



Marist Asia Foundation

Narrative Report July - Dec 2020

Lenity Australia (Sydney, Australia)
Marist Mission Centre (Sydney, Australia)
Kindermissionswerk
Larsen Trust
Singapore Friends
Misean Cara
Australian Catholic University
Society of Mary - Marist



Home visits to support Burmese Migrant students learning at home from May - June were part of our response to COVID to continue education for our 180 Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme Students.

Growing Hope for Burmese Migrants

Thank You

Misean Cara, Caritas Verona, Kindermissionswerk, Lenity, Singapore Friends, Larsen Trust, Australian Catholic University, Marist Mission Centre Australia, Society of Mary, and many Friends and Supporters for your support of Burmese Migrant children and families in Ranong.

Your funding is supporting

- Burmese Migrant Preschool Programme
- Burmese Migrant Secondary Education Programme
- Online University Diploma Programme
- HIV Health Programme
- Migrant Outreach Programme
- Administration support for Marist Asia Foundation Programmes.

Burmese Migrant Secondary Education Programme

Update on Objectives and Outcomes

Misean Cara, Marist Mission Centre, Lenity, NZ Friends and Supporters, Kindermissionswerk,

Larsen Trust, support this programme

*Names of school students and patients have been changed in this report to protect their identity



Marist Asia Foundation responded to over 2,000 Out of School Migrant Children in Ranong in 2020 by welcoming over 90 new students. Pictured above, new students have their first experience in a school with a library and an opportunity to learn and read books in Myanmar, Thai and English Languages.

*Names of migrant students and patients have been changed in this report to protect their identity

Students Numbers.

- **Numbers:** We have 171 students aged 12-17 who are in the 2020 Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme (BMSP).
- 60 new students started in January. 34 new students started in July.
- 4 students have left BMSP this year and 5 students remain stuck in Myanmar (after the school holidays) due to Covid-19 border closures.
- We have 148 students (Year 1, 2, 3 and 4) enrolled into the Non Formal Thai Ko So No Education Pathway which will help students complete a Thai Primary – Secondary Education qualification
- 36 students sat the Ko So No N-Net exam and passed the Primary Education level.
- All Year 3-4 Senior Students registered to begin the Lower Secondary Level (2 years) starting in November 2020.
- 10 Ko So No Students received special certificates in an award ceremony as they achieved 100% scores in various subjects.

- **Attendance Rates:** remain very high: Year 1A 96%, Year 1B 93%, Year 2, 97% Year 3, 95%, Year 4, 94%). This is a sign of student enjoyment, desire for education and good parent-teacher support.
- **Family Support:** In 2020 around 40% of families required financial support for monthly tuition and transport donations. We communicate with and visit families who are struggling to pay, and encourage parents to continue sending their children even if they cannot pay the monthly school tuition or transport fees.
- **Parent Meetings:** Four Parent Meetings have been well attended. Two 'New Parent' meetings had nearly 100% attendance. A meeting for all parents in November was attended by 87 parents (51%). A meeting for parents of Year 3/4 children was attended by 39 parents (71%). 100% of parents of Year 3 and 4 students agreed to the Marist Education Pathway extending into Year 5 to complete the Lower Secondary Qualification.
- **Retention Rate:** We continue to have a retention rate above 95% which is very high in comparison with other Migrant Learning Centres. We are achieving the goal of an *Education Block* (students complete) rather than an *Education Triangle* (students leave).

UPDATE

- **Myanmar Language:** We have been reviewing our Myanmar language curriculum so that students can be confident when 'walking in the Burmese world' either here in Thailand or back in Myanmar. We are using the new curriculum textbooks and teacher books from Myanmar which include up to date information and teaching techniques.
- **Teacher Training:** In 2020, Two Myanmar Language Teachers are completing the ACU Certificate of Teaching and Learning which will directly impact the quality of teaching in the classroom. 4 Teachers are completing Online Learning for Teaching English Second Language (TESOL) to support English Language teacher competency.
- **Vocational skills:** Such as buying, cooking and selling food in a school 'market' is part of our Ko So No (Non Formal Education) Programme. Language learning is the most significant skill for employment in Ranong. Translation skills are not directly taught at the moment however students are learning three languages throughout and are becoming more confident switching between these languages as they go from class to class. This is an area for us to develop in the future, so as students will now stay for 'Year 5' (two days per week in 2021) in order to complete Lower Secondary Ko So No.
- **Community Engagement:** Our Parent Council Committee met three times to discuss how to start fundraising from the local Migrant community. Fundraising was started by the Parent Council Committee. They shared with parents and encouraged parents to support school fundraising which is important for supporting the school needs of renovation and maintenance of classrooms.
- **Home Visits:** Over the year we have made many home visits to support our parents and students. These meetings involve listening to problems and giving encouragement. Some families have also needed help with food during the fishing 'off-season'. We were able to help with food, health clinic visits, and uniform purchases for our poorer families.
- **Community Education:** During our Migrant Parent meetings we have found the most effective way to inspire and encourage parents to support their children is to place in front of them graduates of our Secondary and University Programmes. Their confidence in three languages as translators, the sharing of their personal stories, their goals for the future has been inspirational. This positive role-modelling may partly explain the 100%

of senior Year 3 and 4 parents and students willing to continue and commit to the Year 5 Lower Secondary Education Pathway.

- **Migrant Learning Centre Closures:** On 24th August 2019, 32 teachers at the largest Migrant Learning Centre (MLC) (Ranongthani) were arrested and deported back to Myanmar for not having correct documentation to work as teachers in Thailand. During 2020, Burmese community members with support from Thai locals have been attempting to reopen two of the closed Migrant Learning Centres. One of these is now supported by BEAM Foundation (based in Chiang Mai) and will draw students from several of the previous small MLCs. They will also run Ko So No Thai Programme as this has become the only way to gain any official recognition in Ranong.

The other Migrant Learning Centre (Ranong Thani), is also attempting to reopen but has struggled with having no established Thai Foundation to support them. Many high-level meetings with the Thai Education Department continue to try to find a permanent resolution to the problem. Even after the proposed re-opening of Ranongthani, there are still an estimated 2,000 Burmese children still remain without education this year 2020.

Marist Asia Foundation continues to be able to run our education programmes in partnership with the Ko So No Thai Education Department. We will be looking closely at what happens in 2021 with the reopening of the two MLCs to see how we can best support education opportunities (especially secondary education) for young Burmese migrants in Ranong.

- **Covid-19:** The reopening of our school in May 2020 for the new school year was delayed by two months due to Covid-19 restrictions imposed nationally in Thailand. Because of this we launched a 'Home Learning' Programme beginning in mid-May. Each week our teachers prepared worksheets for each subject which were compiled into Year Level Workbooks for each student. On Mondays the teachers would go by car, motorbike, foot and sometimes even by boat to deliver these books to all our students. The previous week's books were collected and marked so that teachers could monitor the student's learning and give feedback. It was wonderful to see the student's faces light up when their teachers arrived with the books. Our students were hungry to continue their learning during this difficult time. Finally, we were able to re-open the school on the 1st July in line with Thai government regulations.

