

MARIST MISSION RANONG

Annual Report 2013



Education Programmes | Migrant Support Programme | HIV AIDS Health Programme

Who we are

Marist Mission Ranong is a project of the Society of Mary (Marists) responding to needs in Asia. The Project began in 2006.

What we do

Marist Mission Ranong serves Burmese Migrants on the Thailand / Burma Border through Education, Health and Migrant Support Programmes.

Thailand Burma Border - still a place in great need

There is much publicity about the positive changes taking place within Myanmar (Burma). There is also the reality of an increase in Burmese Migrants coming into Thailand. Sadly this reflects the continued poverty and desperation faced by many in Burma who seek employment and a future for their children.

Ranong, as the southern most border crossing town with Burma, is dominated by the fishing industry which, latest reports indicate, requires an extra 50,000 migrant workers to satisfy the demand of Thai fishing boats.



2013 Achievements

- In February Marist Mission Ranong was Nominated for a National NGO Award by the Social Development and Human Security Office in Ranong.
- In May the Marist Centre was completed and opened to serve 200 students. The Community Centre / Library serves many Migrant workers and the HIV AIDS Health Team serves over 80 patients and their families.
- In November, another 8 new Burmese Graduates obtained a University Qualification through the University Online Diploma Programme.
- HIV AIDS monthly self help meetings provided patients with an opportunity for friendship, education and support.
- Marist Mission Ranong continued to implement the Ministry of Education Memorandum of Understanding for non formal education in Grades 1-6.

Ranong continues to be one of the largest population centres for Burmese migrant workers with a recorded 80,000 documented migrants and an estimated 80,000 undocumented migrants.

While funders rightly seek to support the transition to democracy within Burma and its required investment in development, the associated harsh reality on the southern Thailand / Burma Border town of Ranong is that four significant organisations involved in Burmese Learning Centres and Migrant Workers Health are either scaling down or withdrawing because of lack of funds.

At Marist Mission Ranong we continue to recognise the Thailand / Burma Border is still a place in great need. We remain committed to supporting the Education, Health and Migrant Worker needs. Our programmes intentionally promote future Burmese leaders who will serve their migrant community and their country on the pathway to democracy and development.

Completion of the Marist Centre

A major achievement and highlight of 2013 was the completion of the Marist Centre. We now have a multi purpose centre for our Education, Health and Migrant Support Programmes. This has created a welcoming place for Burmese Migrants, a home for education of children and migrant workers, and a caring presence and place for HIV AIDS patients and families to receive support.



EDUCATION

Preschool Programme | Secondary Education Programme | University Online Diploma

Poverty

Transport, uniforms, lunches, and a small school donation are a financial obstacle too large for many Burmese Migrant families.

Marist Mission Ranong is particularly concerned that capable students without financial support are denied an education and an opportunity to change their future.

A moving migrant community

As economic refugees seeking work and a hope for a better future for their children, Burmese Migrants face uncertainty about finding work. This significantly affects their children's educational engagement and achievement.

Being 'Burmese'

Social barriers and discrimination constantly affect Burmese Migrants working in Thailand. The lack of opportunity and difficulty entering the Thai Education System continues the cycle of poverty among Burmese.



Preschool Programme

Poverty is a distressing daily difficulty in the life of Burmese Migrant families.

To provide for their families, parents frequently work two jobs and young children are either left unattended at home, wandering about on the streets, collecting rubbish, or accompanying a parent working in an unsafe work environment such as a fish or charcoal factory or marketplace.

The Preschool Programme aims to

- Provide a programme for migrant children to enable parents to go to work.
- Provide a positive early childhood experience of education for children and parents so as to promote further education.

In 2013 a curriculum was developed encompassing Burmese, Thai, and English Languages, Health and Nutrition, Arts, Science, Mathematics and Values Education.

In 2013 the numbers of preschoolers increased from 60 to 75

From tears to smiles



Myint Myat (*not his real name*) arrived at Marist Mission Ranong Pre School Programme in 2013 after a visit from the Health Team.

He is 4 years old and lives with his Mother and two sisters. His Father is a fisherman. Working for 3 months at sea can cause difficulties for Mum and the children.

At first, he was unsure how to behave with other children in a classroom. He was very timid and didn't want to talk to anybody for the first day.

He did not know how to hold a pencil or write. He would cry constantly and loudly and when asked to do something he would simply stare at the teacher.

After four months he now greets the teacher with a wonderful smile, helps the teacher tidy the classroom, cleans the tables, and volunteers to arrange the shoes tidily.

