

A photograph of two young boys, likely of Southeast Asian descent, smiling and posing for the camera. They are wearing light-colored school uniforms with dark ties. The boy on the left has his arm around the boy on the right, who is pointing towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with rocks and foliage.

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE FUND: THAI-MYANMAR BORDER



DID YOU KNOW

There are
2.3 million
Myanmar migrant
workers in
Thailand?

THE ISSUE

Thailand has long been a key destination for migrant labour from neighbouring countries such as Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia, attracting individuals and families alike for both economic and security reasons. There are **currently 3.1 million registered migrant workers in Thailand, with over 2.3 million (74%) coming from Myanmar.**

While both migrants and refugees from Myanmar who enter Thailand seek refuge in the nine “temporary shelter” camps along the Thai-Myanmar border, this Impact Fund will initially **focus on supporting the larger migrant population.** Since the pre-COVID period, the number of registered Myanmar migrants in Thailand has doubled, with most of this increase occurring over the past two years.

In February 2021, the military coup in Myanmar caused widespread displacement as villages were destroyed, and urban populations also fled in fear after participating in the civil disobedience movement.

This led to a **significant surge in Myanmar migrants crossing into Thailand** in January 2023, when Thailand’s borders were finally reopened, after being closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also a further exodus in February 2024, when Myanmar’s military junta enforced compulsory military conscription for men aged 18-35 and women aged 18-27 in the country.

This increase in migrant families has placed strain on healthcare and education systems, leaving many children vulnerable and without access.



Regardless of their registration status, the Myanmar population in Thailand experience difficulties accessing quality essential services in their daily lives, especially in healthcare and education:

1

Healthcare Access for Migrants

Registered migrants in Thailand can enrol in either the Thai Social Security Scheme (SSS) or the Migrant Health Insurance Scheme (MHIS) through the Ministry of Public Health. Unregistered migrants have access to alternative health insurance schemes, such as the M-Fund.

Although all migrants are able to access the Thai healthcare system, including local clinics and general hospitals, many insured migrants struggle to understand which services are covered, how to make claims, and which facilities accept their insurance. Other barriers to accessing healthcare include prohibitively long distances from health facilities, lack of proper documentation, and high costs, particularly for those without insurance.

Given that the growing Myanmar migrant population is likely to remain in Thailand for the foreseeable future, noting that there is no clear end in sight to the conflict in Myanmar, there is a pressing need to support these communities to improve their living conditions and well-being.

2

Education Access for Migrants

While migrant children in Thailand are allowed to attend public schools, significant barriers cause many from starting or continuing their education. Some of these barriers can include lack of documentation, transportation and language issues, financial constraints and familial responsibilities, as well as negative attitudes towards migrants.

Most critically, many Thai public schools have insufficient capacity, lacking adequate space and teachers to accommodate migrant children. This is especially so in regions with high migrant populations or recent large influxes of migrants.

As a result, a significant number of migrant children remain out of school entirely. In the UN Migration Report 2019, it was also estimated that approximately 200,000 migrant children across Thailand were out of school and not receiving any form of education at all.

Despite efforts by the Thai government to expand educational access over the years, recent increases in demand have further strained existing resources, particularly in provinces like Tak, which face challenges such as:

Prioritised Enrolment for Thai Children:

Based on annual population surveys, schools in Tak prioritise enrolment for Thai children within their designated service areas. Migrant children are placed on waiting lists until all Thai children have enrolled, except for those who meet specific criteria, such as holding a birth certificate (not merely a birth confirmation), and demonstrating basic Thai language proficiency.

Documentation Requirements from Migrant Children:

Recent regulatory updates from the Tak Provincial Special Education Administrative Organisation have heightened documentation requirements for migrant students. Schools now seek village elder certification verifying the child's residency in the area and proof from an employer to confirm the child's parents or guardians are not recent migrants. These requirements have led to increased hesitancy among schools to enrol children lacking full documentation.

While Learning Centres have been established in migrant-dense areas over recent decades to address this educational gap, many of these centres are unregulated. This results in inconsistent educational standards, and an increased risk of closure. Furthermore, the ongoing conflict in Myanmar has hindered Learning Centers from obtaining accreditation through the Myanmar curriculum. As a result, many centres revert to the Thai non-formal accredited education system or assist children in accessing Thai public schools, providing support within these institutions.



Photo credits: Getty Images

ABOUT THE FUND

OVERVIEW

NAME

People On The Move Fund: Thai-Myanmar Border

FUND OVERVIEW:

This is a place-based Impact Fund aimed at improving the conditions for the migrant population living at the Thai-Myanmar border, particularly in Mae Sot and the surrounding districts of Tak Province, where the largest concentration of migrants currently resides.

