



## **Report**

**“Ah Yone Thit school”**

**June 2013 – May 2014**



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## 1. General overview

Help without Frontiers works in the city of Mae Sot, which is located at the Thai-Myanmar border. The friendship bridge connects the two countries and is the most important border crossing between Thailand and Myanmar.

There are a total of 2.3 million migrant workers from Myanmar in Thailand of whom 1.2 million had been regularized during a "national verification process", Myanmar citizens register with the authorities, at the end of October 2013.

The city of Mae Sot has 31.000 inhabitants (2012, Wikipedia) and an estimated 120.000 migrants from Myanmar. Additionally, over 119.000 refugees from Myanmar are living in the camps along the Thai-Myanmar border in March 2014. Most of the migrants and refugees from Myanmar bring their children with them and leave them in Mae Sot with relatives or in the care of teachers in local migrant schools. Out of the need for the children's education so called "Migrant Learning centers" emerged. Until now there are over 70 in the area of Mae Sot.



The schools are not officially operating. Working underground in past years, meanwhile they are registered with the local ministry of education. This enhances the status of schools as well as teachers, who are also mainly illegally in Thailand.

7 of the schools are supported by Helfen ohne Grenzen under the programme "Ray of Hope Schools". The schools are supported financially as well as logistically and the staff in Mae Sot represents the schools in front of the local authorities. Some of the schools have dormitories attached, for children whose parents can't take care of them for various reasons and abandoned/orphaned children. One of the schools is supported by Help without Frontiers Austria and will not appear in this report.

Additionally 3 small schools in the border region of Myanmar and a dormitory are supported with supplies and salaries for teachers and caretakers.

## 2. Programme goals

- To give access to education to all children despite of gender, religion and ethnicity
- To provide a safe and child friendly environment to children
- To improve the quality of education in "Migrant Learning Centers"
- To improve the situation of illegal children in Thailand
- To work closely together with the Ministry of Education in Mae Sot
- To keep a good relation between donors, schools, local organizations and government organizations

### **3. "Ray of Hope" school management**

The school budgets are drawn together with the school management team for each year at the beginning of the schools year. All stationeries and supplies are ordered and distributed by our staff. Uniforms are provided by our "Happy Tailor" project and food for schools and dormitories is delivered by our "yummy! meals for schools" project. At the beginning of the school year each student receives a student ID with picture from our office.

The schools are managed in close cooperation with the headmasters. Each school sends a representative to monthly meetings in our office in Mae Sot. During the meetings the teacher salaries for the previous month are being paid, receipts are collected and advanced money for the coming month is given out according to the budgets. Problems and needs are being discussed and information is shared. The school's representatives report back to our office.

Some schools participate in the programme "School within School" from the Thai government. Under this programme students are registered in Thai schools and study a few times each week there. At the end of the year they participate in the official Thai examinations.

At the end of 2013 our education programme manager Nan Mu Chaung Khu left our team. She was replaced by Khin Soe Mon and David, who started in October and will manage the education programme from now on together. They are responsible for the monthly meetings, monitoring and reports at the end of the school year.

### **4. School activities with Help without Frontiers**

At the end of the last school year there was a tragic accident happening to the school bus of our 42km school, where one child died and many others got hurt. Our office decided to give training to all school bus drivers just before the school year started, to avoid accidents in the future. Traffic rules, Thai law as well as rules for our school buses and transport of children have been explained. Also the busses were checked for necessary signs, lights and safety standards.

The school year started in June. All schools held a small opening ceremony, to welcome the new and old students to the new school year. Monthly meetings with school responsible were held in our office, as well as bi-monthly meetings with headmasters and the local Ministry of Education.



The first group of Peer Youth leaders in our Rays of Youth programme held their graduation ceremony in June. The graduates also gave training on human trafficking to 200 children of 10 schools. New students for the Peer Youth as well as for the music programme have been selected in February 2014.

Our LDF School, which Help without Frontiers supported for many years, had to close down at the end of the school year 2012/13. A case of abuse was uncovered in the school's dormitory. Responsible teachers have been dismissed and the perpetrator was sentenced to jail. For the children in the area the school was opened under a new management with a new name in July 2013. 45 primary students began to study in the new school "Ah Yone Thit".

In August the area of Mae Sot was hit by a devastating flood, which left many people homeless and roads became impassable. Some of our schools had to close down, as students were unable to reach the school. Many factories had to shut down as well, leaving the students parents without income over a long period. Some parents left to work in Bangkok and left the student with relatives in Mae Sot. Help without Frontiers supported schools, students and their families on both sides of the border with basic necessities.

In November the Hair Salon "Fashion Shop" from Mae Sot held a two day hair cutting workshop for our schools. The workshop was held at Parami School and 20 students and teachers from our Ray of Hope schools participated. Back in their schools they will be responsible for cutting the hair of the students, as many parents can't afford a hairdresser and don't take care of their children's appearance.



In December the 4<sup>th</sup> Ray of Hope School student fellowship was held at Parami school. 350 students from 8 schools participated in the three day event full of sports, games and entertainment.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of January our schools participated in the celebration for World Children's Day at CDC School. Our Rays of Youth Team had an own small stand with information, games and riddles. They also performed for the other children on stage.

Our volunteers Laura, Manuel and Sandra from South Tyrol gave a handicraft workshop at all schools. Veronika Lanziner taught at the Ah Yone Thit School.

At the end of the school year 2013/2014 the BHSOH School and Help without Frontiers will go separate ways. A lack of transparency and difficulties in cooperation forced us to decide at the beginning of the year to split from the school. Supporting the school for the whole year, the management had enough time to look for alternative ways of funding.

## 5. School profile and budget

In this chapter we list the student and teacher numbers as well as the budget for the year 2013/14. We also would like to thank you for your support. All stationery is supported by the Autonomous Province of Bozen.



## Ah Yone Thit School

*School adopters:* Nonna Gabriella, Wolf Fenster, Hans Augschöll

*General information:*

<b>Grade</b>	<b>female</b>	<b>male</b>	<b>Total</b>
Nursery	9	10	19
Kindergarten	7	8	15
Grade 1	3	4	7
Grade 2	4	3	7
Grade 3	0	6	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Teachers</b>			<b>4</b>

The Ah Yone Thit School, former LDF School, is located in the fields of Ban Mon Tong outside Mae Sot. There are Burmese, Karen and Mon ethnic children attending the primary school. The year started a little difficult, as the whole school team changed, but meanwhile got into the routine of daily teaching.

*School budget:* Exchange rate 42.935 B./1 Euro

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>	
	<b>THB</b>	<b>EUR</b>
A Running cost	210.597,40	4.905,03
B Food	78.580,96	1.815,90
C Student & Teacher uniform	14.145,36	329,46
D Stationery	2.816,70	65,60
<b>Total</b>	<b>303.323,72</b>	<b>7.050,39</b>

## 6. Challenges and future plans

Help without Borders is trying to integrate the students in the Thai or Burmese School system. This will take time. Even though Myanmar is opening slowly there are many challenges ahead.

The general access to the Burmese border town of Myawaddy improved during the last year. There have been many meetings between Thai and Burmese groups involved in education. The cooperation between the countries improves, but slowly.

For the children living in Mae Sot there will be the opportunity to attend a Burmese school in Myawaddy or a Thai school in Mae Sot. Anyway there are over 15.000 children in the Migrant school system and it will take some time to find a solution for all of them. Until then, the Migrant schools in Mae Sot have to continue with providing of education.

We would like to thank all donors, teachers, staff and friends for their support of our work. Without it many children would have no education at all.

