



The Human Development Foundation  
Klong Toey, Bangkok

2008 Profile







**We are a  
partnership  
with the  
poor.**

We work to help the children and communities of the many slums of Bangkok. Together with our neighbors in the slums we create simple-but-progressive solutions that touch the lives of thousands of the poor every day. We build and operate schools, improve family health and welfare, protect street children's rights, combat the AIDS crisis, respond daily to emergencies, and offer shelter to street kids, to orphans and to children and adults with AIDS – always together, hand in hand and heart to heart with the people we serve.





# HDF History



The Human Development Foundation began on an early morning in 1973, as it has every day since – with a daily walk in the slum neighborhoods. Father Joe and Sister Maria saying good morning to all their neighbors. How are you today? Do you have any food for breakfast? Is there anything we can do to help? Fr. Joe was the Parish Priest for the Catholics who butchered the pigs. The parishioners lived and worked in the slaughterhouse of Klong Toey, Bangkok’s largest slum community. Sr. Maria came daily from her Convent and began teaching Catechism to the Catholic children. She actually taught the children where they played... in a

seldom-used holding pen for pigs. In 1973 Slaughter House kids did not go to school, and the few who did failed dismally and dropped out. The one or two schools available begrudgingly took them in. Teachers singled them out as what not to be. Telling anyone “I’m from the Slaughter House” marked you like an ugly tattoo: branded you forever. You couldn’t go to school. Couldn’t get a real job. Butchering pigs, washing entrails, frying down pork fat into lard... these were the choices available.

Sr. Maria and Fr. Joe turned a one-room shack into a one-baht-per-day preschool

for every child in the Slaughter House, children of all religions. No child was turned away. Thus (without saying so or calling itself anything) began The Human Development Foundation. Now, today in 2008, there are twenty-nine Mercy Kindergartens with four thousand slum children going to school. Alumni of the first Slaughter House kindergarten are teachers, executive secretaries, nurses, two lawyers, taxi drivers, and butchers. There’s one university professor and a couple in prison (but getting out soon!). Many are now married with their own children attending proper schools. Dead-end, throw-away slaughter house kids no longer.





## **The HDF Initiatives and Achievements**

1973 - First Mercy School opens in the Slaughter House neighborhood.

1975 - The HDF street children outreach program formally begins.

1976 - First HDF shelter for street children opens.

1977 - The HDF begins operation of Klong Toey's first free outreach health clinic for the poor.

1981 - The HDF housing program commences. Hundreds of landless families begin moving into self-built homes co-financed and co-constructed by HDF for the indigent and elderly and those forcibly evicted.

1982 - Father Joe establishes prison visitation program for the Archdiocese of Bangkok and begins a 23-year tenure as Prison Chaplain at Bang Kwang Maximum Security and Klong Prem Lat Yao Federal Prisons for men and women.

1982 - 89 - The HDF housing program continues to expand. Mercy preschools are operating in over 20 slum

communities. The HDF keeps an open-door policy in its shelters for abandoned slum and street children. Following devastating slum fires, The HDF rebuilds entire squatter neighborhoods. We continue organizing slum communities, begin credit unions and women's groups, and work with community organizations and government.

1990 - 94 - As AIDS enters Bangkok's slum communities, The HDF pioneers AIDS awareness and education in a door-to-door two-year campaign to talk about AIDS and the pressing needs of children and adults afflicted.

1994 - The HDF opens Bangkok's first free AIDS hospice. Fr. Joe becomes Founding Member of Asian Coalition for Housing Rights.

1995 - The HDF helps found the Thai Confederation of Street Children.

1997 - The HDF opens home for mothers and children and initiates AIDS homecare program among the poor.

1997 - The HDF founds the Klong Toey Women's Group and Savings and Loan, providing low interest loans and empowering poor women through financial security.

1998 - Mercy Preschool System continues expansion: twenty-nine schools in operation throughout Bangkok.

