

Children's Sponsorship Programme

Good Shepherd Sisters, Nongkhai Thailand

Progress Report

Academic Year 2014



*Greetings from the Children's Sponsorship Programme, Nong Khai, Thailand and a **HAPPY EASTER** to our sponsors, benefactors and friends.*

Through your contributions, children and students' education has been supported for another academic year. Some of our participants, when required, have received additional social assistance as well as other services provided for the children/students, their parents and their families during the year.

Programme Participants

We wish to share with you the following statistics which show the numbers assisted by our programme over the past three years. Sponsorship funds are provided from organizations and individuals in 14 countries.

Class	2012	2013	2014
<i>Kindergarten</i>	14	17	26
<i>Primary</i>	150	151	175
<i>Secondary</i>	163	157	126
<i>High School</i>	68	52	57
<i>Vocational Training School</i>	54	53	52
<i>Pre-University</i>	21	20	27
<i>University</i>	85	76	52
TOTAL	555	526	515
University Graduates	14	15	25
Pre-University Graduates	10	8	3

We are proud to announce that 25 of our sponsorship students graduated with a Bachelor's Degree this year. We would like to thank all of our supporters, benefactors and friends who gave them this opportunity. This advancement gives them the ability to receive good jobs and support their families.

Miss Wilawan Udaman



Wilawan does not have parental support. Her parents separated when she was young and since then, she and her younger sister have lived with their 70 year old grandmother. It is quite difficult for the family to get by as the only income they receive comes from the government elderly fund and Wilawan's part time weekend job.

She is a moral, diligent and responsible person. Her favorite subject is Thai. While she was in secondary education, her teacher informed the Good Shepherd Sister's Scholarship Programme of Wilawan's history and dreams for the future. During the eight years she spent under the Sponsorship Program, Wilawan always paid attention to her studies,

was diligent in her work and focused on developing herself. She won many awards in the Thai subject during this time.

Outside of school, she is employed to draw cartoons for instructional teaching media and earn some income for her schooling. She recently graduated with a first class honour Bachelor's Degree and got a job as an assistant teacher in Ban Na Sao Bungkarn province. She now has a better living situation and we are very proud of her.

Activities Programme

Besides sponsoring the students monetarily, the Sponsorship's Programme seeks to provide students with life skills and holistic development. We accomplish this goal during our home visits and the follow up meetings we have with all our students as well as the training we provide on morality and ethics.

The activities provided this year were:



Planning for the future

In order to train our students to think about and plan for their future, we held a training seminar entitled, "Make Our Dreams Come True" on the 9th of April, 2014 for the students in primary education (shown left). Beyond future planning, we also used this time to train them in Thai courtesy and manners. We focused on them being good students and representatives of the Good Shepherd Sisters by living out their lives

with love, care and gratitude to their families and benefactors. We also highlighted 'violence against women and children' and distributed orange ribbons as a symbol of anti-violence.

Relationships built on respect

For the youth in secondary education and higher, we held a training seminar lead by the staff of Baan Perpetual Help Foundation and a nurse from Thai Traditional Medicine, at Tabor Hospital, Nongkhai province entitled "Building Respect in Youth Relationships". The students were split into two groups and completed the training on different days. There were 120 students per group. The objective of the training was to have students realize their self-worth and learn about sexual health in regard to relationships. We talked about how to have healthy, loving relationships and educated them on appropriate dating practices.



Meetings for guardians

We also held meetings with the students and their guardians in March and July 2014. These meetings focused on taking good care of their children, Thai tradition and manners, community development, the anti-violence campaign of the women and children's movement, and human trafficking. We also reviewed and presented our yearly plan.

End of Year celebrations

On Saturday the 13th December 2014, the Sponsorship's Programme held a Christmas and New Year Party for the sponsored students and their guardians. Altogether, 845 people attended. We prayed for and gave thanks to our sponsors, benefactors, and friends, as well as the sisters and their staff. Our students performed pre-prepared shows and enjoyed playing games and sports. We are thankful for the kindness of the sponsors and supporters of the sponsorship programme, as well as the donors who kindly provided funds for the food, ice cream, fruit, drinking water and yogurt on the day.





