



Marist Asia Foundation

Narrative Report January – June 2021

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



Ranong is experiencing increasing numbers of Covid cases and this is high among our Burmese Migrant Community. Many families are without work because of Covid 19 and Fish Factory Closures. Border Closures and 5 months of Myanmar Military Coup have created incredible stress and uncertainty for Burmese Migrant Families on the Thailand Burma Border.

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

Your funding is supporting Education, Health and Migrant Support Programmes for Burmese Migrant Children and Families living in Ranong - the Thailand Burma Border.

Burmese Migrant Secondary Education Programme BMSP

Update on Objectives and Outcomes

Misean Cara, Marist Mission Centre, Lenity, NZ Friends and Supporters, Kindermissionswerk, Larsen Trust, Omnes Gentes support this programme

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



Celebration of Completing Year 4: The final day of the school year (March) is always celebrated with a day at the Beach. We celebrate with our Year 4 students who will be the first group to continue to Year 5 and complete an accredited Thailand Secondary Education Qualification.

Students Numbers.

- In 2020/21 we have 168 students in (Year 1 – 5) the 5 Year Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme
- 4 Students left the BMSP Programme this year because of the financial need to work to support their families struggling with poverty and consequences of Covid.
- We have 163 students (Year 1, 2, 3 and 4, 5) enrolled into the Non Formal Thai Ko So No Education Pathway which will help students complete a Thai Primary – Secondary Education qualification.
- 10 students sat the Ko So No N-Net exam and passed the Primary Education level. They will now join the students in the Lower Secondary level.

Attendance Rates

- Attendance remains very high: Year 1A 98%, Year 1B 99%, Year 2 98% Year 3 97%, Year 4 96%.
- This is a sign of student enjoyment, desire for education and good parent-teacher support.

Retention Rates

- We continue to have a retention rate of 97% with very few students leaving our Education Programme.

Exam Results

- BMSP Programme Year 1(A-B) students 100 %. Year 2 students 89%, Year 3 students 100% and Year 4 students 96% passed their exams in March 2021.
- KO SO NO (Non Formal Thai Education Programme) Year 1 A-B students: 75%. Year 2 student 95%. Year 3 students 100%. Year 4 students 100% passed their exams. Some students Thai Language level is still low at starting the Ko So No and Year 1 Programme. The experience of 2020 and 2021 has informed our decision to have a 2 year Preparation Programme with significant Thai Language Learning support for students to enter the Secondary Programme.

Family Support

- **From January to March around 62% of families required financial support for monthly tuition** and transport donations. This is higher than usual due to the second wave of the Covid19 situation. 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:** No parent meeting at this time due to Covid19 restrictions and shortened school opening in 2021.

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 2021, four Burmese 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 and Life skills:** Buying, cooking and selling food in a school ‘market’ is part of our Ko So No (Non Formal Education) Programme supporting the basics of running a small business venture.
A ‘translation skills’ unit has been developed for our Year 5 students to help them prepare for employment when they leave school.
A ‘teaching skills’ programme for our Year 5 students can support them more confidence to help with education roles in their community.
A ‘Health skills’ programme in Year 4 focusses on 4 modules around HIV Awareness and Health, Discrimination, Risky situations, Sex and Sexual decision making.
- **Year 5 Curriculum:** Our big change in the BMSP programme is the introduction of Year 5 to help our students complete the Ko So No Lower Secondary Programme. Our Year 5 curriculum also includes English language, History and Geography and a Life Skills Course.
- **Year 4 Social Action project:** As part of our Year 4 Social Studies Curriculum, we continue to support awareness of Social Action projects and Social Action heroes around the world. Students identified the need for education and encouragement of Burmese Migrant Children. They fundraised to buy books, stationary, and presented topics and fun lessons with the children at Beam Foundation Migrant Learning Centre.

- **Covid-19 and Learning:** In January, 2021 the Ministry of Education closed all schools in Covid19 affected zones. We created google classes, a YouTube channel for teaching video links, powerpoint slides with audio recording and used Google Meet to meet with our students. We will be delivering workbooks to students homes in June while we wait for further guidelines from the Ministry of Education June 30.
- **Wifi:** We supported some students with wifi fees for online learning and some students in Covid Field Hospitals still participated in online classes despite suffering from Covid 19 illnesses.
- **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. This is 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.



***Build back better:** Responding to the needs of the Migrant Community Marist Asia Foundation has developed a Preparation Programme and increased the numbers in the Secondary Programme, growing from 180 to 240 students in 2021. Marist has added 3 new classrooms and an activity area to support more Burmese Migrant Children.*

Thai Non Formal Education Programme (KO SO NO)

- **Curriculum:** NFE Ko So No – this programme continues in 2021 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.