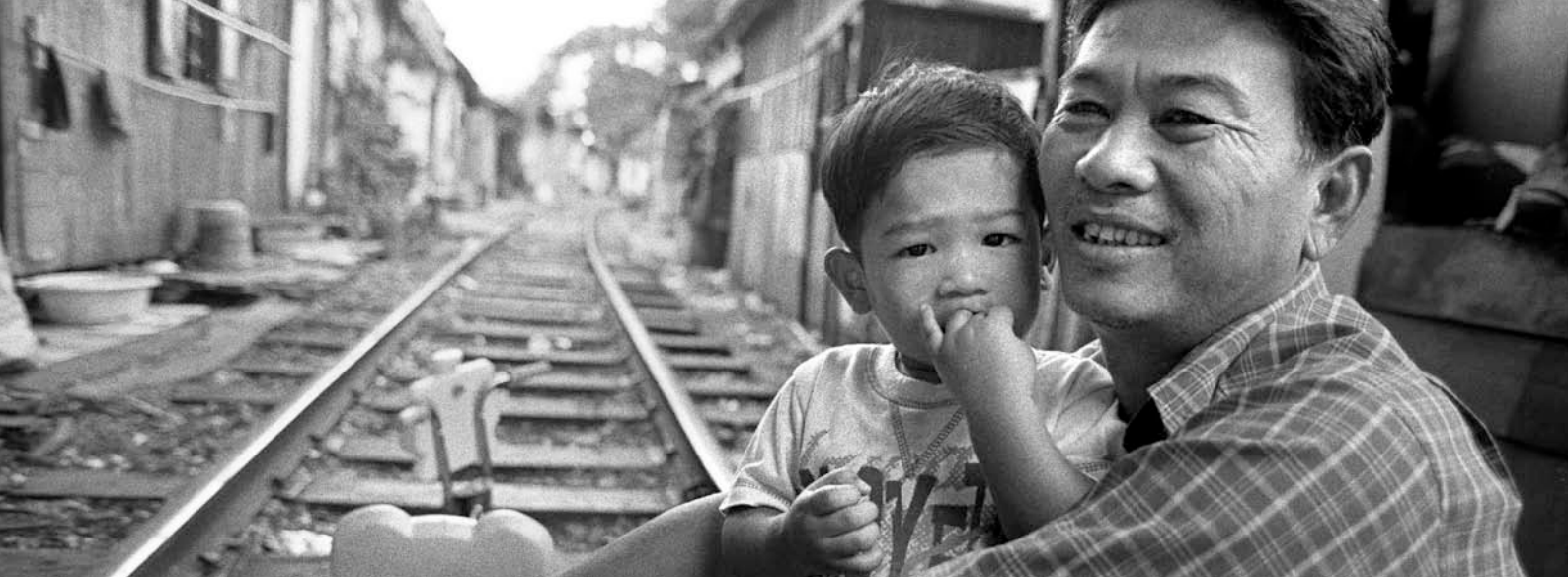
1998 - The HDF opens Thailand's only Legal Aid Centre dedicated solely for poor children.

1999 - The HDF organizes the Klong Toey Handicapped Group, uniting the physically handicapped in seeking their rightful benefits and gainful employment.

1999 - In a memorandum of understanding with Family and Children's Courts, The HDF begins accepting children through the criminal court system as an alternative to incarceration in detention centers.

2000 - New home for Mothers and Children living with HIV/AIDS is opened, Her Royal Highness Princess Galyani Vadhana-Krom Luang Naradhiwas Rajanagarindra presiding at opening ceremony.

2001 - The HDF Mercy Homes and Shelters are rebuilt and expanded, former Prime Minister, His Excellency Khun Anand Panyarachun, UNICEF Representative to Thailand, presiding at the ceremony.



2004 - The HDF opens the Janusz Korczak School for Street Children, providing basic literacy and trade skills for older street children.

2005 - In response to the devastation of the massive tsunami, The HDF initiates emergency relief and housing projects; and transfers its slum-community organization skills to the Thai southern provinces affected. Working together with 20 villages, by end of year 2005, The HDF with community carpenters has co-built and renovated over 500 homes damaged or destroyed; provided long-term education assistance to 500 students; manufactured and installed over 3,000 industrial-size water jars for individual homes; repaired and replaced fifty village wells and school water tanks, and installed twelve water purification systems; built over 250 toilet facilities for schools and homes; and created income-generating projects for the destitute. The HDF formed a federation of twelve primary schools along the sea coast, where its teachers selected Mokaan (Sea Gypsy) children for education sponsorships who are the poorest of the poor. This program continues to this day, The HDF working hand in hand with the

schools, the Department of Education, local politicians and village elders, and Buddhist, Muslim, and Christian leaders in a joint effort to provide educational funding for 500 Mokaan children.