Thailand continues to have very low rates of Covid-19 due to strict border control measures. The closure of the Thai/Myanmar border meant that five students who had spent the summer break in Myanmar were unable to come back across to start school in July. These students will hopefully be able to join us for the 2021 school year which starts May 10th. As of writing this report (Dec 30), Thailand has now experienced a significant Covid outbreak originating in the Myanmar Migrant Community in a fishing town. This has spread to over 40 Provinces in Thailand. As of January 4, 2021 The Ministry of Education has closed all schools in Covid affected zones for the month of January.

The Marist Asia Foundation Education Programmes prepared for a potential Covid closure by making sure all students with a cell phone have a gmail account and understand how to use Google DOCs application on their phone to ensure ease of communication and work sharing between Teachers and Students if necessary. We are preparing workbooks and home delivery for students without a phone or easy internet access.



Teachers visited student homes every week in May – June to deliver workbooks, chat with students and parents, and encourage students to continue learning from home.

EXAM RESULTS

- **Pass Marks:** in 2020 our final exams for the 2019/20 school year were in March 2020. 96% of our students passed these exams (average score across all exams). Our final exams for the first Semester were held in November 2020 and 95% of our students passed these exams (average score across all exams).
- **New Assessment Processes:** As part of our ongoing teacher development, we have introduced the idea of using some ‘in-class assessment’ rather than relying heavily on exams for formal assessment data. Our November exams therefore were worth 80% of the grade and the other 20% was assessed during the semester in the form of student projects, presentations, short essays and tests. This was new for our teachers and we will continue to develop this approach in 2021 as it allows our students to demonstrate their learning in many different ways.
- **Thai Non Formal Education (Ko So No):** 36 of our Year 3 and 4 students sat the N-Net National Exam in October and all passed this exam. Ten students received grades of 100% for part of this Exam.
- **Year One students:** 75% of students passed their exams.

Some students struggled with the exams as they are still learning the Thai language. The Preparation Programme has been started to help our students reach an adequate Thai language level before starting the Ko So No and Year 1 Programme.

- Year Two students: 100% of students passed their exams.
- Year Three students: 99% of students passed their exams.
- Year Four students: 98% of students passed their exams.

CURRICULUM

- **Non Formal Education Programme:** NFE Ko So No – this programme continues in 2020/21 and includes a range of subjects including Thai language, Maths, History, Life Skills, Physical Education, Pathways to Employment and more. There are often opportunities for field trips and school activities. This year the students planned a ‘school market’ day, buying ingredients, cooking, and selling the food at lunchtime. It was a great success.



The Thai Ministry of Education – Non Formal Programme – has activity days and practical life skills components helping students prepare for life and work after school. Pictured above: students practice cooking life skills and prepare to sell their food to other students for lunch.

- **Life Skills Programme** – our life skills programme continues to evolve with topics such as documentation, cooking, and budgeting alongside our Health HIV/Aids programme. This year we have begun using the new Life Skills Myanmar curriculum which has online activities, teacher guide and videos. This is culturally relevant and up to date. The curriculum includes units on Bullying, Puberty Education and many other topics.

PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS

- **Home visits.** In March and November 2020 Year Level Teachers considered which families to target for home visits. Paired teachers visited homes and the community which exposed us again to the reality of migrant life and our students' home background. The challenges include finance, lack of legal documentation, health problems and hospital bills, debts, and conflict with employees and officials.
- **Parent Meetings.** Four meetings for parents were held this year. Two were for new parents to introduce them to our school. One was for all parents to share about our curriculum, Ko So No education pathway, internet safety, child protection, school rules and guidelines, and parent fundraising. One was for parents of Year 3 and 4 students to help them understand the Ko So No Lower Secondary Programme and introduction of Year 5 (two days each week) to help students complete this programme. Meetings included time for parents to ask questions and discuss the information with each other and our staff.
- **Families in need and pastoral care.** This year Sr Annie Soe RNDM has been our Pastoral Care Leader and has taken responsibility for help students with personal issues. Our Year Level Teachers also take responsibility for their classes, listening when students have problems and making home visits when necessary. At the start of the school year in May we helped about 20 students with uniform costs and we have also assisted students with doctor's visits (Operations, Health Cards, Dentist, Optometrist)

LINKS WITH GOVERNMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES

- **Government Advocacy:** Marist Asia Foundation has attended combined meetings with Ministry of Non-Formal Education - National and Local levels to support Beam Foundation and Ranong Thani MLC to be able to open Migrant Learning Centers again in Ranong to return the estimated 3,000 Migrant Children Out of School back to education. As of December 18 with Beam Foundation and Ranongthani Migrant Learning Centres open, there are still an estimated 2,000 Burmese Migrant Children out of school in Ranong.
- MAF continues to seek ways to support the Migrant Learning Centre community while being committed to ensuring our BMSP programme continues sustainably and with quality, and can accept more students as envisioned in our Strategic Plan 2020-2024.
- **Networks:** We are an active member of the Migrant Education Informal Network involving UNICEF, IOM, SCI, World Vision, Baan Dek Foundation, Help Without Frontiers, Teacher Focus Myanmar, and other organizations to dialogue with Royal Thai Government Education Officials, Myanmar Education Officials, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, and Office of the National Security Council.
- **Intergovernmental Migrant Education Webinar:** Kru Prasit and Fr Frank Bird from Marist Asia Foundation recently presented at a high level Intergovernmental and NGO Webinar: Understanding the Impact of COVID-19 on Education for Migrant Children from Myanmar in Thailand: Reflections from the Field and Steps Forward. Marist Asia Foundation was requested to highlight some of the current challenges experienced by Migrant Learning Centers in Ranong

GAIN OFFICIAL EDUCATION QUALIFICATION

- **Thailand Non Formal Education:** 40 students have completed Ko So No Primary (National Ko So No Primary examination). All of these students are now registered to

start Ko So No Lower Secondary in November 2020. We will add a 'Year 5' year for these students (two days per week) to support them to complete the Lower Secondary Programme. Completion of this two year programme will allow students to apply for Ranong Technical College, or continue with the Higher Secondary Programme with the Ko So No Education department. The Higher Secondary pathway provides an entry to the Ranong Community College and opportunities for Computer, Business, Tourism Education.

SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF STUDENTS

- **Workshops:** A 'Child Protection' workshop for all BMSP staff was held in November to share our Child Protection policy with all staff and encourage discussion to ensure understanding of the policy.
- **Internet Awareness:** Our Child Protection Committee had a workshop to recognise signs of students experiencing possible addiction to online – internet games etc and BMSP staff. Staff have developed online internet safety workshops and these will be presented to students in 2021.
- **At Risk Monitoring:** We have continued to monitor some 'at risk' children with regular home visits.