50 Years of Good Shepherd Mission

The sponsorship's program provided a training for the staff and the committees entitled "Reviewing Mission & Vision". It allowed for an evaluation of the progress of their work. This year, alumni of our program and our friends celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Thailand by kindly donating some to the program.



Support for vulnerable women and girls



A family re-united

Ms. Dang Sarimart is a native citizen of Nongkhai. When she was only 7 years old, her father took her to Supanburi province to join her sister working for 700 baht a month. Her father went to collect their earnings at the end of the year. A year after Dang arrived, her father took her older sister back to Nongkhai, where he tragically died from a sudden illness. Dang's sister was still young and could not remember where to go to retrieve her younger sister and therefore, Dang was left to live with her employer with no hope of

returning to Nongkhai.

Ms. Dang did not receive an education during this time, had no identification card or any documents to show she was a Thai National. She was thus left with no social welfare assistance received by other Thai people.

Now 40 years old, her luck has changed. A Catholic sister in Supanburi province found her, learnt her story and helped her find her relatives through the Good Shepherd Sisters in Nongkhai. The sponsorship programme arranged for her to be brought back to her family and helped her to get her Thai Nationality identification card. After all the struggles she has faced in her life, she is now living happily united with her family.

Trafficking and Sexual Abuse



'Pin' (not her real name) is 12 years old. After her father died she was raised by her disabled grandmother. However, her vulnerable situation made her a target for a man from her village who 'befriended' and then raped her.

After hearing of her plight, we contacted the police to start the process of identifying the perpetrator and also providing psychological therapy for 'Pin'. Sadly, hers is not the only case of abuse that we are working with. We will continue to work closely with 'Pin' to seek justice for her and save others from the same fate.

Additional programme benefits

Savings Groups

The saving groups were established in 2003 for providing accessible funds primarily for educational purposes but also for occupational support of members. Membership is comprised of scholarship students and their guardians in the Ban Fang sub district. The saving groups presently provide fund in four areas of the province with 449 members involved and a total savings balance of 3,283,509.49 baht.

Each member can borrow between 8,000 – 12,000 baht a time and in return they pay a small interest to the group.



Funeral fund

A community group in the Ban Fang sub district was formed as an off-shoot of the Savings Groups with 1,011 families involved. The group members agree to donate 20 baht each time one of its members dies in order to cover the member's funeral costs.

“Gratitude Project”



This project was established in 2012 with the objective of providing additional funding to the sponsorship programme for the support of additional children. It's unique quality however, is in providing the programme's alumni, the opportunity to show their gratitude for the assistance they themselves received during their academic years. By following the example of their sponsors, our benefactors and friends, they pledge to donate a portion of their newly acquired income. Donations received from other local donors are also channeled into this fund.

*Through their generosity, we see the words of St Mary Euphrasia, (Foundress of the Good Shepherd Sisters) lived out. **“Gratitude is the heart's memory”.***

Thank You Stephanie



Stephanie Howes, a volunteer from the Good Shepherd Sisters' Volunteer Programme in New York, joined us between January – September 2014. She helped us by translating letters into English and editing reports. She visited children in the villages and schools, taught English to our children weekly and joined activities in the project. For eight months, she gave herself to any task and to the children's welfare. We wish her every blessing in the future.

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Visits from our sponsors



We were extremely happy to have approximately thirty of our donors, benefactors and friends visit us this year. The students were pleased to have the opportunity to thank them in person for their support and felt encouraged by their visit to continue to study hard. Our Staff welcomed feedback from the visitors and appreciated the chance to know them better.

We in the Sponsorship's Programme, together with our students, would like to thank all of you - our benefactors and friends - for your encouragement and support throughout these many years.

We wish you a blessed and joyful Easter.

May you always find prosperity and good health.