2007 - HIV/AIDS Homecare Program expands to reach over 450 patients throughout Bangkok.

2007 - Weekend foster care program begins "on it's own" as families, friends, and staff of "Mercy" in our Partnership with the Poor invite our orphaned HIV and non-HIV children to spend the weekend with them and their own families.

2007 - A Mercy Centre outreach "Getting to know each other better" informal group begins, where former HIV AIDS patients, who recovered their health here with us and have now returned home, gather once a month with families also living with HIV, who are still strong enough to live at home, to share experiences, encourage each other, catch up on latest medical news, and allow their children - the hope of the future - to meet each other and play together.

2007 - The HDF rebuilds two poor

neighborhoods - over 100 homes - after devastating slum fires. In other neighborhoods, 30 homes for elderly poor are renovated. By 2007, The HDF has built and renovated over 10,000 homes for the poor.

2007 - Bangkok Metropolitan Authority awards three Mercy Preschools with certificates of excellence as exemplary schools for poor children.

2007 - Janusz Korczak School begins evening literacy classes for adults - over 50 neighborhood adults attending.





**The HDF has built and renovated over 10,000 homes.**



# Father Joseph H. Maier, C.Ss.R. Co-founder and Chairman

Father Joe has lived among the poor in Thailand and Laos since 1967. His Religious Obedience was to Bangkok to study official Bangkok spoken Thai; then as Parish priest to a remote Lao-speaking Catholic village in the rural North East of Thailand, thus another language; then to a Catholic Hill Tribe Village, where he studied the H'mong language in Northern Laos, and back to Bangkok, again in 1972. Since then and continuing to this day, Father Joe has lived with the Catholic community in Bangkok known as the Slaughter House workers: butchers of pigs and cattle who live in and around the pens of the slaughter house in the Klong Toey Slum, an occupation Buddhists and Moslems left for the Catholics. Fr. Joe joined with Sister Maria Chantavarodom in 1973 to start the Human Development Foundation for his poor neighbors of all religions.

He holds advanced degrees in Theological Studies and Urban Planning as well as an honorary doctorate in Social Administration from Thammasart University here in Thailand, and Acadia in Canada. He has received numerous awards for outstanding citizenship, including a lifetime achievement award presented by Her Majesty the Queen of Thailand. Father Joe still lives in Klong Toey where his work here first began.

## Education:

1962 - Bachelor of Arts and Master's Degree, Philosophy, Immaculate Conception Major Seminary, Oconomowoc Wisconsin

1965 - Ordained a Catholic Priest in the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer: Redemptorists.

1966 - Bachelor of Divinity Degree

1981 - Masters Degree in Urban Development and Slum Improvement, Asian Institute of Technology – Bangkok.





# Sister Maria Chantavarodom, Co-founder and Director



Sister Maria is, and always has been, the heartbeat of the Human Development Foundation. From our organization's earliest days, she has kept our foundation focused on our primary mandate to help the very poorest of the poor.

Born in Macau and raised in Thailand, Sister Maria is a founding pioneer of the Daughters of Queenship of Mercy Immaculate, where she has been the Mother Superior in one form or another for over fifty years.

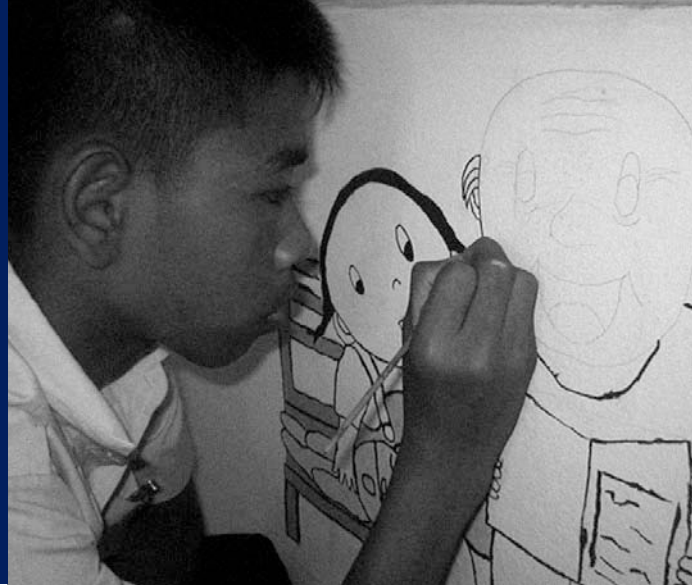
For years, she and Fr. Joe walked the slums. Always listening: seeking our slum neighbors' advice and asking their needs. So began our HDF Partnership with the Poor. Our first free health clinic was in a rented dilapidated clapboard tin-roofed shack: a typical slum building but providing world-class medical treatment. Sister Maria and Fr. Joe believed the poor deserve the very best.