Burmese Migrants frequently spend years in education but without a recognised government accreditation for their years of learning. December 5, 2020 was a significant moment for Marist Asia Foundation as senior students completed Primary and began Secondary Non Formal Education Programme integrated into the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme.

BMSP Student Stories



So, I decided to teach other children what I had learnt....

My name is Hla Win Thu Zar and I am 12 years old. My parents are U Soe Tan and Daw May Thazin Oo and I have a younger brother. My family moved from Myanmar to Thailand for Job opportunities and living. My parents are paid daily. Now my younger brother is studying in a Thai school, and for myself, I am studying at Marist Asia Foundation since I passed the entrance exam.

Because of Covid 19 situation, my parents can not go to work for now. Consequently, my family has faced many challenges. My parents could not even afford my school uniform. However, I can go to school because Marist Asia Foundation has provided school uniforms and food for my family.

Currently, in Myanmar, the schools are closed, many cities are on lockdown, and also the borders are closed, so many migrant children do not have the opportunity to go back to their school. People are not sure when the borders will be re-open and I am very sad to see the children the same age as me not going to school.

So, I decided one thing and asked my parent's permission, that is to teach those children what I have learned, in my holidays. I am very thankful to my parent for always supporting me and also I am very proud of myself that I can share my knowledge with others. The parents of the children that I am teaching gave me some donation to show their appreciation for my tuition for their children. I saved the money and donated a water cooler tank to Marist Asia Foundation, which gave me the knowledge that I can share back to others.

I am so proud of studying at Marist Asia Foundation because it has a good education system, has compassion, and teachers are caring and encouraging. I will carefully learn the knowledge that teachers teach me, and I will try to be a good student at Marist Asia Foundation. Thanks to the whole Marist Asia Foundation community for providing and creating a brighter future for Myanmar migrant children in Ranong.

“Even though we have these challenges, my parents support me to go to school...”



My name is Min Khant Oo. My father is a carpenter and my mother works at a factory. In this time, there are only a few jobs. Therefore, during this time, we have to overcome with some challenges. Money that we get is for rent, electricity and water fees, food and for savings. Even though we have these challenges, my parents support me to go to school. Now, the expenses are very expensive and my parents never stop working even though they are tired.

My parents support me to go to Marist Asia Foundation for study. This school is very important for me. In my school, I learn Thai, Burmese, English, Computer and other subjects. When I am good at these subjects, they will be useful in the workplace and when I meet with foreigners. Also, Marist Asia Foundation is meaningful because all teachers are working hard to teach us.

The reason I joined Marist Asia Foundation is because I would like to learn English and Thai, so I can get a good and comfortable job. Also, I can look after my parents and go to other countries.

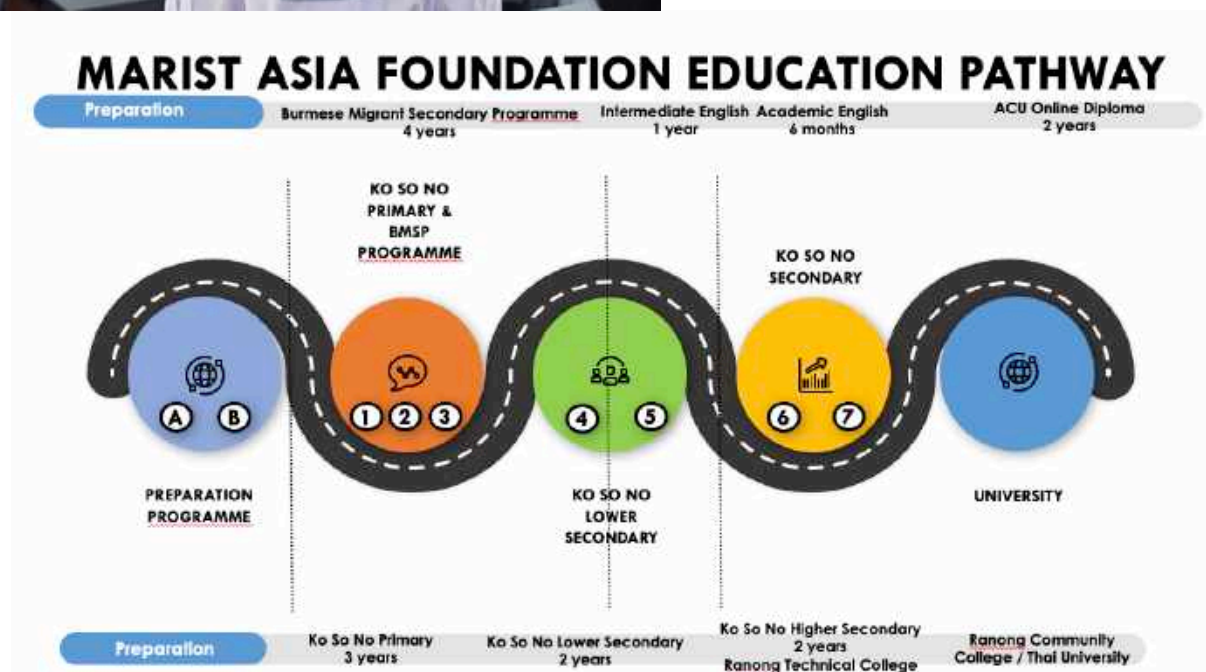
There are many advantages from my school. For example, I can find a good job with my education and languages. Moreover, in the future, I can work in overseas and support my

family or I can go back to Myanmar and work for own business. I believe that all my hopes will come true.

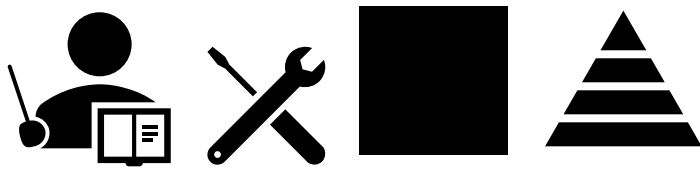


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I very much appreciate studying at Marist Asia Foundation because I can get three languages and a Thai Non-Formal Certificate. These things are useful for my future, for I can get more chances to get a job. Also, I love my school because of no discrimination between religions.



Access to Education: Marist Asia Foundation is extending its education programmes to provide a 7 year Education Programme which supports a 9 Year Education Pathway. A 2 Year Preparation Programme (Primary) (A-B) integrates with a 5 Year Secondary Programme (1-5) which offers the pathway to Higher Secondary and University Education

<p style="font-size: 24px; color: #4F81BD;">Education: BLOCKS or TRIANGLES?</p>	 <p style="font-size: 12px;">In most developed countries, children have a 'BLOCK' Education: they begin school and continue education for 12 years . The Migrant experience is often a 'TRIANGLE' Education: few begin school and most leave education by age 12 . In Ranong, up to 80% of children do not start education, and 80% of children finish age 12 . Triangle Education continues the poverty cycle of the poor. The Marist Education Pathway for Burmese Migrant Children aims for BLOCK education: children begin, stay, and achieve in an education pathway gaining employment and access to higher education opportunities.</p>
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Burmese Migrant Preparation Programme

Update on Objectives and Outcomes

Kindermissionswerk, Marist Mission Centre support this programme



Preparation Programme Students enjoy starting school at Marist Asia Foundation after several months without an education opportunity. Marist Asia Foundation will now develop a 2 Year Preparation Programme supporting Thai Language Learning and basic education prior to entry into the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme and Thai Non Formal Education Curriculum

The beginning of the Preparation Programme in 2020 was a response to the ‘Ranong Education Crisis’ (August 2019) when 9 Burmese Migrant Learning Centres were closed and 32 Burmese Migrant Teachers were returned to Myanmar.

