



Annual Report: 2023-2024 School Year

Thanks for taking the time to learn about our work over the past year. It was a year of highs and lows. The school year started with a record enrollment of over 130 students. Lows came from the stories of fear and violence recounted by our new students from Myanmar; of having the food in their house taken at gunpoint, of fathers being conscripted, of grandmothers hiding under bridges as their village was bombed.

The highlights of the year came in our ability to provide a safe, happy place to learn; a refuge from the ills of war and poverty. With the combined dedication of our teachers and our supporters, we were able to expand and improve what we do. Victories include new classrooms and playground equipment, more teachers, Thai lessons for families, better healthcare, and a parent-led lunch program. Continue reading to see specific highlights below:



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OUR STORY

Since 2007, the Andaman Center for Migrant Education has been the only educational opportunity for the thousands of migrant families living in Kuraburi district of Phang Nga, Southern Thailand. The Andaman Center is a partnership between the North Andaman Network Foundation and the Foundation for Education and Development (FED), and supported financially by Global Purpose Group.

The Andaman Center offers primary education structured around Myanmar and Thai curricula for students in primary school, as well as services for the wider migrant community.



Our Goals:

1. Provide a quality education for migrant children in a safe and reliable environment, and in doing so, sustain their only educational opportunity.
2. Protect our vulnerable students from child labor and other forms of exploitation.
3. Improve the skills of migrant teachers and the standard of education for migrant children.
4. Help pupils adapt to living in Thailand, and continue their education in the event that they relocate or return to Myanmar.
5. Support the migrant community with dedicated teams to address health issues, human and labor rights violations, and women's empowerment.

School and Classroom Successes

- We started the school year by providing the students with new playground equipment. As expected, this addition is one of the student's favorites and it also supports their overall wellbeing. Playing outside helps student's physical health and motor skills as well as their confidence and independence. Because of your support, we were able to utilize quality equipment that will continue to engage our students for years to come.



- We were able to finish construction of a new classroom. This allowed us to have a dedicated kindergarten space, creating less of a distraction to the older students, and improving the quality of nap time for our youngest students.



- We received a number of laptops, and were able to restart the use of our computer lab. This year we focused on teaching students research skills and English language lessons.

- For the first time since the pandemic, we have been able to welcome back volunteer teachers. Volunteer teachers can help continue encouraging an interest in language learning, a skill that can make a pivotal impact on our students' future opportunities. We also welcomed volunteers from a circus, one of the memorable moments of joy in our school year. We appreciate the volunteers who support our student's growth.

- This year, we were able to take learning beyond the classroom. This included a day trip excursion to Phang Nga where grade 5 and 6 students were able to visit a Buddhist temple, hike at a wildlife sanctuary, and explore a cave filled with dazzling limestone formations. Field trips help students apply their learning to real world scenarios, widen their horizons, and deepen their experience.



Child Well Being

- We worked to protect and enhance student health. Over 100 students were signed up for health insurance, allowing access to all local hospitals and clinics. We also helped students get vaccinated and hosted health education sessions so students could better care for themselves.
- Our integration team also helped 15 Burmese children attend Thai government schools, by teaching them basic Thai language, helping parents fill out registration forms, and translating at parent-teacher meetings.
- Our school got a guitar! Music supports child brain development and literacy, as well as being a form of self-expression.
- Students this year were engaged in community events. Students attended multiple sports events and football tournaments; and a dance performance at the nearby mosque. Engaging with the community is an important step in adapting to life in Thailand, the students' adopted country.



Parent and Family Involvement

Parents and families are central to the work of the Andaman Center, and have played an increasingly important role at the school:

- Nearly 75% of families were able to contribute to their children's education through school fees of roughly \$12 per month. These fees help offset the cost of transportation. Parents have communicated to us that they want to support the school, and they feel proud to help with some of the costs, despite their limited income.
- Parents and teachers came together to restart the lunch program. The parents used Facebook and Whatsapp to raise donations within the Burmese community; ensuring that all students can eat a healthy meal at least once a day.
- Our teachers offered opportunities to parents and students to learn Thai on the weekends. Learning Thai supports family's autonomy when working with the government, doctors, or the larger community.
- As always, we engaged in community outreach before the school year began, reaching out to parents to make sure their kids were coming back to school, and encouraging newly arrived families to enroll. We also hosted regular parent-teacher meetings, tracking the progress of each student.



Support for the Migrant Community

In addition to our work with children and parents, the Andaman Center is involved with the larger Burmese migrant community in a number of ways:

- We offer legal support to the community. Within the past year services included assistance after road incidents, reclaiming documents, ensuring fair pay, and fighting workplace abuse.
- During the past year we were able to provide shelter to a family needing refuge from domestic abuse. The Andaman Center also hosted an event with the MAP Foundation to Stop Violence Against Women.
- Sometimes the best way to help is to just be there. Our school is open to the community for use for community meetings, cultural celebrations, and Buddhist holy days.
- Additionally, we promote labor rights awareness, workplace safety, and access to social security benefits regularly to fishermen and dockworkers. Staff have recently begun a 2-year project to help migrant dockworkers form a union to better fight for safe workplaces and fair wages.