As the years passed, always in partnership with their slum neighbors, Sister Maria and Fr. Joe continued to find shacks they could renovate and use for the poorest communities; and they began opening slum kindergartens. Today there are 29 Mercy Kindergartens, most of them still rented shacks, across Bangkok's poorest neighborhoods.

Over the past 35 years, Sister Maria and Fr. Joe have developed the foundation's long-standing projects in preschool education, child protection, and several community - and skills-building efforts for the poor. When AIDS entered Thailand in the early 1990s, they also developed a comprehensive and compassionate system of HIV/AIDS outreach, a home for abandoned mothers and children, a shelter for adults, and a homecare program throughout the slums. Sr. Maria has been widely recognized for her work with street/ slum/AIDS/abandoned children and is a highly respected woman in Thai society.



# Achievements and Recognition for HDF and Father Joe Maier



2004 - Lifetime achievement awarded to Father Joe Maier by Her Majesty the Queen of Thailand for HDF programs in the field of protection of mothers and children. Fr. Maier was given the award as the foreign resident who, "over the long-term, has contributed the most to the promotion of the status and protection of women and children in Thailand."

2004 - Outstanding Citizenship for social work and community development in the field of HIV/AIDS, awarded by the Red Cross AIDS Research Centre and presented by Her Royal Highness Princess Soamsavali Phravorarajatinuddamatu.

1999 - Koman Kim Tong Foundation Award for outstanding citizenship

1998 - Special Achievement Award presented to HDF from National Council of Thailand for Child Development

1997 - ESCAP HRD Award as best NGO among 41 Asian nations, based on the quality and sustainability of HDF programs and its positive impact on the community.

1997 - Fr. Joe receives the "Shining Diamonds of Bangkok" award given by the Governor of Bangkok for outstanding citizenship.

1994 - Justice & Peace Award, Redemptorist Order Denver

1989 - National Housing Authority of Thailand recognizes HDF housing as provider of model homes for low-income communities throughout Thailand - a series of designs that are followed throughout the provinces to this day

1985 - Fr. Joe receives Most Noble Order of the Crown of Thailand, Fifth Class



# HDF Overview



## General Information

- Founded in 1973
- Co-founder and Chairman: Father Joe Maier, C.Ss.R.
- Co-founder and Director: Sister Maria Chantavarodom
- Executive Director: Usanee Janngoon
- Staff: 330
- Geographic reach: Over 30 poor communities in Bangkok, 25 villages in the tsunami devastated southern provinces.

## Our Mercy Centre

- Our home and family, including over 180 abandoned, orphaned, and trafficked children
- Home for children living with HIV
- Adult respite hospice
- The largest of our 29 slum preschools
- Janusz Korczak School of S.E. Asia
- Legal Aid Centre for poor children
- Administrative center for all HDF programs
- A community drop-in centre for the elderly, handicapped, adults living with HIV, anyone in need
- Administrative, meeting, and training center for all HDF programs

## HDF Programs

### I. Children in Need Orphanages and Shelters

- Four orphanages
- One safe house for children in grave danger
- One home for mothers and children with HIV/AIDS
- Total care provided, including education and skills training

### Street Children Outreach and Legal Aid

- Protection, defense, counsel, and support for street children.
- Securing legal birth and identity certificates for migrant and poor urban children

### II. Education

- 29 Mercy preschools throughout Bangkok's poorest communities. Approximately 4,000 poor children, ages 3 to 6, enrolled. National



curriculum: reading, writing, Thai culture, history, dance, song, sports, and the arts.