Our reflection on the many challenges of 2020 has recognised the continued challenges for Burmese children for Access - to education, Accreditation – for their learning, and Achievement – to complete primary education.

While Marist Asia Foundation began the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme to support Burmese Migrants over age 12, the current lack of primary education opportunities for Burmese Migrant Children has caused us to carefully analyse the new education context.

In 2021 we will develop the Preparation Programme to accept younger students and prepare them for the BMSP Programme. We will continue to listen to the community, work with the Migrant Learning Centres, and work in agreement with the Thai Ministry of Education to find effective and sustainable solutions to overcome Access, Accreditation and Achievement Barriers.

NUMBERS

- **In January 2020 we accepted 60 students** for a short 3 month preparation programme prior to enrolling them in the Year 1 Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme and Thai Non Formal Education Programme.
- **In June 2020 we welcomed another 34 students** to begin a 12 month Preparation Programme to prepare for Year 1 Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme. Looking carefully at the learning progress of students coming from a variety of backgrounds and learning experiences, Marist Asia Foundation now considers a 2 Year Preparation Programme necessary particularly for Thai Language Learning. If a student has not reached Primary Level Thai language, they will not successfully pass the BMSP and Non Formal Thai Education Pathway.
- **Attendance Rates:** Preparation Programme Class 98%
- **Exam Results:** 100% of students passed the November Exams (average score across all exams)

UPDATES

- **Preparation Programme Curriculum** – In 2020 we have begun using curriculum documents from the updated Myanmar Curriculum. Using this curriculum allows the students to maintain a connection with the education system inside Myanmar and the activities are more student centred than in the past.
- **PP Students Learn Myanmar, Thai and English and also Computer Studies:** Thai language and using a desktop computer are often first-time experiences for students. The feedback has been very positive. Students comment on our caring, interested teachers who work hard for them to learn. Teachers have noticed the students growing in their ability to ask questions and begin to develop their thinking skills.
- **'Thai Language Learning'**- We are continuing to ensure this programme is adequately resourced and developed for new learners. Many Burmese students do not have good enough Thai language to jump straight into the Ko So No programme so our Preparation Programme will focus on Thai language learning. We have employed a new Thai Teacher, Burmese Teachers competent in Thai and Burmese to act as translation support teachers. This also has given us the ability to split classes between quicker and slower learners. We have purchased new library books with a variety of Thai language levels.
- **Preparation Programme 2021:** Our plan for 2021 is to have two PP classes and to extend the age range to 10 – 14 years (currently 11 – 14 years) to allow younger students to start. This will allow students two years of Thai language preparation before starting the Thai Ko So No programme. The programme will be resourced with a '200 hours basic Thai' curriculum supplemented with textbooks from Myanmar (Science, Social Studies, Maths) and a basic English language programme. Students will also learn basic computer skills.

Preparation Programme Story



“I have changed and improved since I am studying at Marist Asia Foundation....

My name is Zue Hay Mun and I am 14 years old. I am Burmese migrant child who lives in Ranong, Thailand. I came from Myanmar. I have been here in Thailand for about 7 years. I was not staying with my parents when I was young. I moved here in 2013 and started to stay with my parents. Then, I studied at one of the learning centers named Ranong Thani School for a while. And I moved to another school named Lotus Pond Learning Center and I studied from grade 2 to grade 7. Recently, I am in grade 9.

I heard that the Marist Asia Foundation announced the enrollment to take the entrance exam. Then, I decided to take the entrance and I passed it. I have many dreams that I want to be such as I want to become a doctor, I want to be an English translator and a championship in playing badminton. I really want to become a doctor because I want to help and cure my parents and the people who are sick and have health problems.

I have changed and improved since I am coming and studying here at Marist Asia Foundation. Before that I was so selfish and I was not patient with people, but now I am not the same person as before and I noticed that if I am patient and selfless, more people love me and want to play with me. I am improving my thinking and leadership skills.

I like the English subject the most because I get the motivation when I see the teachers are speaking in English fluently. I also want to speak in English well. That is why I am trying my best and studying hard. I am very happy to come to school because my teachers are very generous in teaching and have good relationships with the students.

In my opinion, Marist Asia Foundation is really nice and the teaching techniques are also wonderful. The school has significant rules to follow and they are very useful to have in my school. In short, I am pleased to have a chance to study at Marist Asia Foundation and I hope I will have a higher education and better life in my future.

HIV AIDS Health Programme

Update on Programme Objectives and Outcomes

Misean Cara, Marist Mission Centre, Lenity, Marcus Fund, Singapore Friends support this programme.



Ranong continues to have one of the highest rates of HIV in Thailand. Daily visits in the community by our HIV Health Programme Team members brings Friendship, Health Education, Access to health services, and a Brighter Future. Pictures above: Community Health Education in a Burmese Migrant Home

NUMBERS

- The MAF HIV Health Program provided 877 Home Visits giving Friendship, Health Education, Counselling, Nutrition and Access to Health Services.
- 101 people living with HIV AIDS have been directly supported by the project:
 - 98 current patients (Including 6 children -- 4 boys and 2 girls)
 - 3 deceased patients.
- 40 Burmese Migrant Teenagers in the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme received Health Education -- Formation
- 164 family members indirectly supported with home visits and education
- 13 new patients from January – December 2020 and one of them died.
- There were no patients discharged from January – December 2020.

- 3 patients died (from January – December 2020. 2 of them were referred to us at the late stage of HIV)
- 10 ‘Monthly’ Self-Help Group gatherings.

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

- **Translation:** 1,017 Translation appointments were provided at the Ranong Hospital HIV clinic.
- **Medication:** (95%) 93 out of 98 patients are on ARV medication.
- **Support for Children:** 6 migrant children who are HIV positive have been supported and monitored with regular clinic appointments at Ranong Hospital. The Team also support language translation for some children who are not under our care.
- **Support for Mothers:** 4 mothers who are living with HIV have been assisted and monitored during the pregnancy period to prevent ‘Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT). We distributed 21 packs of infant “milk formula” to support this PMTCT initiative . We achieved a ZERO transmission rate of Mother To Child Transmission from Mothers to Babies for our patients.
- **HIV Testing:** 13 people were assisted for the HIV test. 11 patients tested negative and 2 tested HIV positive. 12 spouses who are HIV negative are followed up for a regular HIV test every 6 months.
- **Support in Hospital:** 13 patients were assisted for hospitalization with transportation, translation and emergency support.