The Impact Fund will focus on two primary areas of support, with the opportunity to expand to other areas over time:

- **Access to healthcare**
- **Access to education**

LAUNCH DATE

October 2024

MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION

SGD20,000/USD15,000

Multi-year contributions encouraged

FUND TARGET AND DURATION

SGD5,000,000/USD3,850,000

over five years

This Impact Fund aligns with and contributes to the following UN Sustainable Development Goals:



TO GIVE:

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10% of the total funds raised will cover ACF's fundraising and administrative costs.

Individuals with 'Accredited Investor' status, their associated private wealth entities, or corporate entities that pass ACF's Know-Your-Donor process may give through ACF's various funds.



KEY PRIORITIES



Photo credits: The Inclusive Education Foundation

1

Providing direct healthcare and education services:

This ensures that migrants have direct access to essential healthcare and education. It includes delivering healthcare in clinics and schools, treating emergencies and common health issues. Education initiatives will establish accredited pathways, offering learning spaces and supporting existing centres where migrant children and youth can gain basic education, language skills, and vocational training.

Migrant communities face major barriers to healthcare and education, leaving children vulnerable. Direct services provide immediate support, improving health and education access, empowering them for brighter futures.

2

Building capacity of healthcare and education providers:

This area focuses on training healthcare workers in line with the local healthcare systems and fostering information sharing between Thai and Myanmar ethnic health providers to improve patient care and efficiency. In education, the emphasis is on training teachers, expanding capacity in learning centres to student enrolment and integrating bilingual classroom assistants in Thai public schools to enhance learning for migrant children.

By enhancing professional skills and aligning services with national standards, this approach ensures sustainable, high-quality care and education for migrant communities.

3

Removing barriers to accessing essential services:

Migrants face many barriers to basic services, leaving them vulnerable. This Impact Fund aims to remove these obstacles, creating an inclusive system that ensures access to essential support by simplifying processes, reducing bureaucracy, and addressing issues like documentation, transport, and cost.

Initiatives may include improving coordination between service providers, enhancing communication with migrant communities, and working with local authorities to streamline access.



WHO BENEFITS FROM THE FUND?

The Impact Fund will **primarily benefit migrant communities living along the Thai-Myanmar border**, who otherwise receive little protection and support in their daily lives. In the Mae Sot area and surrounding Tak Province, many migrants face difficulties accessing essential services such as healthcare and education due to various structural challenges. Therefore, the Fund aims to **provide holistic support and improve the living conditions of migrant communities** in Thailand by addressing their specific needs.

Additionally, beyond providing direct services to migrants, the Fund seeks to support education and healthcare professionals working at the border through training and capacity building. This is crucial as it ensures that the services provided are of high quality and contributes to better overall health and educational outcomes for the migrant community.





HOW ARE OUR SOCIAL IMPACT PARTNERS CHOSEN?

ABILITY TO CREATE AND DRIVE MEANINGFUL IMPACT:

The social impact partners in the People on the Move Fund are carefully selected for their ability to lead change and drive meaningful impact in migrant health, education, and protection. With decades of experience, they have consistently delivered high-quality services and achieved significant results while adapting to evolving challenges and finding innovative solutions to better support migrant communities.

STRONG LEADERSHIP TEAMS:

A key selection criterion for social impact partners is their strong leadership teams, which are essential for driving meaningful change in migrant health and education. Effective leadership is vital in this sector due to the multifaceted barriers migrants face, including legal, cultural, and systemic challenges. Leaders with deep understanding and experience can navigate these obstacles, foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and develop innovative solutions that meet the specific needs of migrant communities.

NATIONAL AND GLOBAL RECOGNITION:

The social impact partners in this fund have also been recognised for their impactful work, both nationally and globally. Crucially, within Thailand, they have been regarded by the Royal Thai government as key voices in efforts to improve conditions for migrants, making them valuable contributors to national policy and practice in these critical areas.

Globally, the three organisations have a proven history of successful collaboration on key initiatives, such as a recent global parenting programme run by UNICEF. Their ability to work effectively together highlights their understanding of each other's strengths and capabilities, positioning them well to tackle critical priorities. By leveraging their combined expertise and strong leadership, these organisations are uniquely positioned to create meaningful, lasting impact for the migrant population.

MAE TAO CLINIC

www.maetaoclinic.org

OPERATING LOCATIONS

Mae Sot, Thailand

YEAR FOUNDED

1989

HOW THE FUND WILL SUPPORT THIS PARTNER?

This fund will support migrants' basic healthcare services.