- The Janusz Korczak School for Street Children – i) a non-formal school providing literacy and trade skills for older street children; ii) an academic excellence program for university-bound poor children; iii) comprehensive arts program for all Mercy Centre children; and iv) adult education for staff and community.
- School Sponsorships. Over 400 primary and secondary school sponsorships for the poorest neighborhood children in Bangkok
- Moka Children's Pioneer Education Program - 475 additional school sponsorships for Moka (Sea Gypsy) children. Coordinating with 12 poor coastal communities, including village leaders and Board of Education in tsunami-devastated provinces.
- Preparation for International Colleges and Universities - Currently 9 of our children attend colleges and universities abroad on academic scholarships.

### III. HIV/AIDS Programs Adult Hospice

- First and largest free AIDS hospice in Bangkok
- Current capacity: 30 beds, 100 patients per year
- Providing homecare training and general welfare for people living with AIDS and their families.

### Home for Mothers and Children with HIV/AIDS

- 56 children, 5 mothers - always a growing family
- Emphasis on dignity, joy, a life without stigmatization
- Children attend school and live and play with other children in our care and in the community.

### AIDS Homecare for the poor

- Over 600 patients in Bangkok
- Helping the poor living with HIV maintain their strength and remain productive members of their family and community.



**Anyone in  
need...**





### **HIV Education, Outreach and Advocacy**

- Targeting over 10,000 high risk individuals/year
- Schools, community centers, factories
- Fighting for patients rights and free access to medicine

### **IV. Community Services**

- Housing – Repair, renovation, and construction for elderly and indigent and slum communities devastated by fires – over 10,000 homes in Bangkok slums to date.
- Community Organizing – Consultation, leadership, and education initiatives with the poor; coordination with government ministries including the National Housing Authority, Port Authority of Thailand, and various welfare organizations.
- Sports – Construction and maintenance of drug-free playgrounds
- Financing – Small business start-ups, emergency low interest loans.
- Klong Toey Women’s Group and Credit Union – Empowering poor women to take control of their personal and family finances.

- Slum community credit unions throughout the slums, often implemented immediately after slum fires, where those left homeless need to be recognized as juristic residents to remain in the community and receive emergency government assistance.
- Disabled Poor – Providing employment, securing legal benefits for physically disabled.
- Emergencies – Slum fires; families in crises.
- Community Building in 25 villages in Phang Nga, Phuket, and Satun provinces following the tsunami.

### **Coordination with Thai Government and Local Non-Government Organizations**

To strengthen our partnership with the poor, we coordinate our efforts and pool resources with several Thai government ministries in education, welfare, and justice, the local police departments, government hospitals, and various local community - based organizations. The assistance we give and receive from these organizations and government institutions is a great part of our own strength as a non -

profit field organization. A partial listing of our partners in these cooperative activities:

### **Child Protection and Shelters**

- Ministry of Child Welfare
- The Confederation of Street Children Organizations: pooling resources, communications, and advocacy experience with a Thailand federation of 17 street children organizations.
- Local Police Stations – Over 80 stations work directly with our child protection and legal aid teams, and call HDF for assistance.
- National Police Academy – HDF provides annual training in Street Children Outreach to police cadets.
- Ministry of Education – HDF mans the national child abuse hotline weekly.
- Thai Armed Services and Rural Development Program – providing training programs and camping expeditions for our children.
- Wat Saphan Buddhist Temple. Our children work for and receive Buddhist teachings from Monks at our local Temple.
- Holy Redeemer Church and local





Catholic institutions tutor our children after school and teach our children about prayer and ethics at home and in the community.

### **Education**

- Ministry of Education – Formal and informal school coordination of various activities and certifications.
- Bangkok Metropolitan Authority - Coordinates activities and curriculum with our 29 Mercy Preschools, provides milk for our 4,000 school children, and subsidizes a portion of our teachers' salaries.
- Community Leaders – We help organize and advise community leaders representing the neighborhoods surrounding our 29 preschools.
- Pang Nga School Board and School Principals – Coordinating with 12 schools in Tsunami-

devastated provinces to boost education opportunities among Mogan (sea gypsy) children.

