



Child's Dream

A charity organization supporting children in need

www.childsdream.org



Our objectives

- To stop migration of children from their origin
- To prevent child labor, trafficking and sexual exploitation
- To cultivate a better attitude towards life and society
- To help children to take pride in themselves and strengthen their self-esteem
- To improve living conditions
- To encourage the children to love and respect their own customs and culture
- To raise awareness among families and communities of child trafficking

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Newsletter

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After driving 4 hours from Chiang Mai to Mae Sai and having spent an afternoon on the site of the Childlife project helping to coordinate its reconstruction, I was tiredly lying in my room zapping through numerous TV channels looking for something comfortable to fall asleep, when I got stuck at channel 39 live broadcasting from a different world. There was glitter and glamour, stunning dresses, sparkling diamonds and fake smiles. This spectacular extravaganza, however, took place only 1000km south of my guest house and the tornado-demolished site of Childlife. This year's Miss Universe Pageant was hosted in Bangkok, which never felt farer away. Luckily, no one spoke about contributing towards world peace. I guess some PR manager told them not to mention it unless they wanted to become a laughing-stock. Bridging these two worlds, even if it almost seems impossible, is one of our core objectives. On one hand, we encourage wealthy people to develop a better balance between material preoccupation and true human values, and on the other hand, we explain the less-privileged that not every rich person is naturally a bad person.

Organizational news

We have deliberately been operating on a very 'grass-roots' level, driving our project bus to places where most big organizations wouldn't go. And exactly at those places we find the rough diamonds of social entrepreneurship, silently making a difference to hundreds of lives. There, with the absence of big NGOs, we can achieve the highest leverage. We, therefore, decided to start to cover running costs for selected projects to either ensure their survival or their solid implementation. However, most of these commitments are covered by individual donors for that particular purpose. In cases where money from the general donation pool is being used, we act like venture capitalists to assist



the project to become financially independent. Thus, our financial support is only temporarily.

We stay in close contact with our previous employer and are happy to announce that UBS Singapore has renewed Child's Dream's participation in its matched giving scheme called 'Donate As You Earn' for this year.



Personnel news

With ever more new projects in even more remote areas, Child's Dream's work force has been stretched to its limit for the last couple of months. Two new long-term volunteers should ease our workload without compromising our cost-effective structure. We are pleased to introduce to you:

Edi Aumiller, 22 years old, decided to take a break for a couple of months after having finished his college education and military service to gain a new experience in the social field. Given his extensive language knowledge, he is a great support to Child's Dream with regards to the day-to-day correspondence, translation of texts and maintenance of our website. He will also spend a lot of time on our projects to represent us. In his spare time, Edi likes to play and listen to music, write, paint and do sports.

Heidi Schmid, 60 years old, finds herself now free to pursue her strong desire to contribute her skills and life-long experiences to humanitarian projects involving under-privileged children. After spending some weeks in Uruguay volunteering for a marine turtle conservation project and proofing to herself that she can still 'rough it', she decided to join Child's Dream. With her vast experiences and language skills, she will greatly support us as Office Manager. She likes reading, classical music, theatre, gardening, travelling and, to everybody's delight, baking cookies.



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In the meantime, we have to say 'goodbye' to Benjamin Boesch, who has not only been a great help by custom-designing a new donor management database and reviewing our accounting standards, but also became a good friend. Thank you Ben and all the best with your studies in Argentina.

Reconstruction of Childlife

It must have been like a nightmare that became true! On the night from May 24th to 25th a tornado swept over the site bringing a rough awakening to the approx. 100 kids. The roofs of the shelter, the shower house, the kitchen and the toilets were almost completely blown away. Some of the concrete pillars of the shelter were uprooted by the enormous destructive force. Even the 4000 liter water tank, despite its massive size, didn't stand a chance and was blown from the 12m tall tower. The smashed roof tiles were scattered all over the project. It is a miracle that no one was injured or harmed.



The shelter was destroyed beyond repair



Before



and after

We quickly organized the reconstruction of the shower house and the water system, both are again fully operational. 'Hope for Life' agreed to use its emergency budget to rebuild the kitchen, but up to now has failed to fulfill this commitment. The shelter, which was already in bad shape before the tornado, will not be repaired. At first, we wanted to provide living containers since Childlife's lease will expire in about two years, so building a new shelter would not have been justified. However, we realized that the purchase of such living containers is too costly and the only feasible way is to convince the land owner to extend the lease. Once signed, we will immediately start with the construction of new shelters for boys and girls. In the meantime, the children are housed in an emergency shelter.



We have been following Childlife for the last two years with all its ups and downs. Unfortunately, the downs have dominated the last couple of months leaving visible marks on the children's health and development. Despite the tireless efforts of the volunteers to look after the children, there is simply not enough money to adequately care for the kids. We are once again evaluating several possibilities to improve the well-being of the children. Sadly, we have not enough confidence in the current management to support the project's running costs.