PROMOTE SELF WORTH AND DIGNIFIED LIVING

- **Home Visits:** 877 Home Visits for medication follow up, assessment of health condition, support and information about documentation, health situation and COVID awareness.
- **Palliative Care:** 2 patients received palliative care and support before dying.
- **Counselling:** 43 patients and members of family were supported with pastoral counselling. 13 people received counselling for voluntary HIV testing
- **Quality of Life Survey:** Three surveys throughout the year with 28 patients in 4 categories based on World Health Organisation framework for Quality of Life showed averages of Physical: 69%. Mental: 71%. Socio-economic: 66%. Spiritual: 77%. Exceeding our target of 70%. This shows a general average of our HIV Patients being happy and healthy. We continue to monitor data to assess individual patients scoring significantly lower survey results.
- **Legal Documentation:** 93 patients were helped to get legal documents enabling them to work, get Health Cards, and Social Insurance. We supported 11 patients to get Border Passes with a Work Permit.
- **Health Support:** 7 patients were able to get Border Pass Only and this enabled them to access ARV medication in Kawthaung, Myanmar. Without proper documentation ARV medication would cost over 2,000 THB per month. This amount is well beyond what migrants can afford as they are frequently on very low daily wages.

DEVELOP A COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT FOR PLHIV

- **10 sessions on various topics:** Mobilising Community, Social Awareness, Basic HIV Knowledge and Sexuality, Documentation and Migrant Rights, Covid 19 Prevention, Stress Management, World Interfaith Harmony, and World AIDS DAY.
- **2 workshops on Basic Self-Help Leadership Seminar:** 7 core group members of Self-Help Support Group have learned about Self-Awareness and Self-Confidence to grow the leadership capacity of the Self Help Group.
- **5 members of Self Help Core Group** participated in meetings with other network groups composed of People Living with HIV (PLHIV) from Thailand and Myanmar.
- **Developing Independence:** Self-Help group members are involved in Self-help activities such as: communication, education, cooking, preparation of the venue, restoration -- cleaning after the self-help gathering. This enables the group to walk toward sustainability and independence in the future.

PROVIDE EDUCATION FOR HIV AWARENESS

- **Networking:** 11 communities in Ranong were given basic education on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with our patients who are living in the community and some of the local leaders.
- **Curriculum Development:** The Health Team member, who has just completed the Australian Catholic University 'Certificate in Teaching and Learning', was able to revise the Health Curriculum and method of teaching. Her method of teaching is now more focused on student participation and is more in touch with the needs of the young people.

RESULTS

- 2 Patients passed away were cared for with dignity.
- **Collaboration with the Ranong Public Hospital:** We have developed a very positive working relationship between the MAF Health Team and the Ranong Hospital personnel. This has made the procurement of Health Cards for the children under our care possible. We have had an increased number of referrals of patients from Hospital to MAF. Our relationship with the Social Welfare Department has also allowed us to get reduced hospital fees for our patients.
- **Education:** Education during home visits and organized community basic HIV education has made an impact on the members of family, community and friends. Some people have approached the Health Team for counselling and HIV testing. Our patients are more comfortable relating with their neighbours. On many occasions our HIV Patients were the ones who organized and gathered their communities for HIV/AIDS education.
- **Myanmar Referrals:** Patients who return to Myanmar are properly referred back to Myanmar agencies, followed-up and looked after by our network groups in Myanmar. We provide correct patient information to ensure access to support and ARV medication.
- **Myanmar Partners:** ARV medication in Myanmar is facilitated through our network collaboration with the RNDM Sister's and the Women Positive group in Kaw Thaug to procure the ARV the patients need.

- **World Aids Day:** On Dec 5 we collaborated together with World Vision and Ranong Public Health Department to enhance the delivery of an effective education experience and witness develop our collaboration with relevant Thai Government agencies.
- **Death Certificates:** We now work with Community Based Organisations to issue a formal Death Certificate to patients who died outside the hospital which assists their immediate family and necessary documentation.

HIV Health Patient Stories



“I have no idea what to do....”

6 months ago we got a phone call from an unknown name and I answered the phone. She introduced herself to me and shared about her suffering. She shared: “ I am HIV positive and I don’t have medicine to take. I have no idea what to do. I got your phone number from the hospital.”

I listened to her and asked her address. The next day our Health Team went to her place and visited. We were surprised because she stays in a very small house with her husband and they didn’t have any food to eat. She was a beautiful young woman who shared with me that she got HIV in 2016. It has already been 4 years and now she is feeling lost and afraid.

She faced a big problem because of Covid 19. She can't go back to Myanmar. Usually, she was having treatment at Kawthaung Myanmar, but after the Border closed she bought HIV medicine at Ranong hospital. However, it so expensive and she can't afford it. We tried to support her to get medicine at Kawthaung hospital (across the Border in Myanmar). At first, we communicated with the Kawthaung Sister's group who were helping HIV patients, but we couldn't get the medicine because she was missing her appointments in Kawthaung. The Doctor refused to give medicine to her. Therefore, we helped her to get medicine at the Ranong hospital and we encouraged her husband to take an HIV test. We gave HIV education to both of them. Thankfully, after testing, the husband was HIV negative.

With support from the RNDM sisters in Myanmar we explained and apologized to the doctor from Kawthaung. After lots of effort and conversations, we finally got the medicine from Kawthaung. We were successful and she now has the chance to get ARV medicine again which is so important to keep HIV patients healthy.

She has become our patient and we support her with nutrition and other needs. We are happy to see her take her medication and be healthy again.



“After all the bad things that happened, she decided to be strong for her daughter...”

Htwe Yee Yee Aung is 23 years old. She has one daughter who is living with her mom back in Myanmar. The hospital had referred Htwe Yee Aung to Marist Asia Foundation in 2019. The cause was her husband was found to be in the last stage of HIV AIDS and she is very likely to be infected from her husband. The first time we met Htwe Yee Aung, she was in despair without a job or money for her husband's treatment. Because her husband was the one who took responsibility for the needs of the family she was desperate. We encouraged her not to feel down, and we informed her of what support we can provide for her. At first, she did not know what HIV was, but we shared gently and in an encouraging way with her.

We suggested that she should take a blood test. The next day Htwe Yee Aung took a blood test and not surprisingly the result was positive. We support her for treatment accessibility in the Ranong Public Hospital. Three months later she decided to send her husband back to Myanmar because the treatment for him there would be free of charge. They could not afford medication in Thailand. Unfortunately, after three months back in Myanmar he passed away.

She became very afraid she would lose her daughter, so she brought her daughter to Ranong, Thailand, to take a blood test and be with her. Her daughter's test result was negative. She was so happy for that. After all the bad things that happened, she decided to live strong for her daughter. Every day she now takes her medication on time and eats healthy food. She has now got a new job, met lots of people with HIV that support her, and she is living with more hope and confidence for the future. The lives of our Migrants living with HIV can be better with our support.