His Mother shares that he is now very talkative at home, always retelling the activities that happened at school and singing the songs. She said he has even begun to try and teach her as if in the classroom. He continues not to eat the lunch and snacks provided by the programme because he is keeping these for his two sisters at home.

children and their was good attendance at 3 parent meetings.

Team teaching and an individual teacher observation and mentoring programme was established to develop the teachers skills.

The Preschool Programme is now integrated into the 'Marist Centre'. This provides a positive wider Education environment with senior school students greeting and accompanying children up the stairs and to their classrooms providing daily support and encouragement.

This Programme provides a great learning experience and a positive expectation of going to school as a 'normal' experience for both Burmese Migrant Parents and children

The positive effects of the programme has been shown by an increased interest and demand in 2014. In 2013 the Pre School Programme reached its capacity of 75 students in 3 classes.



SECONDARY

Preschool Programme | Secondary Education Programme | University Online Diploma

Burmese Migrants Education

There are an estimated 20,000 Burmese Migrant Children in the area surrounding Ranong. There are limited education opportunities and 90% of children finish education to work at age 12.

Child Protection

Lack of attendance at a school raises the risk of child trafficking or pressures to work in the fish factories.

Growing leaders

With less than 20 Burmese Migrants receiving a formal education experience in a Thai Secondary school Marist Mission Ranong responded with a Child Protection Programme (35 students) inviting at risk children off the streets, and a Secondary Education Programme for 75 students who have the ability, personal motivation and parent support for 4 years of secondary education.



Secondary Education

The Marist Secondary Education Programme responds to the significant need for education of Burmese Migrants Children aged between 12-18.

The Secondary Education Programme aims to empower Burmese teenagers with a basic, well rounded education to enable them to be productive members of their communities

Statistics reveal, that in 2013 of the estimated 20,000 Burmese Migrant Children in the Ranong Province, only 2,300 were in one of the 12 Burmese Learning Centres. Significant numbers of children are not receiving an education and 90% of the children in these Centres depart at age 12.

A continued significant concern is the large number of students who are not attending a Learning Centre and the lack of education opportunities for Burmese Teenagers.

In 2013 Marist Mission Ranong continued the Child Protection Programme providing an education programme for 35 Burmese students in the surrounding area of the Marist Centre who are not attending any Learning Centre.



Orphans find support and a future

In 2009 the Health Team was made aware of three young and orphaned girls aged 14,13,and 11.

Neighbours to a fish factory alerted us to two of the young girls working in the fish factory and their need for help.

The three sisters were offered support and began to live with Marist Mission Ranong Burmese staff members. Placed within the Child Protection Education Programme, they began to enjoy being at a school, and meeting new friends..

In 2013 Pan Phyu (*not her real name*) is now 15 years old and has progressed to Year 2 of the Secondary Education Programme. She is very happy and succeeding well at school. She has a great gift with music and has enjoyed singing for a number of special events at Marist Mission Ranong. She now lives with her older sister who is employed as a translator in the local Ranong Hospital.

Pan Phyu wants to become a teacher and to teach other Burmese Migrant Children.

In 2011 Marist Mission Ranong was granted a Memorandum of Understanding by the Thailand Ministry of Education - Province of Ranong - to run a non formal education programme.

In 2013 Marist Mission Ranong became a pilot project to teach the 3 year alternative 'Non Formal Education Programme' designed to assist Burmese Migrant students to be able to enter the Thai education system for further studies.

In 2013, a 4 year curriculum was also developed for English, Science, Maths and Social Studies for the Secondary Education Programme.

In 2013 graduates from the Secondary Education Programme found successful employment including 5 training as teachers in Burmese Learning Centres, Translators in medical clinics, a Mobile Phone Company and Supervisory jobs in Ranong.

Teacher Home visits, has significantly helped teachers appreciate the students' home living situations and their difficulties in learning and studying.

"I want my child to have a job with a pen and not just cut off the head of the fish with a knife"

A Father speaking at Parent Meeting

UNIVERSITY

Preschool Programme | Secondary Education Programme | University Online Diploma

University Online Diploma Programme



Marist Mission Ranong partners with Australian Catholic University in the Thai / Burma Border Programme providing a Diploma course for future leaders.

The University Online Diploma aims to offer an internationally recognised qualification in the English language medium that helps students find meaningful employment or gain university entrance for other degree programmes at universities in Thailand and overseas.

Entrance to the programme requires students to be a Burmese Migrant living and working in Ranong, show a proficiency in English, a commitment to the programme lasting 12-15 months and a willingness to use their skills in order to help their own community.