Karen Junior College

It always saddens us to meet bright teenagers, eager to learn and absorbing information like a sponge, but without any possibility to still their thirst for knowledge given their unrecognized status in Thailand. When we heard of the idea and the dream of many young Karen people (refugees from Karen State in Burma) to establish a facility where teenagers can continue their studies, we didn't have to think long whether we would like to support this idea.

After battling heavy rain, muddy roads and slippery stairs, we reached the newly built college. Nothing could have dampened our enthusiasm; even the Mexican girl who flattened the muddy stairs with her bombo (Spanish for bottom) was in high spirits. We couldn't wait to get out of our dirty, soaked clothes and to put on something dry and clean. Once we had laid out our sleeping bags on the wooden floor and covered every inch of bare skin with mosquito repellent (malaria is very common in this area), we ventured out to explore the surroundings. We were stunned by picturesque scenery, the lush vegetation and the steep mountains embraced by low-hanging clouds. After we all had a chance to catch a sickening glimpse of a goat being slaughtered, we walked white-faced to the college where the distribution of the school uniforms, sport outfits, underwear, school bags, shoes, slippers, shampoo, soap, baby powder, tooth brush and paste took place. It was a great event for the 45 youngsters, who, for the first time in their lives, were equipped like 'real' students. As darkness fell we enjoyed a festive, candle-lighten meal with delicious goat meat, rice and lots of veggies. The following morning the official opening celebration with many speeches took place with all the teachers, some officials and the students. Since we had an approx. 8-hours drive back to Chiang Mai in front of us, we had to say 'good-bye' far too early.



Distributing the school uniforms

We visited this college together with a potential donor last April to discuss its concept and curriculum. Based on a detailed and adequate budget, this potential donor, and



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now good friend as well, agreed to fully cover all costs for this college for the first two years. As this was the first time Child's Dream covers running costs on a larger scale, we had to find an efficient and effective way, which gives the college enough freedom to manage its financials without Child's Dream losing control over the money.

As of June 20th 2005, 47 gifted Karen students enjoy a college education where they learn English, Computer training (the required laptops were sponsored by the Swiss Stock Exchange), agriculture and accounting as its main subjects. We will continue to monitor the activities of the college and the progress made by the students.



The new elite of the Karen State

Children ward for Mae Tao Clinic

Today, Burma has one of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in Southeast Asia. Burma's policy makers have ignored the non-Burmese ethnic regions for many decades with regards to resource allocation, health information and community participation. Because of the harsh political and economical conditions that confront people every day, there is widespread forced displacement of people both within Burma and to neighboring countries. People have very little access to health services in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) areas. Only 4% of pregnant women in these areas can access trained health workers for emergency obstetric care.

The Mae Tao Clinic, which opened its doors to Burmese refugees and migrant workers in 1989, is currently treating over 40,000 patients annually. We visited the clinic several times since we started with Child's Dream and the existing children ward was always of great concern to us. Today, the children ward consists of a little one-storey building with no proper sanitation facilities and simply not enough space. Children are lying everywhere on the floor and it's difficult to protect them against mosquitoes. In 2003, 1,197 children under 12 years were admitted to the children ward. 785 of these children were under 5 years old.

Together with Dr. Cynthia and Dr. Elisabetta, an Italian doctor, who has been working in the clinic for many years, we have started with the construction of a bigger child care facility consisting of a children ward (247m²), toilets, a pharmacy, a store room, a separate room for malnourished children and space for medics. The old children ward will be upgraded and used as a play room. It is planned that 'Help without Frontiers', an Italian organization, will cover the running costs for the new child care facility after its completion in July.

Vocational Training Center

After less than one year in operation, we regret to inform you that the Vocational Training Center closed its doors despite the generous funding of the German government. What started as an excellent idea, failed to become successful because of the incompetent management of the center. All machines and tools were turned to us in good order according to the contract. We are currently looking for a meaningful recipient of the machines and tools, being it an existing training center or a project that would like to offer vocational trainings. We will keep you posted on the developments.

Project Round-up

Wan Pieang Fha School Complex – The school complex for over 300 kids is finished except for the waste water tank. The official opening will take place soon.

CDC School – The extension of the school has been finished to our complete satisfaction. There is now enough room to comfortably accommodate over 200 students.

How you can help

Besides making a monetary contribution, we also look for less-conventional ways to help us in our quest.

Normally Eric Schmid has sophisticated furniture, exquisite food arrangements, glamorous models and celebrities in front of his lens, but if you come to visit us nothing is quite normal. Equipped with his state-of-the-art camera, Eric joined us for a couple of days in Mae Sot, where we visited some of our projects together. We were thrilled about his offer to produce a collection of photographic designs such as Christmas cards, leporello, etc. Together with the help of his wife, a famous designer, and his friends from the industry, he will create these pieces of art at no cost. Having two kids on his own, he immediately connected with the children on our projects and caught these special moments on film. Once produced, we will offer this special Christmas card for sale and all the proceeds will flow into Child's Dream general donation pool. Should you be interested in giving your friends and family members a special treat for Christmas and even for a good cause, please contact us.



We hope you have enjoyed this snapshot of our work and look forward to hearing from you.

Cheers,

The Child's Dream Team