Migrant Outreach Programme

Update on Programme Objectives
Marist Mission Centre, Lenity support this programme



Academic English Classes – a pathway for employment and higher education opportunities. Students follow the Marist Asia Foundation Education Pathway from Secondary Education to Higher Education

NUMBERS

- 10 students are in the Intermediate English Programme
- 17 students are in the Academic English Programme (AE1)
- 9 students are in the Test of English Foreign Language (TOEFL) Academic Programme
- 3 students are completing the TOEFL iBT Programme for Scholarship / University Letters of Acceptance
- 1 Health Worker is in the 'MOP Health Worker Programme'.
- 3 Teachers are supporting Thai Language Learning for younger Burmese Migrant in the Preparation Programme
- 45 Migrant Workers were supported with Sunday Migrant Worker Classes in Thai / English / Computers

UPDATE

- **Intermediate English** classes Mon-Friday 4.30-6.00pm support Young Burmese Migrants English learning for Employment and Higher Education Opportunities. In 2020 we increased from 1 to 2 Intermediate classes (27 students). English Learning to B1 (Intermediate) level is regarded Internationally and as an education goal for English in the ASEAN community as the benchmark for employment.

- **Academic English:** In August, 17 of 23 students passed the Academic English entrance test with Thabyay Foundation Exam Preparation Outreach Programme (EPOP). All students are successfully passing their course requirements and will complete Academic English 1 in February to sit an entrance test to Academic English 2 in February 2021.
- **Higher Education Opportunities:** While Marist Asia Foundation cannot provide scholarships for Burmese Migrants, we can support their achievement in TOEFL test scores, which is a pre-requisite to prove English Language Proficiency for Scholarship applications and acceptance into University.
- 10 students are doing the TOEFL Course and 3 students are doing the TOEFL Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT) in preparation for University Scholarship and University Acceptance in 2021. The Academic English Pathway supports students to be successful in entrance to the Australian Catholic University Online Diploma Programme.
- **Supporting Migrant Learning Centres:** With the closure of 9 Burmese Migrant Learning Centres in August 2019, Marist Asia Foundation has recognised the most important education need is networking with the Government and the Migrant Learning Centres to re-open Burmese Migrant Learning Centres and return the estimated 3,000 Burmese Migrant Children to Education.
- **Continued Advocacy:** Over 3,000 children have had their education stopped for the past 15 months causing many children to 'work' and discontinue education. Marist Asia Foundation has hosted many inter-agency government (Ministry of Education: Formal and Information Education, Human Development Social Security) and NGO meetings (Unicef, United Nations Ambassador, International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Save the Children, BEAM Foundation, Help Without Frontiers, Teacher Focus Myanmar, Burmese Migrant Worker Education Committee, Burmese Migrant Teacher Association).
- Marist Asia Foundation has always been allowed to remain open as it is a registered Foundation, integrated into a recognised education qualification within Thailand (Non Formal Ministry of Education Primary – Secondary), and meets all health and safety regulations. We are currently waiting on a new MOU Agreement with the Non Formal Ministry of Education (Ranong) to continue the development of the Primary, Secondary and Vocational Subjects / Courses available for Myanmar Students and Migrant Worker Adults in Ranong.
- **Latest Developments:** Beam Foundation (Chiang Mai, Thailand) has now arrived in Ranong and is about to complete a new school building (Mid Dec) with the aim of welcoming up to 500 children. Ranongthani Monastery School is awaiting final permission to open. All Migrant Learning Centres are required to now integrate their education pathway to include the Non Formal Thai Education Curriculum. This introduces a significant challenge for the Burmese Migrant Community to teach Thai Language effectively within their Learning Centres. Significant challenges continue to exist around funding, accepted 'teacher' migrant documentation, teacher quality, health and safety, and curriculum toward an accredited education pathway.
- **Supporting Community Health (Health Workers):** The MOP Health Worker is a valuable asset to the HIV Health Programme Team with her skills in Thai language. Her half time MOP employment allows her to both work and complete studies. She is very committed to health work in the community for her future.

- **Migrant Worker Classes:** In July Marist Asia Foundation re-opened Sunday Migrant Worker Classes to support Thai, English and Computer classes for Migrant Workers. For the past 2 years we have a high interest in all classes with a reduction in attendance over 6 months. 65 Migrant Workers began their 6 month courses in July, 35 workers completed their course in December.
- **COVID challenges:** COVID caused some Fish Factories to close for some months, workers returned to Myanmar, Fish Factory owners when re-opening their factories refused permission from workers to attend Sunday classes (a penalty payment was sometimes taken from wages if they were not willing to work or do over-time on Sunday). Our MAF young teachers / volunteers wanted to commit to completing the 6 month programme to show their commitment to help Migrant Workers gain skills and education for a brighter future.
- **Increased use of the Marist Centre.** The Marist Centre has become a valuable asset for the Burmese Migrant Community. We have become a trusted point of contact with Thai Government Health, Education and Immigration Agencies with community meetings for Covid Health and Safety Education, Work Permit Renewal Processes, Immigration Documentation Updates. There have been numerous visits from Ministry of Education officials in Bangkok as a result of Migrant Learning Centre closures, and Ministry of Non Formal Education Officials from Bangkok and Ranong as we seek to identify a solution to the Migrant Education Crisis.

Migrant Worker Stories



“I believe that perseverance is when you push yourself to go forward”

Many Migrant Workers in Ranong work in Fish Factories. Many have the same story of early childhood trauma, arriving as a young migrant and with little education opportunities, then beginning work in a factory. We share a longer Migrant Worker Story as an illustration of the many hidden stories of our Migrant Workers and their determination to keep going in the midst of so many daily challenges.

My Father went to Yangon in Myanmar and never came back. My Mum was six months pregnant with me. I grew up in the hands of my Mum and Grandma. I started living with my Grandma at the age of 11 so my Mum could work.

In terms of education, I could only attend primary school. I had to stand on my feet at the age 15 because my grandma became blind. My childhood lacked proper family and support.

I have had a hard life. Seeking a better life, I started living in Ranong with my cousin while working as a fish worker.

When my cousin went on a fishing boat for months, I was left alone with his mother-in-law. My mother-in-law was a rich and cunning person. She tried to take advantage of me. I was just a naive Burmese girl who just started living in a foreign country. Without my knowledge, she showed a picture of me to the fish workers and tried to gain something from them.

People started to warn me that it is risky for me to stay there with her longer and I can end up getting married soon. I did not feel safe, so I tried to ask help from one of my relatives and started living in the market downtown. While I was living there, I had my first proper job experience.

I began working in a hotel. I started to live there too since my work hours were quite irregular compared to a normal person. I had to get up at 2:30AM to open the shop and wait until 7PM to close it. I felt like I was living in jail there. There was no holiday nor sick-leave. I had to start working at 3 in the morning and travel back and forth to deliver the things to the shop.