Since 2023, MTC has seen a significant increase in demand for its services, accommodating nearly 50% more clients and providing 68% more consultations due to the influx of migrants resulting from the military coup in Myanmar.

Mae Tao Clinic (MTC) provides critical healthcare services at no cost to communities along the Thai-Myanmar border. Over the years, MTC has conducted more than 2,500,000 million consultations, delivered nearly 50,000 babies, and administered over 70,000 malaria treatments.

As a training hub, MTC has equipped over 4,000 health workers to serve in clinics across Eastern Myanmar, thanks to strong partnerships with various organisations. The clinic also works closely with community health volunteers, promoting disease prevention and health awareness. In addition, MTC conducts health check-ups at 40 migrant learning centres and supports around 2,000 children in boarding houses with dry food rations.

MTC's founder, Dr. Cynthia Maung, is a highly respected figure within the Myanmar migrant community and continues to serve as the clinic's Director. Her tireless dedication has earned her numerous awards and international recognition.

Funding for MTC will be routed via the Suwannimit Foundation (SNF), a Thai Foundation established in 2010 by MTC, which works through strategic alliances with community-based partners to deliver essential services to marginalised communities living along the Thai-Myanmar border.



HELP WITHOUT FRONTIERS

www.helpwithoutfrontiers.org

OPERATING LOCATIONS

Mae Sot, Thailand

YEAR FOUNDED

2007

HOW THE FUND WILL SUPPORT THIS PARTNER?

This fund will support a larger number of Thai teachers in Migrant Learning Centres (MLCs).

With more Thai teachers, MLCs can serve more students and better prepare them academically, socially, and linguistically for their education in Thailand.

Help Without Frontiers Thailand (HWF) provides critical support for migrants and displaced individuals from Myanmar, with a focus on children living in Thailand, and operates across four key program areas: education, youth empowerment, child protection, and emergency response.

HWF has facilitated access to education for more than 10,000 migrant and refugee children, provided training to 23,000 young people across Thailand and Myanmar, and equipped 250 teachers and staff from partner organisations with child safeguarding training. Additionally, HWF has also delivered 6,317 emergency food sets and provided shelters, toilets, and essential supplies to internally displaced people within Myanmar.

Siraporn Kaewsombat (Ann), the Director of HWF, has become a prominent figure in the national conversation on migrant education in Thailand. Her presentation to a special parliamentary commission of the Royal Thai government resulted in the formation of a government-approved working group on migrant education. She has engaged with various government ministries, most recently hosting the Director of the Department of Youth and Children, the authority responsible for child protection across Thailand. From October 2024, Ann will also be Advisor to Tak Province on child protection.



THE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

www.inedfoundation.org

OPERATING LOCATIONS

Mae Sot, Thailand

YEAR FOUNDED

2017

HOW THE FUND WILL SUPPORT THIS PARTNER?

This fund will support increasing the number of Bilingual Classroom Assistants, which is essential to help migrant students succeed in mainstream schools and continue their education. It will also ensure that migrant students receive quality education by providing training for teachers.

The Inclusive Education Foundation (InEd) was officially registered in 2022 but has been operating since 2017. With a dedicated team that has over 15 years of experience in education for the migrant population at the Thai-Myanmar border, InEd is committed to bridging the educational gaps for migrant children from Myanmar living in Thailand.

Through its various initiatives, InEd plays a vital role in enhancing educational opportunities. The foundation offers comprehensive teacher training programs aimed at improving the quality of education for migrant students. Additionally, InEd also assists these students in accessing Thai schools by providing accelerated Thai language training, which helps migrant students better integrate into the local education system. To further support migrant children, InEd also manages bilingual classroom assistants in Thai schools, ensuring that language barriers do not hinder their learning experiences.

Moving forward, InEd intends to expand its successful Youth Champions programme into a full-time Thai/Myanmar youth centre. This centre will focus on developing core skills necessary for career advancement and further education pathways while fostering important connections within the community.

In recognition of its impactful work, InEd has published over 16 academic papers and research reports, with its initiatives having been cited by numerous organisations. Notably, UNICEF had referenced InEd's work in their 2023 Make Learning Count report, highlighting the Foundation's significant contributions to the field of education for migrant children.



OUR ISSUE EXPERT

Simon Dickinson, based in Thailand, has over 15 years of experience working with Myanmar community-based organisations and local NGOs, primarily along the Thai-Myanmar border. His journey began as an organisational development volunteer and evolved through roles including Director overseeing finance, Human Resources, logistics, and fundraising, to consulting for INGOs and local organisations on strategic planning, operational systems, policy development, and mentorship. Simon has supported organisations in health, education, protection, and human rights across Thailand and Myanmar. He has also collaborated with donors to identify and assess new partnerships in Thailand and the region. His deep understanding of the issues is instrumental to the impact fund's effectiveness and fosters a shared commitment to meaningful social impact.



