CHILDREN’S MEDICAL FUND

REDUCE CHILDHOOD MORTALITY AND LONG-TERM DISABILITY IN CHILDREN FROM MYANMAR AND LAO PDR
Established in 2006, Children’s Medical Fund (CMF) provides life-saving operations and medical interventions for infants and children living in remote regions of Myanmar and Lao PDR.

At least 5 out of 100 children in these regions are dying before their fifth birthday (UNICEF, 2019). Many of these deaths are attributed to congenital diseases which go untreated simply due to a lack in resources.

CMF’s core focus is to tackle the limited access to health care and personnel among the disadvantaged communities of rural Myanmar and Lao PDR. Treatment of congenital disorder are prioritized as it’s one of the leading causes of child mortality in these countries.

Without access and financial support to quality healthcare, many of these children either die prematurely or are crippled by disability and unable to attend school, perpetuating the cycle of poverty.
HOW IT WORKS

REFERRAL

- Patients are qualified and selected through an established referral system with community health organisations and hospitals along the Thai-Myanmar border and Lao PDR.

TRAVEL & BOARDING

- Patients and guardians receive transportation to our Safe House in Chiang Mai, Thailand where they are provided with boarding and basic nursing during the treatment and recovery periods.

- While Myanmar and Lao PDR struggle in the healthcare sector, Thailand, which is their immediate neighbor, is a world’s best for medical tourism providing international standard treatments with cutting-edge technology that are cost-efficient and responsive.
ADMITTANCE & TREATMENT

• CMF admin, finance and medically trained teams ensures smooth patient admittance and treatment at expert hospitals for each medical case. Within our northern zone of Thailand, our partner hospitals are in Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai and Lampang.

• CMF’s medically trained team supports communications between Thai medical workers and the guardian(s) about the condition of their child including detailed post-op regimen instructions. Our team is multilingual and speaks Burmese and some ethnic languages.

RECOVERY (2 WEEKS – 1 MONTH)

• Patients, on-average, remain at the hospital for 2 weeks after surgery followed by further wound care at the Safe House until the final follow-up at the hospital.

• Educational health trainings are conducted raising awareness and offering guidance around potential side effects and complications from the procedure.

• Health and nutritional education is provided to encourage healthy, long-term sustainable practices as both patient and guardian transition back into life routines.
OBJECTIVES

• To organise treatment and surgery for Burmese migrant and refugee infants and children from Myanmar and Lao PDR with medical needs

• To provide financial support for infants and children who urgently need life saving medical treatment

• To tackle the limited access to healthcare and personnel among the disadvantaged communities of rural Myanmar and Laos PDR

• To reduce childhood mortality, long-term disability and allow children to participate in education

BENEFICIARIES

Burmese migrant and refugee infants and children aged 0 - 12 from Myanmar and Lao PDR who were born with congenital disorders and diagnosed with cardiac disorder, anorectal malformations, and neural tube defects.
ACCOMPLISHMENTS (as of April 2022)

2,137 TOTAL PATIENTS HAVE BEEN ADMITTED FOR DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT
1,447 PATIENTS HAVE BEEN TREATED SUCCESSFULLY
1,207 CHILDRENS LIVES HAVE BEEN SAVED
240 PATIENT LIVES HAVE BEEN IMPROVED
1,207
LIVES SAVED SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT

83% OF SUCCESSFUL TREATMENTS WERE LIFE-SAVING AND 17% WERE LIFE-IMPROVING

Depending on the severity of the condition treated, CMF either saves or improves lives. The majority of our cases are life-threatening, as cardiac disorder and other congenital malformations. Such disorders if left untreated are typically fatal.
STORIES FROM THE ROAD

Guitar was born in April 2020 in Bangkok, to Malatip, a Laotian migrant worker. Soon after he was born, his father, a local Thai, abandoned him and Guitar lost the benefits of being recognized as a Thai citizen, such as affordable health care.

At three months, Guitar was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and community-acquired pneumonia, requiring urgent surgery and immediate inpatient care. While he was hospitalised for more than a month, the mother sought different opinions from three hospitals in Bangkok. After receiving confirmation that the surgery would cost 1.2 million baht (almost $40,000), she was ready to go back to Laos and seek traditional treatment from local healers, as the charge was just unaffordable and out of reach. Returning to Laos would have been a death sentence for Guitar.

Luckily, with COVID-19, all borders were closed leaving her with little choice but staying in Thailand. To receive free medical care, a hospital doctor informed Malatip about our Children’s Medical Fund. In July 2020, Guitar was accepted into the programme and they moved to Chiang Mai and started treatment. After receiving complex heart surgery, Guitar is finally on his way to full recovery.
MONITORING AND REPORTING

Patients’ information and medical records are stored in a database designed for keeping track of health treatments.

For monitoring and evaluation purposes, information is cross-checked against medical reports every six months.

Programme statistics are regularly produced to understand the output and outcome of the programme.

We report to donors twice a year.

Donor visits can be arranged very easily since this programme is based in Chiang Mai city centre.
Depending on the medical condition, the treatment costs vary from patient to patient. We have set aside a yearly budget of approx. USD 750,000, enabling an average of 150 children to receive treatment by the programme every year. Below a cost breakdown by spending category.
CONCLUSION

Burmese migrant and refugee infants and children from Myanmar and Lao PDR come to our Children’s Medical Fund in dire need of urgent medical treatment and life-saving surgery. Not only do most children receive the immediate care they need for survival, but a majority continue to thrive and live a healthy life.

Over the past 16 years, our CMF has supported over 2,000 patients with over 1,000 lives saved. Thanks to our generous donors, the CMF continues to achieve its goals of reducing childhood mortality and allowing children to participate in education.

Urgent funds are needed to support our CMF and the continual cycle of infants and children from remote areas of the Mekong Sub-Region needing life-saving medical treatment.

Please support us today. Thank you !!!