- 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.
- **Higher Education:** 2 MAF students who completed Ko So No Secondary have begun Diploma in Computer Studies for Business at the Ranong Community College in 2021.

PROMOTE EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS

- **Home visits.** In March 2021 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.
- **Families in need and pastoral care.** This year Sr Annie Soe RNDM has been our Pastoral Care Leader and has taken responsibility for helping 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. In February 2021, we helped about several students with uniform costs and helped with food for some families really needed. We have also assisted students with doctor's visits such as one student who broke two bones in hand and some were sick.

LINKS WITH GOVERNMENT AND OTHER AGENCIES

- **Government Advocacy:** Marist Asia Foundation has recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Non Formal Ministry of Education to provide Primary and Secondary Non Formal Education. This helps us secure access for 230 Burmese Migrant Children on a sustainable and quality education pathway with Thai Government recognition of Learning.

Marist Asia Foundation has supported the Ministry of Public Health with the use of the Marist Centre for Covid Screening of the local Myanmar Migrant Community to help identify the Covid incidence rate in the Bangrin Area.

Marist Asia Foundation has sought to network with Ranongthani and Beam Migrant Learning Centres with the Public Health Office and World Vision creating a combined request for Covid Vaccines for Burmese Migrant Teachers as front-line workers. We aim to ensure the safety of Burmese Migrant Educators as they are significantly involved in supporting the Burmese Migrant Community and needy families.

- **Networks:** Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme Staff have been active in linking with World Vision and Public Health Office throughout the 3rd Wave of the Covid Crisis affecting Ranong with food distribution, support of the Myanmar Migrant Covid Field Hospital 2 for Food, and networking with fundraising and support for World Vision as the lead co-ordinating agency in Ranong.
- **Military Coup & Emergency Contingency Planning:** MAF Administration Team has been a member of multiple online meetings January - May concerning Migrant Education and the development of a crisis contingency plan if Myanmar Refugees cross the Southern Thai Burma Border because of conflict and hardship with the Military Coup. This network involves Save the Children, World Vision, UNESCO, UNICEF, IOM, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), Help without Frontiers, Teacher Focus Myanmar and other Migrant Education and Health Providers. We aim to ensure quality support for the Thai Government to manage an influx of refugees at several border crossing points on the Thai Burma Border.

Student Story

“We have never had a meal together as a whole family”



Student story: My name is Zar Zar and I am 17 years old. I live in Ranong with my father, mother, and cousins. My parents are Mon ethnicity and also migrant workers. I am currently studying at Marist Asia Foundation (MAF) in Ranong, Thailand.

There are seven members in my family, but we do not live together. My two brothers and one of my sisters are working in Bangkok. The other sister is working in Phuket. Unfortunately, they did not get to study well when they were young because there were many challenges in my family. There were no learning centers as many as today, my parents could not support, and they had to work since they were young.

In the past, the Burmese children who did not have documents were not allowed to study and they ended up studying at home. Since it was illegal, they had to run and hid when Thai soldiers came to check on them. So, many migrants were out of school since they were very young. However, I have the opportunity to continue my education with family support.

Even though all of us do not see each other often, we always keep in touch and they are concerned about our parents. We have never had a meal together as a whole family, but I hope that one day our family will be reunited.

I studied at Sea Dragon learning center in Ranong when I was grade-6. There were a lot of weaknesses and challenges such as not enough teachers to teach the students for higher

grade, insufficient resources like textbooks, teaching materials, and so on. So, we got to learn only a few lessons from the textbooks.

I started to love learning English and I wanted to be a lifelong learner. So, I tried hard to pass the entrance exam at Marist. Luckily, I passed the entrance exam and got more opportunities to study. Most of my classmates praise me that I am intelligent, but they do not even know how hard I tried. In my opinion, no one can succeed without diligence and perseverance.

I am always eager to know and I ask the question “why should people only have one dream?” As for me, I have a lot of dreams, but the most important one is that I always want my family to be happy. Here are some other dreams (1) I would like to study until I obtain ACU diploma. (2) Travel around the world to learn new experiences. (3) I would like to open my own shop. (4) I would like to build a house before my parents die.

I would like to thank my older brothers and sisters because they have been supporting me to be able to study. My dreams are very simple, and I believe that I can achieve them. Some people do not believe their dreams are possible to become true. I know that it is not easy to achieve our dreams and we must put our effort in as much as we can, and be patient with them even though there are many failures and fatigues to be faced. To be able to succeed we must be confident and believe in ourselves.