Two years later I was unable to work since I was sick. I was kicked out by my boss from the back door of the shop. I did not know what to do. When I asked for my 1 month and 19 days salary, he said my cousin's mother-in-law took my salary, so he can't pay me anymore. I had nowhere to go nor places to live. I asked help from my co-worker who knew the boss was being unfair to me. I got permission to live in the dessert shop. Their building was peculiar because the other side of the building was a brothel. I did not know about it and the boss often warned me and his young kid not to go there since people there are bad and they smoke cigarettes a lot. I didn't even have time to think about that because my work hour was 6.00AM to 10.00PM. I worked downstairs and I live upstairs. A year later, when the boss kid was walking at the other side of the building which was a brothel, I tried to get back to her house and saw "Ladies - guaranteed with no AIDs" written in Thai, English and Burmese.

I got married to my husband when I was still working there. My marriage was not out of love but because of my relatives. In 2008, I worked in Marist Asia Foundation (formerly known as Marist Mission Ranong) as a child protection worker for 4 years. I believe this job was a challenge for me as well. I went from door to door talking to the children's parents and negotiating with them with difficult problems. It was especially stressful when parents have strong disagreements upon something. It was also about persuading the parents to educate their children (letting their children to continue to go to school).

I am proud of the fact that there are a number of Burmese students who are studying ACU and Thai school today because of our work of encouraging parents to believe in education for their children. My three kids were also raised by Marist Asia Foundation and two of them are already independent with their own careers and one of them is already married. My daughter has graduated from a university and she is currently working as a Burmese/Thai interpreter.

I wonder what the future holds for Burmese migrant children in Ranong with their education. For me, I am sad because my education level is not high because I had so many obstacles when I was young. However, I believe in my perseverance. I believe that perseverance is when you push yourself to go forward even though things don't go as expected despite all the hard-work.

I am very grateful towards the Marist Asia Foundation and teachers for providing opportunities for Burmese migrant workers like me to learn English. This is the only opportunity migrant workers like me can have another chance for education.

ACU Online Diploma Programme & Certificate of Teaching and Learning

Update on Programme Objectives and Outcomes
Marist Mission Centre and Australian Catholic University support this programme



On December 5, 2020, Marist Asia Foundation celebrated the Graduation of the Australian Catholic University Certificate in Teaching and Learning. This was the first batch of the 2 year Trial Programme. Another 4 teachers will complete this Certificate in June 2021 growing the capacity and sustainability of the Burmese Migrant Education Programmes in Ranong.

NUMBERS

- ACU Diploma Programme: 12 students will complete their Diploma in Liberal Arts. All students have passed their 7 courses with their final course in Human Rights to be completed on January 29, 2021.
- ACU Certificate Programme: 5 Burmese Migrant teachers completed the ACU Certificate in Teaching and Learning in July. Another 4 Burmese Migrant Teachers will complete the Certificate in Teaching and Learning in June 2021.

RESULTS

- **Current course results**: All 12 Students have showed a very strong commitment to their learning and all students are expected to pass for their final Human Rights Course earning their Graduation with a Diploma in Liberal Arts in May 2021.
- **Students grades**: Students gained 24 Distinctions (above 75%) and 5 High Distinctions (above 85%) in their 7 courses so far, which shows a strong commitment to their studies and aiming for academic excellence.

UPDATES

- **COVID Challenges**: We have been fortunate that during the COVID closure period in Thailand for Schools / Education Programmes, (March – May) our ACU Programme was able to continue unbroken through the Online Learning Platform (Learning Environment Online (LEO) and MAF Tutor Tutorials via ZOOM. Classes returned to the Online Classroom at the Marist Centre in May.
- **Stuck in Myanmar**: Only 1 student from the ACU Diploma was inhibited from returning from Myanmar with sudden Border Closures, but has successfully completed all her course requirements from home with internet access.
- **Documentation Challenges**: With the challenges of Border Closures between Ranong (Thailand) and Kawthaung (Myanmar) some students have not been able to renew their 'Border Passes' maintaining their legal status. It has been estimated up to 20,000 Migrants in Ranong are currently in this status, along with many others who have lost employment and work permits as a result of factory closures or laying off of staff. Marist Asia Foundation is currently producing Student ID Cards for Marist Asia Foundation Programmes which will include our ACU students. Having an ACU ID card and a Marist Asia Foundation Education Programme ID Card while not giving legal status, is often respected as proof of student status and manages to satisfy police or travel police in not asking for more documentation or extortion of money.
- **Successful Graduates Leading in the Burmese Migrant Community**: The ACU Diploma supports the development of Burmese Leaders for their Migrant Community.
 - 4 Current ACU students and graduates volunteer for the Sunday Migrant Worker Classes on Sunday teaching Computers, Thai Language and English Language. Leadership workshops and leadership reflection experiences create the environment of expectation to serve as a result of the gift of education.
 - Of the 12 ACU graduates in 2019-2020, 6 are already employed in Education Organisations, 1 in Health Work, 1 in Translation - NGO support roles supporting their Migrant Community.
 - In 2020, previous graduates continue to work in Ranong at the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Ranong Public Hospital – Health Translation Services for Migrants, Ranong Ministry of Labour – translation for Burmese

Migrants and Work Permits, World Vision - TB / HIV / Migrant Birth Registration Programmes, Myanmar Immigration – Work Permit Agencies, Human Rights Fishing Network (Ranong), United Nations – Procurement Officer (Yangon), Institute for European Co-operation and Development – Education Mentor (IECD-Yangon).

- Dec 2020 an ACU Graduate from Marist Asia Foundation became the first Burmese person to provide a special Daily Burmese edition of news from the Thai Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) to share information with the Burmese Migrant Community about the COVID outbreak in Samut Sakhon. 3 ACU Graduates in created a special facebook page for the Ranong Myanmar Migrant Community to have accurate Local and National Government COVID Information translated from Thai to Myanmar immediately attraction of 1,000 followers as we went into a RED ZONE designation on January 4.
- **Graduate Scholarships:** Shwe Zin Tin (ACU Graduate 2017) has been awarded a full University Scholarship for Community Development Studies in Rangsit University (Thailand). Htike Htike was awarded the 2020 Liberty Leadership Scholar to the Bush Centre (USA) and has also been awarded the Australian Award Myanmar to study at Flinders University for Masters in Gender Studies (Australia). May Thazin Oo and Yoon Thiri are both anticipating studies in Bachelor of Education at Asia Pacific International University (Bangkok) in 2021 to return to Ranong and become future Teachers at Marist Asia Foundation.
- **Continued Education Opportunities:** The ACU Diploma Programme has continued to be an educational qualification that has allowed graduates to proceed to further education opportunities in Thailand, Myanmar and overseas.
- **Strengthening Education Capacity:** In 2020 The ACU Certificate in Teaching and Learning has successfully completed the first cohort of 5 Teachers. In June a further 4 Teachers began the second cohort due to finish in 2021. This programme has proven to be very effective in growing the personal confidence and teaching capacity of the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme Teachers. Teachers have learnt about the importance of context and culture in learning, detailed lesson and course planning, curriculum assessment methods, classroom management skills, critiquing current education theories, and frequent video and group feedback sessions on classroom teaching. As a direct result of this certificate course, we have seen a marked increase in group work, classroom

“CTL has helped me plan really deeply, understand student’s different needs. It has helped me realise I really want to be a teacher!