Photo credits: Help Without Frontiers



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I learned early on that those I worked with brought unwavering passion, doing their best with what little they had. My role was simply to support—strengthening systems, building capacity, and seeking resources. Now, as conflict drives more Myanmar refugees into Thailand, this Impact Fund is timely to help communities access essential education and healthcare.

SIMON DICKINSON

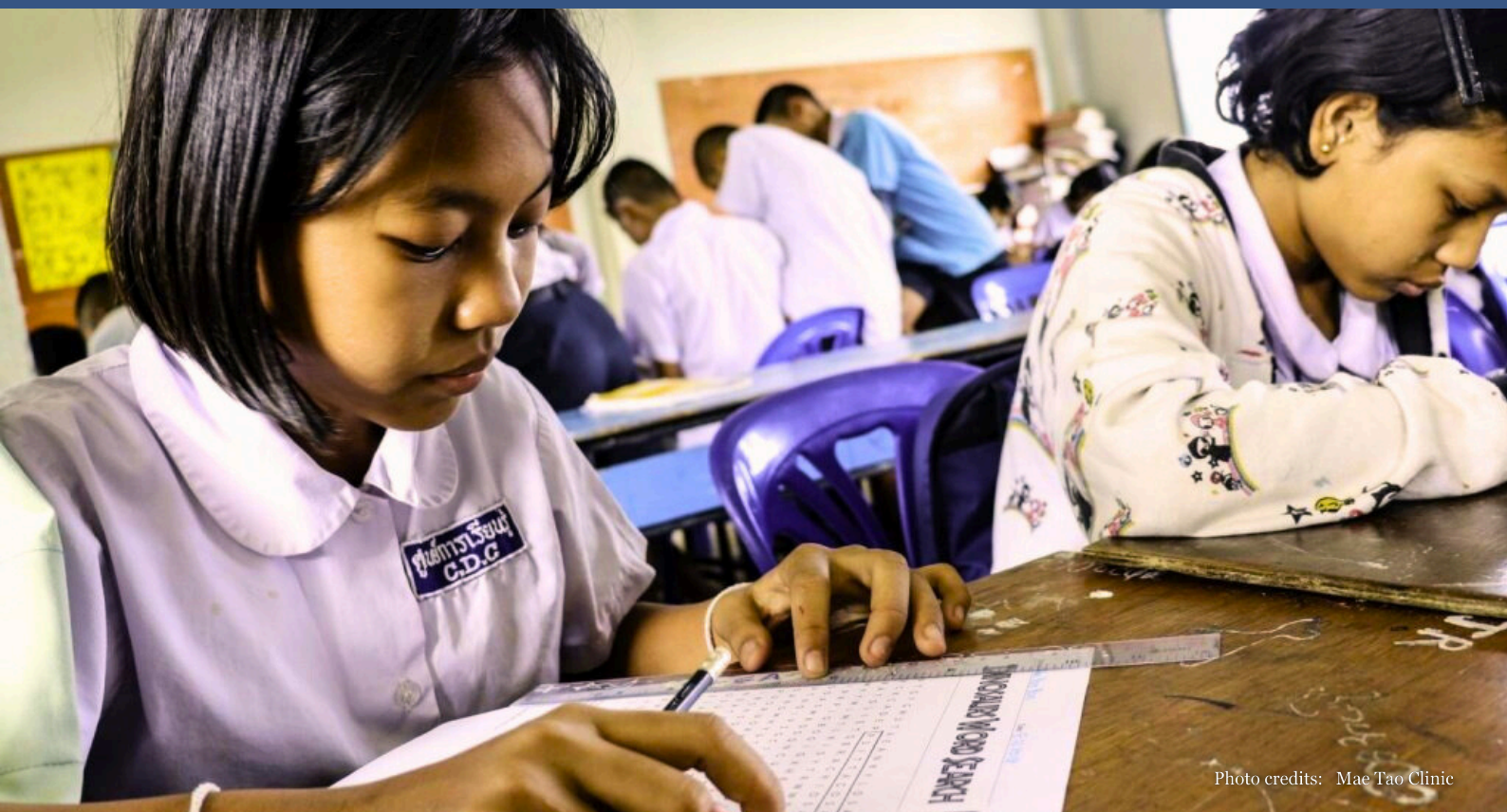


Photo credits: Mae Tao Clinic

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