There is also something that I would like to help in my community. I would like to help Burmese migrants in the ways I can such as helping them when they need help, listening to their feelings, encouraging them, and sharing with them the knowledge I have. I always want to help them with knowledge rather than giving out money and things. They are not able to take care of themselves in terms of health because they are struggling for their living.

The children in Ranong are not able to study well because their parents cannot support them and I was one of them. I almost dropped out from schools due to the hardship in my family. Fortunately, I was able to continue my study again with the help of Marist. This is the reason why I always study hard and I want to help vulnerable people like me.

From my point of view, it is not fair for children to not be able to go to school just because of the hardship of parents. Education is the most important thing for children because they will be the new generation of young people in the future. Therefore, I would like to give the chance to the children to learn, and migrant workers who need it.

In conclusion, I am deeply saddened and concerned by the current situation in Myanmar. We also pray for the return of normalcy to our motherland and the safety of all Burmese people in Myanmar. While I think about the future of Myanmar, it is very sad. Finally, I hope that our motherland will improve and develop in the future.

Burmese Migrant Preparation Programme

Update on Objectives and Outcomes

Kindermissionswerk, Marist Mission Centre, Omnes Gentes, Larsen Trust, Lenity support
this programme



Preparation Programme Students enjoy Orientation Week Activities and starting school at Marist Asia Foundation Preparation Programme after several months without an education opportunity. In 2021 we accepted 66 new students into a 2 year programme preparing them for entry into the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme.

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.

In 2021 we continue to develop the Preparation Programme to accept younger students and prepare them for the BMSP Programme.

In March we accepted 66 students in the Preparation Programme. It is a very helpful and good opportunity for these migrant children because many students would like to study at Marist Asia Foundation. After they finish their studies in the 2 Year Preparation Programme, they will have the basic skills to read, write, speak and listen in Burmese, English and Thai. We hope that they will be successful in their education and be able to achieve their dreams.

NUMBERS

- **January 2021** we had 34 students in our PP programme. 32 students finished PP in March and joined the BMSP Programme in May. One left to go to work. One student will stay in the PP programme for the next school year.

- **March 2021** we had our entrance exam for new PP students. 72 children sat the exam. We offered 66 students places in our PP programme and 3 students who had very good exam results were placed in our Year 1 BMSP programme.
- **Attendance Rates:** In the Preparation Programme Class from January to March, 78% of students attended class.
- **Exam Results:** 33 students sat the final end of Semester Exams in March. The pass rate was 85%. We recognise that these students have not had the consistent Primary school education in Migrant Learning Centres as in previous years due to MLC closures in 2019.

UPDATES

- **Burmese Special Class** - After our PP Entrance Exam in March we identified 15 students who we wanted to accept at our school but had very low results in Burmese. We provided a 'Burmese Special Class' to help them to read and write in a special class before the end of the school term.
- **Preparation Programme Curriculum** – In 2020 we began 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 new activities are more student centred than in the past. We will continue with this curriculum in 2021 supplemented by other textbooks for English and Mathematics. These are international curriculums such as Side by Side (English) and World Education Maths (supplied by US AID).
- **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. Other subjects include Social Studies, Science and Mathematics.
- **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 hope to enrol our Thai language teachers in professional development run by Save the Children when schools re-open this year.
- **COVID19** - There are many challenges we are facing as teachers and students to teach and study at the school because of Covid19 restrictions.
- Currently, we are waiting to hear what the government policy is and we have to follow their rules in order to re-open the school for face-to-face learning. In the meantime, we have created Online Learning for the students. The teachers teach and explain by recording videos and uploading them on their Youtube channel, then sharing them with the students using the Messenger App. Sometimes, they use Google Meet and have a chat with their students.
- It is quite challenging for the Preparation Programme students and teachers because it is very new for the students and they are also very young. However, the teachers and students are doing their best and enjoy their teaching and learning.

Student Story

“If I cannot read or write other people can lie to me”



My name is Naing Lin and I'm (10) years old. My father's name is U Aung Soe and My mother's name is Daw Hla Kyi. I was born in Ranong, Thailand. There are five members in my family. I'm from Mon state, Myanmar. I didn't attend school in Myanmar because I have been living in Ranong, Thailand since I was born with my parents.

My dream is to be an engineer or work as a mechanic. In my free-time, I play football, do exercise and play mobile games. My hobby is I like anything about cars, motorbikes and vehicles especially about fixing them.

Education is very important for me because it's for my future. If I am educated, I can find a good job and I will be knowledgeable when I go somewhere. If I cannot read or write, other people can lie to me and also I cannot help myself in communicating with others.

The fish factory which my mother and sister used to work in is closed due to covid 19 and no work time. So, now my mother is out of work and my sister is working in another fish factory. Before, my father's work was going on a boat with foreign visitors. During this time, my father also doesn't have work. My oldest sister's work is painting boats and in the rainy

season right now she cannot work for a whole month. Therefore, our family has to depend on my two sisters.