Teacher Yoon Thiri

“CTL has taught me the most important teaching skills: how to manage the classroom, write a good lesson plan, and many ways to deal with misbehaving students

Teacher May Thazin Oo

“I now know how to be an effective teacher and I know what is an effective learning environment for students.

Teacher Soe Myat Tun

presentations, and a clear joy in seeing the results of engaged students with their learning.

- **Continuation of the ACU Diploma and Certificate in Teaching Pathway:** Marist Asia Foundation is awaiting the renewal of its Memorandum of Understanding with ACU to develop this education partnership together. ACU is currently experiencing significant challenges with loss of International Student Income into Australia and has decided to 'suspend' intake of students for the 2021 year. Marist Asia Foundation will work closely with ACU in 2021 to seek the continuation and sustainability of the Thai Burma Programme in 2022.
- **Ranong Covid Restrictions:** From Monday 4th January, The Ministry of Education issued instructions to all Schools to close for the month of January due to the increase in number of COVID 19 infections in Thailand. Ranong was designated as a RED ZONE despite having only 1 positive case of COVID. As Ranong has a very large Migrant Population, the Government was concerned about the potential for an outbreak in this fishing town corresponding to Samut Sakhon, the source and epicentre of the 2nd Wave in Thailand. ACU Online students will continue their studies for the remainder of January with the ability to meet individually and weekly with their Tutor at the Marist Centre and via online connectivity (Google Meet – Messenger – Zoom)
- **Graduation** – we look forward to planning the Graduation Ceremony for 12 ACU students in early May 2021.

Administration

Lenity and Marist Mission Centre both support the Administration of Marist Asia Foundation.

Burmese Migrant Education Crisis

It has been 15 months since the Ranong Raid of Ranongthani Monastery School. The arrest and deportation of 32 Burmese Migrant Teachers caused an estimated 3,000 Burmese Migrant Children to be 'Out of School'. The continued closure of 9 Migrant Learning Centres caused the loss of physical learning spaces, loss of Education Resource people, and an increased vulnerability of young children working in fishing factories and roaming the streets.

Migrant Parents have suffered greatly with their children being locked up at home or the loss of income for the Mother as she is forced to stay at home. As of December 2020, the Thai Ministry of Education (Non Formal Education) and the new Governor of Ranong have agreed to allow 2 Migrant Learning Centres to re-open with some conditions. This is the result of sustained advocacy and pressure. Most Burmese Migrant Parents have resisted sending their children to Royal Thai Government Schools as their children will not learn Burmese Language, their children receive very little support in learning Thai Language, have difficulty meeting the increased financial costs of uniforms and further transport costs.

Marist Asia Foundation has been fortunate in being the only Migrant Learning Centre to remain open throughout the whole crisis having met the basic legal and documentation criteria. In light of the education challenges a strategic decision was made to increase from

90 to 250 students over the next few years. This has shaped construction activity, Teacher Training, the development of our Migrant Education Pathway, and further integration of Non Formal Curriculum and other subjects / language studies.

Marist Asia Foundation was formally granted a 'Community Learning Centre' (So Ro Cho) status for the Thai Non Formal Education Programme in August 2020. A new Memorandum of Understanding between Marist Asia Foundation and the Ministry of Education – Thai Non Formal Education is still waiting to be signed to support the certainty of Burmese Migrant Students to complete the Primary and Secondary Pathway. The tension still exists between 'National Security' and 'Human Rights' with government officials in both National (Bangkok) and Local (Ranong) levels.

Construction

A constant water supply and significant water storage was needed prior to increasing the number of students. With an increased number of nearby fish factories using the local water supply, the Marist Centre was frequently faced with water shortages. In June we completed a large water storage tank. In September we completed a large shade roof that provides for an activity area and student / staff seating area for lunch. We anticipate the restructuring of classrooms upstairs (April 2021) to ensure quality classroom spaces to welcome 60 students in 2021. We have recently been supported by a local Thai Business to help us complete the concrete floor under the new roof. We aim to complete this in early 2021 for the increased number of students in February – March 2021.

Sustainability.

COVID has created challenges with volunteers and teachers not being able to come to Ranong and support our Education Programmes. Border closures also caused problems in not being able to send a Health Team Member for Basic Nursing Training in Yangon, Myanmar. Sustainability is both a Human Resources and a Financial Challenge. We have been grateful for the Society of Mary designating the Marist Community and Mission in Ranong as an Omnes Gentes Community. With some additional funding support beginning in 2021, we have confidence to begin a 2 Year Preparation Programme and increase students numbers beyond 200. Securing University Scholarship Funding for 2 Burmese MAF Teachers to begin Bachelor of Education will also ensure future educational leadership for Marist Asia Foundation.

Inter-Religious Dialogue

Marist Asia Foundation and the Marist Community continued to seek ways of developing the dialogue of life between cultures and faith traditions with inter-faith education and social activities with students and religious leaders. Art Competitions, Education Opportunities, World Peace and Harmony Day were all opportunities to celebrate the richness of our cultures and faith traditions. The Marist Community is discerning the future possibilities for the redesign of the prayer house and land space on the edge of Ranong to facilitate small group gatherings, student activities, and Inter-Religious Dialogue and Reflection experiences

External Misesan Cara Monitoring and Review

In November and December, Misesan Cara conducted External Virtual Monitoring Reviews of both the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme and HIV Health Programme. Both reviews were very positive.

The Health review noted “Strong advocacy and outreach to local government and other stakeholders is taking place to a high degree”. The Health Team were encouraged to continue measuring qualitative and quantitative results to continually monitor their progress.

The Education review noted the continued and increased relevance of the (BMSP) Education Programme considering the education crisis in Ranong. “The resilience of the learning centre is admirable in the face of a difficult context in Ranong and also the fact that the majority of international NGO’s have left and other learning centres have shut down”. The Management Team were encouraged to continue advocacy efforts with local government to allow migrants to be treated and receive education rights just like Thai nationals. How to generate more income locally as a project was an ongoing financial sustainability question raised for consideration.

New Director and Staff in 2021

The current plan is for Fr Frank to depart for studies in a Masters in Education in New Zealand in May 2021. We are waiting for the arrival of Fr Arnold Garferio (Philippines) who will become the new Director, and Fr Ricardo Gutierrez (Mexico) who will support the Education Programmes. We also wait for Sr Angela Nan Koe (Myanmar) who is our new RNDM sister waiting to arrive from Myanmar to join the Health Programme. We are not sure when Covid travel restrictions into Thailand and the necessary Non O Visa Processes may be completed for them to arrive in Ranong.

January, 2021

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