- International High Schools – Academic scholarships for our children; volunteering opportunities for teachers in these schools and their most gifted graduates.

### **HIV/AIDS**

- Ministry of Health
- Government Hospitals – HDF assists large groups of the poor living with AIDS through local government hospitals.
- Bamrad and local Children's Hospitals – provide medicine and testing for our children living with HIV; care for them for months at a time when they are not well.
- Wat Saphan Buddhist Temple – Monks

meet and advise our patients about life and healing, and provide funeral services when they die.

- AIDS Coalitions – Advocating for patients' rights.
- Children's Network – A federation of orphanages and children's HIV/AIDS organizations, initiated by HDF, to coordinate communications, advocacy, and programs for children.

### **Community Services**

- National Housing Authority
- Port Authority of Thailand
- Women's Group and Slum Savings and Loan – networking with slum organizations throughout Bangkok
- Federation of Coastal Villages in Tsunami-devastated provinces

# Orphanages

## Program Director Wanee Kidswad



### Mandate

Protection, Caring, Education, a Future Full of Opportunities

### Number of Children

Currently 180 children.

### The Care We Provide

The HDF operates five Mercy homes for children. Every child who comes to live with us comes from somewhere, a home, a village, a place full of relatives, people they call Aunty and Uncle, Grandma and Grandpa. Our goal with all of our children is to return them to home whenever possible, in those cases where the home environment is loving and nurturing. We raise the children in the religious faith of their parents and teach them to respect all religions. Our children attend Catholic Mass and Buddhist ceremonies. We have programs that teach our children art, computers, dance, and physical education. Each Mercy Home also includes social workers, cooks, tutors, and coaches. We send them all to school and nurture and love these children as part of our family. Since all our children have suffered severe loss, rejection, or abuse before they came to us, our first and most important efforts must always be in helping restore and rekindle the simple

joys of being a child in each of them. We teach them all we can to prepare them for a life once they leave Mercy.

### Our Homes

- Home for boys, ages 13 to 18
- Home for boys, ages 6 to 12
- Home for young children, boys and girls, ages 3 to 9
- Home for girls, ages 9 to 18

A safe-house for children in grave danger. (We also have a special home for Mothers and Children with AIDS - detailed as a separate program.)

### Origins/History

In 1976 HDF opened a home for nine street children who depended on Fr. Joe and Sr. Maria for survival. Our capacity to care grew with each child we took in and our reach expanded every year. Twenty-five years later in 2001, we opened our fifth home. The following year, the Ministry of Justice, in a unique arrangement, also began assigning children to our care as an alternative to incarceration.

### The Challenges

Our greatest challenge never changes. That is, to ensure our children, who often come to us after experiencing enormous infancy and childhood

deficits, are each able to be children once again on their way to leading a fulfilling family life in adulthood.

### Success Story

A three-year-old slum child named Benz was abandoned by his parents and somehow (nobody will ever know) ended up living alone in extreme degradation and sleeping among pigs in the slaughterhouse pig holding pens of Klong Toey. Months later, when our social workers found Benz, he was severely malnourished with life-threatening infections. Nursed back to health at his new home in Mercy Centre, Benz flourished, and he is now a normal, mischievous nine-year-old boy with many friends at Mercy Centre and school, and an asset to his team on the soccer pitch.





A family of over  
180 brothers and  
sisters.



# Anti-trafficking and Legal Aid Centre

Program Director  
Wanee Kidswad



## Program Mandates

To protect street children in Bangkok, offering solace and safe shelter at all times. To rescue slum children from abusive environments wherever they are found.

To prevent vulnerable children from being sold or trafficked.

To protect and defend poor children in legal matters.

## Background:

**Street Children Outreach:** Through our "Walking-the-streets teams" and meeting children on their own "turf," we have been taking in and caring for poor children for over thirty years – children with no family, children who have been abused, children who are orphaned. HDF provides as normal a home life as possible within our shelter program.

Our outreach has grown through the years. Consequently our close cooperation with key government institutions, including the Child Welfare Department and Children's Courts, grows stronger every year.

## Anti-Trafficking and Legal Aid Centre:

The HDF Legal Aid Program and all its activities have grown out of the needs of the children we meet on the street. So many of their legal rights are abused.