There are some challenges for me. After I finished pre-school, I didn't continue going to school and part of it was that the school was closed due to illegal learning centers. However, I continued going to tuition class near my home for two years. So, I couldn't read or write yet as other people around my age do. This year is my first time coming back to school, so sometimes I didn't understand what the teacher said in the online-learning class.

I'm very happy to go to school and be in the class. When I was at home, I felt bored from using my mobile phone. At school, I understand what the teacher said and I can ask questions if I don't understand.

The reason I joined the Marist Asia Foundation is that I was studying in a preschool program of Marist Asia Foundation when I was young. So, I enjoyed coming to this school in the past and I know that I will enjoy being back now. Marist Asia Foundation is different from other learning centers because I feel happy to be in this school and it's big and nearby my home.

I believe I will improve by coming to Marist Asia Foundation and I can read and write. Also, I can improve learning from different subjects and computer learning.

HIV AIDS Health Programme

Update on Programme Objectives and Outcomes

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



Food Support for Migrant Families: Ranong continues to have one of the highest rates of HIV in Thailand. Migrant HIV Patients are very vulnerable if they have no documents, no work, and no access to health services for their daily HIV medication. Daily visits in the community by our HIV Health Programme Team members brings friendship, health education, access to health services and a brighter future. In the past few months there has been more need to support Burmese Migrant Families with food.

Numbers

- The MAF HIV Health Program provided 327 Home Visits giving friendship, health education, counselling, nutrition and access to health services.
- 106 people living with HIV AIDS have been directly supported by the project:
 - 103 current patients (38 Men, 58 Women and 7 children -- 4 boys and 3 girls)
 - 8 New patients
 - 3 deceased patients.
- 28 Burmese Migrant Teenagers in the Burmese Migrant Secondary Programme received Health Education -- Formation
- 178 family members indirectly supported with home visits and education
- 8 new patients from January – June 2021.
- There were no patients discharged from January – June 2021.
- 3 patients died (from January – June 2021)
- 2 Self-Help Group gatherings (February - March 2021) with 70 participants. The Covid-19 Pandemic situation in Ranong has not allowed the Health Program to conduct Self-help group gatherings in January, April to June. However, the Health Team has initiated a Meeting through Google Meet platform with the leaders of the group and given a space for them to share stories and testimonies. The leaders were given the task to follow up other patients near their area of residents.

Access to Health Services

- **Hospital Translation:** Every Tuesday the MAF Health Team provides translation assistance - from Burmese to Thai and vice versa to Burmese Migrants, and assists them to access HIV Treatment at the Ranong Hospital HIV clinic.
- **January – May:** The Health Team has done 513 translations. In May and the following months, the Health Team stopped doing the translations at the Ranong HIV Clinic because of the risk for Covid infections. The team goes to the hospital and collects the Medicines of our patients and delivers them to their homes.
- **Medication:** 99 out of 103 patients are on ARV medication.
- **Hospital Support for Children:** The health situation of the 7 migrant children with HIV has been facilitated and monitored every Wednesday during their hospital appointments at Ranong Hospital. The Team has also assisted the children who were not under our care through language translations.
- **Support for Mothers:** 2 mothers who are living with HIV have been supported with medication to ensure no ‘Mother to Child HIV Transmission’. We have continued to monitor after giving birth and have provided 10 packs of infant “milk - formula”.
- **HIV Testing:** Blood Tests and other requests. 3 people were assisted for the HIV test. 1 patient was tested negative and 2 were tested HIV positive. 12 spouses who are HIV negative are followed up for a regular HIV test every 6 months.

- **Support in Hospital:** Assisted and facilitated the neediest patients with transportation to hospital, and emergency support and translation. 10 patients were assisted for hospitalization.

Promote self-worth and dignified living

- **Home Visits:** Average of 67 home visits per month for medication follow up, assess their health condition status, and provide support information about documentation and health situation
- **Palliative Care:** 3 patients received palliative care and support before death and their family were supported at the Monastery with funeral service and prayers.
- **Counselling:** 15 patients and members of HIV families were given pastoral counselling. 10 received counselling for voluntary HIV testing.
- **Quality of Life:** This year the Health Team has done 1 survey in February with 28 respondents on the quality of life of the people living with HIV/AIDS. In the survey on the quality of life among our patients, their Physical, Mental, Socio-Economic and Spiritual well being survey result was 74% which was an increase of the baseline in 2021 of 72. This reflects a positive general well being result for our 103 HIV Patients.
- **Legal Documentation:** 8 patients were helped to get legal documents that made them safe, able to work, get their Health Cards and receive Social Insurance to enjoy their rights to healthcare as migrant workers.
- **Develop a community of support among PLHIV:** 2 Self Help Meetings (February & March) focussed upon mobilising community and social awareness have been given to the Self-Help Group. Topics discussed were Documentation, Side Effects of ARV Medicine, Covid 19 Prevention, Art Therapy for Self Reflection and Relaxation. .
- **Leadership:** 1 Workshop trained 4 Leaders to plan the Self Help Group Meetings (February and March), and they took leadership in the activities of communication, education, cooking, preparation of the venue, restoration -- cleaning after the self-help gathering.