In 2013 Marist Mission Ranong benefitted from the presence of international volunteers and trained teachers from New Zealand who established the 'Bridging Programme' to prepare interested candidates for 6 months prior to the University Online Diploma Entrance Exam. This greatly improved the quality and competency of the candidates.



‘Creating a brighter future’

In front of the families and leaders gathered to honour the achievement of their Burmese Migrant Leaders, Leah Wa Wa Zaw shared just how profound the achievement of the academic journey had been for them.

‘We are economic refugees in Thailand. One day we heard how Australia Catholic University was offering opportunities for all people from Myanmar regardless of ethnicity or religion. This gave us a chance to improve our lives and most importantly gave us hope.’

‘Before we studied at Australian Catholic University our hopes were dimly seen and our dreams were just dreams. We worried about our poor broken English and we were afraid that the courses would be too difficult for us’

‘In just over a year we are amazed at how much we have improved. Our English is so much better in writing, listening, reading and speaking. We have also become much better critical thinkers. Now we can think like the limitless sky!’

The number of students applying for the University Online Diploma Programme continues to exceed the number of places available. In 2013 12 students sat the entrance examination to compete for the 9-10 positions available.

In 2013 the University Online Diploma programme covered Academic English, Management, International Development, Human Rights, Leadership, Climate Change, Photography, Psychology in partnership with Australian Catholic University, York University (Canada), and Fairfield University (United States).

Lecturers from 4 of the 8 courses delivered these in person at the Marist Centre in Ranong which exposed the students to an international outlook and a breadth of experience normally limited to those able to afford University studies in the city.

In 2013 8 of the 9 students graduated with a Diploma in Liberal Arts from the Australian Catholic University.

In 2013 graduates found employment as Teachers, Health Workers, working for Non Governmental Organisations, in the Hotel Industry and some have applied for further University Studies.

The growth in leadership skills and the personal confidence of the University Online Diploma students continues to be a highlight and inspirational example for other young men and woman and the whole Burmese Migrant Community in Ranong.

“This Australian Catholic University Diploma course is like a candle that provides light and knowledge creating a brighter future for us all”



HEALTH PROGRAMME

HIV AIDS COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMME

HIV AIDS

There is a high rate of HIV AIDS on the Thailand Burma border crossing town of Ranong, Thailand. The Marist Mission Health Project serves over 80 HIV AIDS patients who are most in need.

Community Support

The Health Programme is community based, involving visits to homes and encouraging families and friends into monthly education and support 'self help' meetings. These gatherings help break down isolation and build independence and resiliency.

Translation Services

Marist Mission Health Team provides translators each Tuesday for Hospital appointments for Burmese Migrants to ensure effective communication between Thai Doctors and nurses and Burmese Migrants.



Marist Mission Ranong Health Programme supports Burmese Migrants with HIV AIDS and their families and care-givers who live in Ranong. The HIV AIDS Programme aims to:

- Assist with meeting the basic physical and emotional needs of patients
- Provide information to help patients and their families manage living with HIV AIDS
- Facilitate self help groups
- Assist with hospital access through the provision of transport, translators and by developing positive professional relationships with staff.

In 2013 the Marist Mission Ranong HIV AIDS Health Project:

- Received 40 new patients and 13 patients passed away.
- Provided 1260 patient home visits with monthly personal



From Loneliness to Hope

Marist Mission Ranong received a call to visit a dying man in December 2012.

U Kan Kaung (*not his real name*) was found alone in a broken down wooden hut unable to move. A neighbour was asked to help assist him into the car to take him to hospital for TB treatment. Both his wife and son had passed away from AIDS and his 5 year old daughter had recently been sent to a Buddhist monastery to ensure she was looked after.

Returning back from hospital he showed a great determination to live and get better for his little girl. Visits each day provided him with care, washing, rain covers, some basic rice and food. With help he began to understand his medication and with a clock and calendar each day he began to care for himself, cooking rice and some vegetables.

After 12 months he stands to greet team members at his door, is progressing well with HIV treatment, has work on a boat transporting wood, attends self help meetings, welcomed his daughter home for a week visit in October 2013 and looks forward to a life being able to manage his virus, work, and provide love and support for his daughter whom he loves.

contact, distribution of some basic food items of rice and nutrition, personal care and counselling, and individualised medication explanation.

- Provided 817 Hospital visits for patients in need of transport or special care and attention while in Hospital.
- Provided 2033 translation appointments at the Ranong Public Hospital for Tuberculosis (TB) Patients and HIV AIDS Patients ensuring medical advice is understood and effective assistance is provided between Thai medical staff and Burmese patients.