Starting in 1982 the Canadian Embassy donated the first of many grants through the next 26 years to help HDF defend children and prevent them from sale or trafficking. In 2000 the Canadian Embassy together with a Toronto Law Firm joined HDF in beginning the first program in Thailand dedicated solely to assisting poor children in legal matters – children accused or victims or witnesses of a crime; children being abused; and children in grave danger. Since 2000, we have officially represented over two thousand children in police stations and courts. Recent Thai laws, which strengthen and protect children's rights, now require that an impartial third party be present when police question or detain a child involved in a potential criminal proceeding. Today HDF is registered as a third party representative in 85 police stations in the greater Bangkok area and receives dozens of requests weekly from police authorities to assist children in need of legal representation.

## Geographic Coverage

Greater Bangkok - all major congregations of street children in addition to Klong Toey and several densely populated slum communities.

## Anti-trafficking and Legal Aid Activities

- Protecting the legal and human rights of poor children who are victims of rape, abuse, and trafficking, accompanying them at all times during legal proceedings and providing a safe house whenever they are in danger.
- Securing the birth and identity certificates for unregistered children. These are the children most vulnerable to transnational trafficking as they can disappear without any legal trace. Without documentation, they also cannot enter school, apply for work or receive any rights as Thai citizens. (These documents can only be obtained in a child's province of birth and often require an arduous effort in their retrieval.)
- Providing legal counsel and defense during police interrogations and court proceedings for poor children who are victims, witnesses, or accused of a crime.
- Ensuring the welfare of those children while awaiting trial.





- Offering shelter in a nurturing and loving environment at Mercy Centre as an alternative to incarceration. In an agreement in 2001 with the Thai Ministry of Justice, the courts may now refer children charged with minor infractions to the care of the HDF, allowing these children the opportunity to gain direction in life outside the criminal justice system.

### **Street Children Outreach Activities**

Trust, education, protection, continuous friendship and rehabilitation:

- Visiting the children on a regular basis, giving them food, drinking water, milk, snacks, soap, toothpaste, baby powder, first-aid kits, and other basic necessities
- Educating the children about health and disease issues on the streets, especially regarding HIV and drug use
- Giving the children confidence-building lessons through games and interactive art (materials provided)
- Giving parental advice, gently encouraging them towards a safer environment
- Guiding the children to temporary foster care homes whenever children are willing
- Delivering sick children to hospitals

- Encouraging the children to return to school
- Accompanying children on camping trips outside of Bangkok, in cooperation with other NGOs
- Placing children with HIV in our Mercy Centre home for children living with HIV
- Opening the door to all street children who are willing to live at our Mercy Homes
- Creating profiles of the children for continuity of social work care
- Returning the children back to their families whenever the home environment is safe and the child is willing
- Providing those families too destitute to care for their children with basic living needs
- Studying the problems and obstacles that are related to children's rights and advocating solutions

### **Challenges**

Since 1990, rampant amphetamine abuse has turned home environments more violent and heightened the level of street problems. AIDS remains a scourge. Street children die younger today than in decades past. Human trafficking has increased dramatically. More so today than ever before, these children are in urgent need of protection.

### **Street Children's Association**

We are leading members of an association that links government and private social welfare groups. Together we work to strengthen children's rights, especially victims of abuse, rape, and trafficking, and to help meet Thailand's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

# The Mercy School System

**Program Director**  
Sudaporn Saenkhot



## **Mandate**

Every child must go to school.

## **The Numbers**

29 Mercy Preschools

4,000 Students (2007)

## **School Curriculum**

Preparation for entering the first grade in government-sponsored state primary schools: Thai, English, reading, writing, arithmetic, hygiene, Thai history, folklore, dance, song, sports, and the arts.

## **Nutrition**

All children are given a nutritious rice, vegetable and protein lunch plus afternoon snacks of milk, fruit, and protein every school day. Almost 10 percent of our incoming students are malnourished, and these children's health and weight are closely monitored throughout the school year.

## **Community Partnership**

The communities help construct and staff the schools located in their neighborhoods. The HDF receives a 10 to 15-baht fee from parents each school day – just a fraction (approximately 5%) of the cost of most Bangkok private preschools. The fee is waived for over 500 poor families who cannot afford it. These poorest children also receive school supplies, book bags, shoes, uniforms, etc.