Provide education on HIV AIDS and Prevention

- **Community Education Activities:** Two Education Activities in Ranong gave basic education on HIV/AIDS in collaboration with our patients who are living in the community and some of the local leaders.
- **Less Discrimination:** As a result of Community Education, some persons have approached the health team for counselling and HIV testing. Our patients are more confident and comfortable in relating with their neighbours.

Access to Health Services

- **Health Cards for Children:** As a result of the partnership between the MAF Health Team and the Ranong Hospital personnel, we were able to procure Health Cards for the 7 children under our care possible.
- 2 Patients were referred back to Myanmar agencies, followed-up and looked after by our network groups in Myanmar

Networking

- 3 Patients who live in Ranong and have been taking ARV in Myanmar are facilitated through our network collaboration with the RNDM Sisters and the Women Positive group in Kaw Thaug to procure the ARV they need.
- We continue to collaborate with World Vision (Medicine), Ranong Public Health Department (Translation), DISAC (Documents), Mirror of Mercy (Myanmar Referrals),

Community Based Organization (CBO - Say Thanar Shin – Funerals – Death Certificates), Catholic Committee on HIV/AIDs -Camillians- Training), Ranong Thani School (Orphans), Foundation for Education and Development (FED) (HIV Survey).

- Marist Asia Foundation HIV Programme is a survey partner with FED in a research project on HIV & Self Stigma. This research project will help identify HIV Self Stigma Reduction in Burmese Migrants. This survey project will extend over a 2 year period involving 15-20 of our HIV Burmese Migrant Patients in Ranong

HIV Patient Story

“I always pray for the Donors”



In Ranong, many migrant people are suffering from the Covid-19 situation in this pandemic. Migrant people are losing their jobs and facing daily problems to survive. Migrant people who are affected by HIV/AIDS patients are more vulnerable than other people because if they lose their job they cannot afford medicine for their health care and they can die.

Recently we learnt of a family in great need. Zaw Zaw stays with four young children and his wife. He lost his job because he did not have documents and there was no work because of the Covid pandemic. Zaw Zaw was affected by HIV/AIDS and he got treatment from the Ranong hospital, but he had to buy medicine because he did not have a health card. He tried to borrow money from others and bought medicine by himself. It is quite expensive (2,000 THB = 10 Days Wages) and it is not easy to borrow money every time. He could not even return back to Myanmar because Covid had closed the border crossing between Thailand and Myanmar. To make money his wife was collecting plastic bottles at night and cleaning

at the temple every morning. However, this money was not even enough for their food and they could not buy medicine.

We went to visit their place and support nutrition, rent, and share education about HIV/AIDS with them. We discussed a long-term plan for their future and tried to find the process to get documents for him.

By the end of March 2021, he got a full document which was supported by donors from Marist Asia Foundation. He was very grateful about that and thankful to our team. Now he always says “I always pray for donors”.

He has become an active patient in the HIV group. Now he is healthy and working for his family. During this Covid time, there are many people who are affected by HIV/AIDS and faced have so many difficulties. We are serving them as much as possible.

Migrant Outreach Programme

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



Post School English Classes – a pathway for employment and higher education opportunities. Teacher Katie Fisher (NZ) with young migrant workers 3 evenings each week. In 2021 we have Intermediate, Academic English, TOEFL English classes for Young Migrant Adults to chase their dream of Higher Education.

NUMBERS

- 10 students are in the Intermediate English Programme
- 17 students are in the Academic English Programme (AE2)
- 10 students are in the Test of English Foreign Language (TOEFL) Academic Programme
- 3 students completed TOEFL IBT Test for University Scholarship Applications
- 4 Teachers have completed online Teaching English Second Language (TESOL) Certificate to support English Pathway.
- 2 MAF Teachers have been accepted into the Asia Pacific International Bachelor of Education Programme.