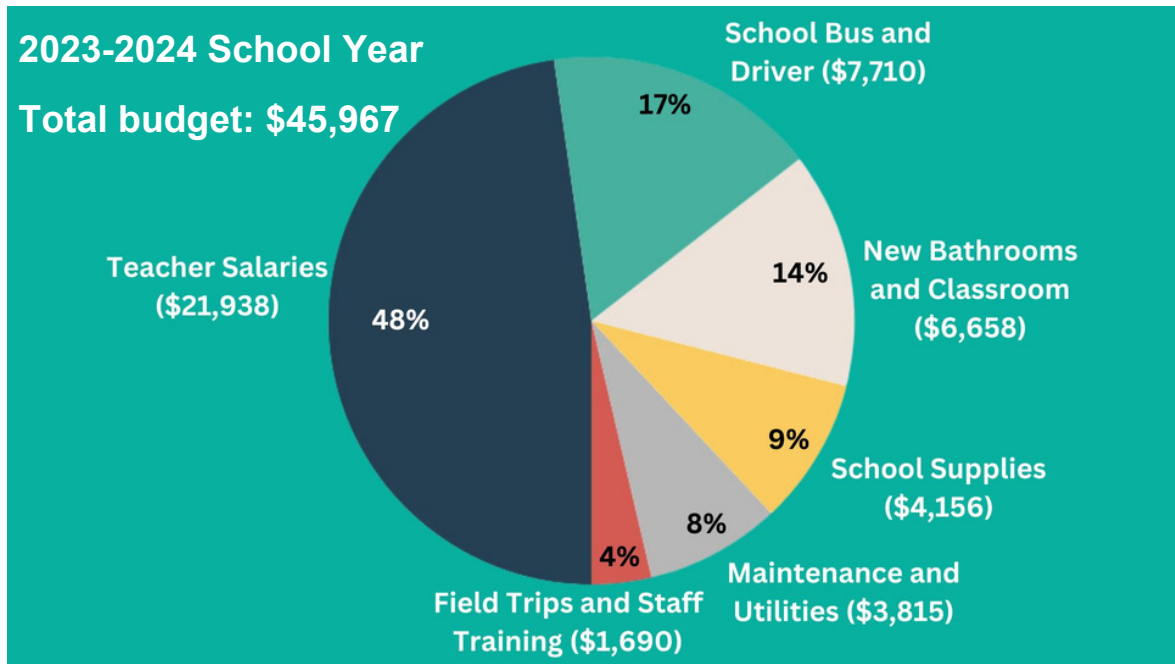
Looking Forward

We feel grateful for the work we have been able to achieve this year, knowing the significance of our work is only increasing. As the conflict in Myanmar deepens, there is great concern about a planned military offensive, and a new law requiring migrant workers to join the army. Both of these events will create an increase in migration, and we are preparing to greet new students with open arms.

In the new year we plan to hire two more teachers, and improve our student to teacher ratio. In exciting news, we plan to build 3 new classrooms and a dining hall. This will allow each grade level to have their own classroom, and provide a space to welcome grade 7 students for the first time; fulfilling our goals of providing a full primary education to Burmese Migrant Children



Budget



Student Attendance

Student Grade	Female Students	Male Students
Kindergarten	14	16
Grade 1	15	11
Grade 2	13	13
Grade 3	7	8
Grade 4	9	8
Grade 5	6	12
Grade 6	9	5
Total Enrollement March 2024	73	73
Starting Enrollment May 2023	64	70



Teacher Spotlight:

Shein Nay Zin

Meet Shein, our newest teacher. He is a recent arrival to Thailand. I spoke with him in early March and asked why he came. He responded, “I was a teacher in Myanmar, but when the army took over, I joined the civil disobedience movement and protested. The army blacklisted me, which meant I lost my job and was not allowed to find new work. Then the army came to my family and told them I had to leave or there would be “trouble for everyone.” So, now I am here in Thailand, and I am proud to be teaching again because I am educating the next generation who can help save Myanmar.”

Student Spotlight

Meet Ei and Htet - new friends Ei and her parents arrived this past year from Dawei to work on a palm oil plantation. Ei says she is excited to be around other kids again, as she has mostly been at home since her school in Myanmar closed last year. If she could be a super hero, she excitedly said she would be Superwoman! Htet is also a new arrival to Thailand, and her favorite place at school is the garden because she “loves the beautiful flowers.” Htet wants to be a math teacher when she grows up. When asked “what superhero do you want to be,” she said, “a bear, because they are so powerful!”