In 2013 Self Help Meetings were changed to a monthly half day format with group sharing activities, education and two patients invited to share their story and journey. This has been a source of great inspiration and encouragement and instrumental in breaking down barriers and growing hope and resiliency for patients on their journey to wholeness.

In October 2013, a significant development was the decision by the Thailand Government and Ranong Province Hospital, to give free access to Antiretroviral drugs (ARV) for HIV AIDS patients. This is a source of great relief for all involved in the treatment and care of HIV AIDS patients.



MIGRANT SUPPORT

Community Centre Library | Migrant Education Classes | Future Leaders



There are an estimated 100,000-160,000 Burmese Migrants living in and around Ranong. It is one of the largest Burmese Migrant populations in Thailand as many Burmese Parents and children seek work in the fish factories and plantations on the Thailand / Burma Border.

Poor living conditions, difficult work environments, low wages, discrimination and harassment are a daily part of the struggle as a migrant worker.

The Burmese Migrant Support Programme aims to

- Form positive relationships with local Burmese in order to best meet their needs
- Encourage Burmese to engage with their culture by providing a Burmese library service



“You are such a dreamer!”

My name is Kyaw Naing. In Burma at age 11 I sold water for \$4 per day and I collected garbage every evening. When I saw students with their white shirt I was sad. I wanted to be like them. I wanted to go to school.

In 1999 my family arrived in Ranong and I began working in a charcoal factory.

I found Marist Mission Ranong and the Migrant Support Programme. I was so happy. I joined the Computer Class and then the English Class in the evening.

At the beginning I did not understand what the teacher said but I could only guess what the teacher meant.

In 2012 I had an opportunity to join the Future Leaders Group and I learnt about the University Online Programme. Some of my friends teased me ‘you are silly’ ‘you are such a dreamer!’. Every day I studied from 7.00pm to 12.00am and I listened to English while I worked during the day. In December 2013 I passed the entrance exam and I cried at home and could not sleep the whole night. I’m a university student! Now I am completely changed.

•Educate adult Burmese with skills that will help them integrate into the local Thai community and find employment.

In 2013 our Migrant Support Programme focussed on 3 Programmes to respond to the needs of Burmese Migrant Workers.

Community Centre / Library

The new Marist Centre has encouraged a great sense of community with many students, parents, migrant workers feeling they have a place to come that is welcoming and responding to their needs.

The new Marist Centre has allowed the Library to grow with over 3,000 books in Burmese in a larger area with chairs and desks.

In 2013 it has been encouraging to see many school students, parents and workers reading and making use of the library which now has more than 500 members.

English / Thai / Computer Classes

English, Thai and Computer classes are courses that the Migrant Community have identified as the most helpful education programmes they can use to grow their confidence and ability to find work.

Adult Migrant Workers attending education classes have remained steady. A positive development in 2013 has been the introduction of Thai classes which allow Burmese Migrant workers to grow in their ability to communicate with Thai employers. This improves their working relationships, employment possibilities and integration into the local community.

Future Leaders Group

13 promising young Burmese men and women have been invited into a supportive programme providing mentoring in education, leadership, life and work skills.

Building the capacity of Young Burmese Migrant workers has grown their skills, commitment and employment opportunities as they work for Non Government Organisations in Ranong.

The success of this programme in 2013 is shown by 7 of the programme candidates entering the 2014 University Online Diploma Programme.



Directors Report

2013 has been a year full of great memories. I felt like the happiest man on earth at the opening of the new Marist Centre in May. It had been a dream for many years. To see it become a reality was filled with so many thoughts of migrant workers and children who have been served over the past 7 years. We can be humbly proud for the contribution we've made to the lives of thousands of Burmese with Education, Health, and Support Programmes.

The poorest of the poor in Ranong are those who live with HIV Aids. They experience great poverty, and added to this, is the social discrimination they face leading to extreme loneliness and suffering. It has been a huge relief to have the burden of expensive medicine taken off their shoulders. The Thai Government has introduced 'free health care' to Burmese Migrant who are registered and have a Health Card. It is a positive sign of commitment by the Thai authorities to support the many Burmese suffering on the Thailand / Burma Border.

The graduation of a new group of talented men and women from the University Online Diploma programme is always a personal highlight for me. I am so happy to see them proudly wearing their graduation gowns, a shining symbol of accomplishment and good news in the midst of a chaotic and complicated migrant life.