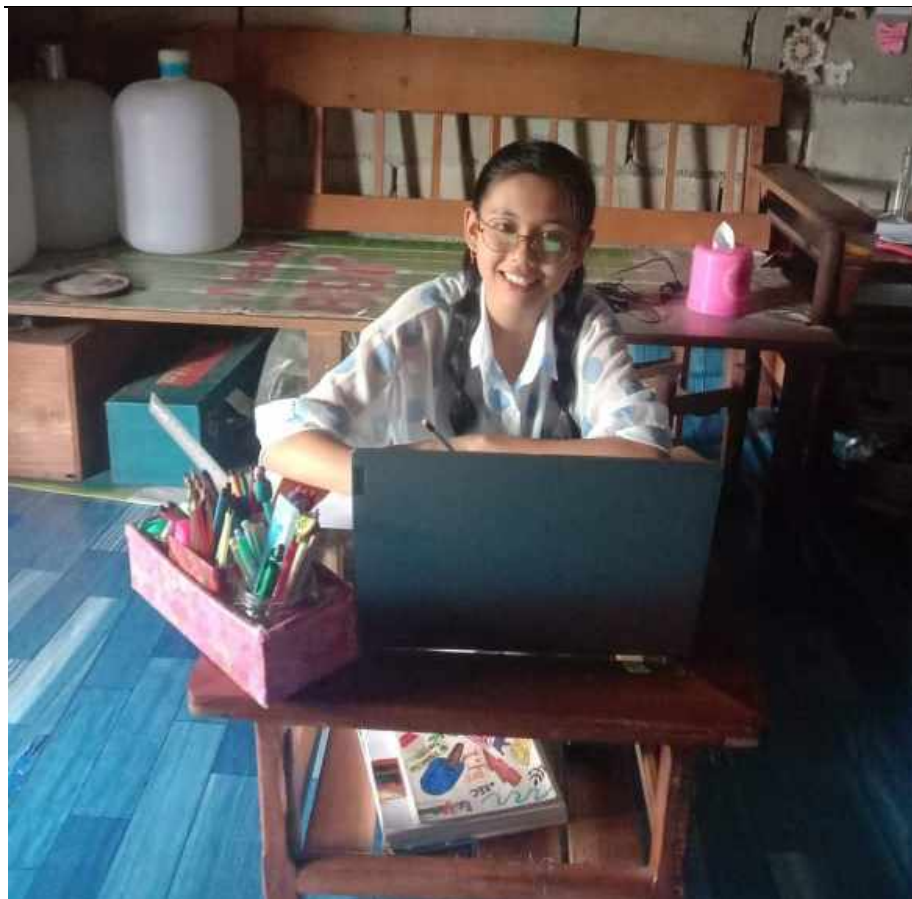
UPDATE

- **Intermediate English:** Intermediate English (10 students) continues online with googlemeet and online learning tools. We are noticing a drop-off in attendance the longer the covid pandemic – learning from home – situation continues. It is difficult to do homework and study for long periods of time using only a cell phone.
- **Academic English:** In February 2021, 17 of the students successfully completed Academic English 1 and were accepted into Academic English 2. In March MAF provided 8 chromebooks to students who were identified as needing support to ensure learning from home during the covid pandemic. The Academic English Programme requires access to the online learning portal (Exam Preparation Outreach Programme EPOP) essay writing, audio and video files. MAF considers it important to ensure extra support to keep students engaged and interested in their English Education Pathway. Academic English Students also access googleclassroom resources as well as googlemeet classes with their Tutor each week.
- **Higher Education Opportunities:** Marist Asia Foundation established a Higher Education Consultation Group to look at the future strategy for English Language Learning and future education partnerships to support Higher Education. Current research is being undertaken with Ateneo Davao (Philippines) and Jesuit World Wide Learning.
- **Continued Advocacy for Burmese Migrant Education:** Marist Asia Foundation is part of the Migrant Education Working Group and has been involved in Emergency Contingency Planning for Refugee and Migrants Fleeing Myanmar as the result of the Military Coup. We aim to support education and health initiatives with Thai Government and INGO's if the Southern Border Crossing Point – Ranong is opened up.
- **Research Partner with Teacher Focus Myanmar:** From June – October 2021 we will be involved in a Participatory Research Survey seeking to understand in the light of the Covid 19 Crisis, Myanmar Military Coup, and Border closures, how to support the Burmese Migrant and Refugee Community access education pathways for their children. The Research will involve Burmese Migrant Learning Centres, Royal Thai Government Schools, Ministry of Education (Formal and Non Formal). This research will also help us constantly engage and listen to the needs of our Burmese Migrant Community and find ways to advocate for access, quality, accreditation, and sustainable migrant education pathways.
- **Accreditation for Migrant Worker Classes:** In June MAF Volunteer teachers will complete Thai, English and Computer 'short course' curriculums which will be presented to the Non Formal Education Department for certification. These will be

60 hours – 6 month courses (Sunday 2—4pm). MAF signed a MOU with Non Formal Education Department which supported the development of short courses for Migrant Workers. This certificate can assist young migrant workers who left school aged 12 to support their families an education pathway for more employment choices.

