofit by GreatNonprofits We are very grateful for your continued support!

COVID-19 Emergency Relief



COVID-19 emergency relief distribution in Chiang Mai. Thank you, DKSH Thailand, for your generous donation and your continued support and to our volunteers, local partner organisations, and to all involved for making the relief distribution possible. We're bursting with gratitude!