On the Thailand / Burma Border it is a tremendous success to simply have a child in the classroom. Each day seeing over 200 students come into the Marist Centre is deeply satisfying and wouldn't be possible without the generosity of so many supporters. Each day you are remembered thankfully in our prayers.

Despite some positive changes in Myanmar (Burma), there is very little difference here in Ranong. The big challenges still exist. Education is needed to lift families from the cycle of poverty. Restoring people to health allows them to work instead of being a burden to their families. Migrant Workers need a supportive community that will help them learn and strive for a better future.

I'm really very grateful for your support and prayers and hope you will continue to support us and the people we are serving.

Fr Kevin Medilo sm. Director. kevin26sm@gmail.com +66 843772574

FINANCE

Summary of the 2013 financial figures

Thanks

A special thanks to our funding partners: Marist Mission Centre Australia, Caritas Italy (Health Programme), Caritas Verona (Preschool Programme) Misaan Cara (Building Project), and generous schools and supporters for various programme needs. We are extremely grateful and seek to utilise funding to its maximum benefit for the children and families of Burmese Migrants.

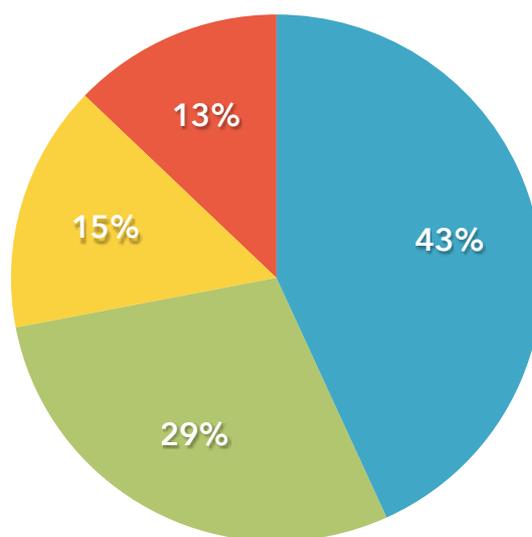
Sustainability

In 2013 discussion and planning has attempted to map our future partnerships, growing our friends, supporters network and online donation opportunities. Income generating projects are also being considered to ensure a sustainable pathway for the future.

Funding Challenges

Many NGO's are experiencing the stress of funding shifts from the Thailand Burma Border. Marist Mission Ranong seeks to identify, inform and strengthen new 3 year funding partnerships.

● Education ● Health ● Migrant Support ● Admin



Marist Mission Ranong Programmes 2013

Education Programmes	THB 2,565,072.00	Euro 62,562.00
Health Programme	THB 1,331,764.00	Euro 32,482.00
Migrant Support Programme	THB 702,659.00	Euro 17,138.00
Administration	THB 593,728.00	Euro 14,481.00
Total	THB 5,193,223.00	Euro 126,663.00



SUPPORTERS

visit: www.maristthailand.org and www.facebook.com/maristmissionranong

Opportunities

We welcome opportunities for Parish & School Partners, Teacher Volunteering, Class interaction, Immersion Experiences, and Sponsorship

Become a Friend

We love the people we serve and the work we do here on the Thailand / Burma Border. Become a friend at www.maristthailand.org and receive a monthly photo and story about the project.

Become a Supporter

In 2013 we developed a safe and secure way for people to share their support and care for Burmese children and Migrants in needs. Monthly supporters can provide a stable source of support for programmes and receive personal information how their donation is changing lives

Become a Donor

We continue to search for donor partners willing to support a particular programme. Contact Fr Frank Bird, Fundraising Co-ordinator for details.
francisbird@gmail.com



In 2013 we continued to benefit from the involvement of so many Friends, Supporters and Partners. We wish to express our continued thanks to:

Marist Mission Centre (Australia), Caritas Italiana (Italy), Caritas Verona (Italy), Caritas Ambrosiana (Italy) Misesan Cara (Ireland), Greg Larsen Fund at the Australian Community Foundation, Surat Thani Thai Catholic Foundation, J P McManus Foundation (Ireland)

St Pat's College Wellington NZ - "20 Grand for Thailand"

Irish Students visiting - English Language Camp

Volunteer Services Overseas (VSO) - Teacher Mentoring

Australian Catholic University (ACU) - University Online Diploma Programme

Singapore friends - Building Project

Donors responding to the givealittle.co.nz/org/maristmissionranong web campaign 'Complete the Marist Centre'

International Volunteers from: New Zealand, Italy and Ireland

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