- **COVID challenges:** Since March Thailand has experienced a 3rd wave of Covid 19 infections. 4 Covid Field Hospitals were established to support the large number of Burmese Migrants affected. Current numbers are 1,103 (Thai= 303 & Burmese = 800). It has been distressing to see the lack of financial support offered for Burmese in Covid Field Hospitals. MAF joined with other organisations to ensure food and vital supplies support Burmese Migrant Families and Children. As the crisis continues, the requirement for patients to self-quarantine at homes for a further 14 days has placed incredible challenges upon families and children. MAF has provided Tuesday meals and responded to World Vision emergency requests and MAF families and students.
- **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. The Marist Centre became a Covid 19 Testing Centre for several days to help identify the spike in infections in the local Bangrin area which is a highly densely populated migrant area.

Student Story



“I study hard to improve my English because I want to go to university”

Education grows confidence, increases choices, brings hope for a brighter future.

La Pyae Woon shares her story why she has joined the MOP English Class after finishing school.

English Language is an increasingly important gateway now and for the future to access online education.

Mingalarbar! My name is La Pyae Woon and I am 19 years old. I live in Ranong, Thailand with my family. I am currently studying an Academic English course and I have been studying at Marist Asia Foundation since 2014.

Education is one of the biggest challenges for young Burmese migrant people like me. Not a lot of us are gifted with education even though education can give us good experiences and knowledge. Since I am lucky enough to have an opportunity to study at MAF, I study hard to improve my English because I want to go to university.

As a teenage student, I feel that I need more knowledge, experiences, and challenges to be an educated person. These are the reasons why I am continuing my current education. I really love studying the Academic English Exam Preparation Outreach Program (EPOP) because this Program is giving me a lot of knowledge I have not known before. By studying in this program, my English has improved a lot and it is very helpful for students like me who want to prepare for the university entrance exam.

I have a lot of dreams and plans for the future. I have three big dreams. The first one is to graduate from a university (ACU), and share my knowledge and experience with the new students. The second one is to be a fashion designer after graduation, which is my ultimate goal. My third dream is to support orphans and poor children. I really want to be a good supporter because everyday I always see a lot of children who can't go to school and have to work at an early age for their livelihood. They are too young to work and they should be going to school.

I always felt I was one of the luckiest students who got this precious opportunity to study at MAF in my community. Besides teaching lessons, MAF taught us practical skills and important knowledge as well as encouraging students to keep going for their goals and using our skills and learning to serve our community. MAF is also like my second home because I have spent years growing up there.

A Scholarship Education Opportunity



Marist Asia Foundation is proud to announce the award of a Scholarship Partnership Fund for Yoon Thiri and May Thazin Oo for a Bachelor of Education at Asia Pacific International University (Bangkok) in August 2021.

Yoon Thiri (left), Fr Frank Bird and May Thazin Oo (right) sign their Learning and Service Agreement with Marist Asia Foundation. Their commitment to study 4 years and return to serve the Education Programmes at Marist Asia Foundation helps supports a quality and sustainable education pathway for our Burmese Migrant Community in Ranong, Southern Thailand.

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



Celebrating Higher Education: Pre-Graduation Photos February 2021. Due to Covid travel and group restrictions our Graduation for the Australian Catholic University (May) was postponed until later in 2021 when we can gather with family and friends to celebrate their achievement. This celebration continues to inspire younger students.

NUMBERS

- ACU Diploma Programme: 12 students completed their Diploma in Liberal Arts in February 2021. MAF will have graduated 55 Young Burmese Migrants since 2010.
- ACU Certificate Programme: 4 Burmese Migrant Teachers will complete their Certificate in Teaching and Learning in July. MAF will have graduated 9 Young Burmese Teachers since 2020.

UPDATES

- **Graduation**: due to Covid health and safety restrictions, the graduation ceremony planned for May was postponed. We are waiting for the opportunity to celebrate with the students and their proud families their special education achievement.
- **The Certificate in Teaching and Learning** Students will begin their final and fourth Course: Assessment for Learning June 21.

- **Gaining Employment:** 10 of the 12 Graduates have already gained employment in Migrant Learning Centres Education (6), Health (1) and Translation / Interpreter Work (1), Hospitality (2)
- **Graduate Scholarships:** Yoon Thiri and May Thazin Oo have been awarded a Scholarship to Asia Pacific International University (APIU Bangkok) for a 4 Year Bachelor of Education. They will return to Marist Asia Foundation to support the Primary, Secondary and Higher Education Programmes. Htike Htike is awaiting confirmation of his application for Masters in Human Rights and Democratization at Mahidol University.
- **Internship:** Soe Myat Tun was recently selected for the Connected Learning in Crisis Consortium Communications Internship. This is a 12 month part time opportunity to develop communication and media skills while continuing to work with MAF
- **Leadership Development Programme:** Pai Htu Htwe and Mee Ei have both been accepted into the 12 month BEAM Foundation Community Youth Leader Development Programme (CYLD) This online programme involves a General Education Diploma, English, Leadership and Community Development Projects.



Teacher Training: Teacher Katie (left) supports and mentors another group of Burmese Teachers in the Certificate in Teaching and Learning Programme. The Learning Environment Online (LEO) system with Australian Catholic University provides the digital content. Supported with weekly classes, personal mentoring, video feedback and peer sharing, teachers gain personal confidence and develop competency in classroom management and teaching methodologies. Teacher Training is considered one of the key factors to improve educational outcomes for Burmese Migrant – Refugee Education on the Thai Burma Border.

Administration

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



A covered area to provide for more student activities. In 2021 we saw the completion of the concrete floor and 3 new classrooms. With 240 students and a very hot and wet climate, the ability to have students get out of the classroom, play games, and sit together out of the rain and hot sun, has made a huge improvement in the experience of daily life at the Marist Centre. We are incredibly grateful to our supporters for this improvement.

The effects of an Education Crisis, Covid 19 and a Military Coup

An estimated 3,000 Migrant Children were without a Migrant Learning Centre in 2020.

Thankfully, in late November 2020, the Ranong Provincial Government authorised Ranongthani Monastery and Beam Foundation to open their Migrant Learning Centres for Burmese Migrant Children with special education conditions.

Marist Asia Foundation is now involved in a Research Survey Project with Teacher Focus Myanmar to assess the current needs of the Migrant Community. The aim of the Participative Research Project is to understand the obstacles to education, assess how many children are 'Out Of School Children' (OOSC), and listen to what education pathways migrant parents are wanting for their children.

February 2021 saw both Covid cases arrive in Ranong and the damaging effects of the Military Coup in Myanmar. While Border Closures were already in place, some parents and children were separated on either side of the border, many jobs in the fish processing

factories were affected, and Myanmar Migrant Families became extremely concerned and uncertain of their future. Many cannot imagine returning home to Myanmar in this current situation. Many are struggling without work, without health services, without social welfare.

Marist Asia Foundation has been actively involved in supporting COVID Testing in the Migrant Community, supporting translation for Thai Public Health Officials, distributing food to needy families, and networking support with World Vision to support Myanmar Migrant Covid Field Hospitals in Ranong. We are grateful for supporters and donors showing their support which has enabled us to create a Covid Care Committee. We are actively monitoring families in our education and health programmes and responding to requests from the Burmese Migrant Community. It is uncertain when vaccines will be available for the general migrant community and we can foresee continued support needed for the next 4 months.

Construction

May 2021 saw the completion of 2 years of Marist Centre Development to achieve our education goal of supporting 250 students. 3 new classrooms have been added and a large shade and concrete area have created better learning and activity spaces.

Scholarship Partnership Fund

To support the vision for a sustainable quality education for Burmese Migrant Children, we are delighted with the support of the Society of Mary USA, Society of Mary NZ, Marist Mission Centre (Australia) and Marist Asia Foundation to partner together to support 2 Burmese Teachers to gain a Bachelor of Arts - Teaching at Asia Pacific International University (4 years) and then return to a commitment to Marist Asia Foundation for 4 years. They will begin their studies in Bangkok in August 2021. This enables us to have continuity and confidence to develop our Education Programmes for the future.

Inter-Religious Dialogue

Fr Hermes Sabud has begun creating a vision for the Harmony Centre (a small house and land beside a river on the edge of Ranong). In addition to a peaceful place for reflection and dialogue with religious leaders and staff, educational activities are being created to engage with students in the Life skills programmes. Witness to harmony and unity in the midst of different cultures and religious traditions can be a powerful sign of community and hope in the midst of fractured communities.

New Director and Staff in 2021

We expect the arrival of Fr Arnold Garferio (Philippines) who will become the new Director, and Fr Ricardo Gutierrez (Mexico) who will support the Education Programmes, and Sr Angela Nan Koe (Myanmar) who will support the HIV AIDS Health Programme. We have been delighted to welcome recent ACU Graduates into the Preparation Programme and Secondary Programme as student numbers have increased by 90 students in 2021.

June, 2021

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