## **Additional School**

### **Program Benefits**

Our preschools are the core of our community outreach activities. HDF provides legal counseling for both parents and teachers; we initiate local credit unions and savings and loans; we work with community leaders to strengthen each neighborhood; we protect children in cases of child abuse; and coordinate with medical facilities, hospitals, police and housing authorities in emergencies.



## Origins/History

We were inspired jointly by the Muslim leader Imam Haji Tolaeb and the Buddhist lay teachers Kru Sunnee Yingyoung and Kru Jamnean Jamsri who opened Bangkok's original "one baht per day schools" in the Klong Toey shantytowns. In 1973, when we opened our first one-baht-per-day preschool in the Catholic section of the Klong Toey slaughterhouse neighborhood, many people lent support. Our first school was an unqualified success: all the children graduated, entered government primary schools, and continued their education. Local slum community leaders soon began asking us to open schools in their neighborhoods, and we expanded our reach. Tens of thousands of children have learned to read and write in our schools. For generations of poor children in Bangkok Slums, the Mercy Schools have become a major rite of passage in their young lives as they begin many of life's bigger lessons.

Thirty-five years after opening our first school, Imam Haj Tolaeb's two daughters still teach at our largest Mercy preschool while Kru Jamnean's daughter teaches art and graphics to all of our Mercy children. Kru Sunnee is a community leader in a slum next to a famous Buddhist Temple.

## The Challenges

The government school system, which children enter at age 6, expects each child to have basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic when they enter first grade. Yet, the government provides inadequate pre-schooling for the poor. Thus, when poor children enter first grade illiterate, they are doomed to academic failure.

The head start  
in life that poor  
children need  
the most...



# Education Sponsorships in Bangkok

Program Director  
Sombat Nunthavichitra



## Mandate

Every child has the right to stay in school.

## Description

We sponsor poor Bangkok children from kindergarten onward, as far as they can reach within the education system. Currently, this includes over 25 children enrolled in vocational college and university. When we began 35 years ago, there were none.

## Outreach

Our social workers, teachers, alumni and parent representatives identify the children who are most in need of education funding assistance. We also sponsor the education of the children living in our care at Mercy Centre, from preschool onward.

## 2007 Statistics

Community Sponsors: 475\*

Mercy Children: 185

Total: 660

\*149 live with a single parent; 132 with non-parent guardians; 23 began their education late, several years behind their peers.

## Challenges

Until age eight or nine, most poor children attend school as they have little economic value as laborers. As the poorest children reach late primary school, many drop out, especially eldest siblings in a family, to earn family income and to care for younger siblings. In addition to funding to keep these children enrolled in school, we also need to provide social and family support, tutoring, and continuous encouragement along the way. The longer we can keep poor children in school, the more likely they will avoid drugs, crime, and teenage pregnancy.

## Activities

- Outreach with the parents and guardians to understand each child's family situation
- Evening classes and tutoring
- Summer camp. Each year, we take the children



on a 4-day holiday to a national park where they learn about nature, teamwork, independence, and leadership.

- Leadership training for our most motivated and capable children
- Child-to-child learning
- Field trips to museums and zoos
- Weekend computer, batik, and graphic arts classes at our Mercy Centre
- Sporting events and organized Sports Days
- Cross-cultural exchange with the Moka schoolchildren we sponsor in Thailand's South

### Retention rate

Over 99% of our sponsored children remain in school.

### Success Story

Siranee, age 20, has a story that is typical of our sponsored children: her father died when she was young; and when her mom remarried, she left Siranee and her siblings with aging grandparents who were unable to support themselves. Landless, homeless, and without any means of support, the grandparents moved the family to a rented wooden shack in a rice field in Samutprakarn province just outside of Bangkok. Siranee was always a diligent, hardworking student, even though, as the eldest child in her family, she had to look after her younger brothers and sisters as well as her aging grandparents, doing the daily housework, cooking and washing. Only at bedtime was she free to do her schoolwork, always by candlelight as her family could not afford electricity.

Siranee excelled throughout primary and secondary schools and was the first in her family ever to attend vocational college. She has completed a 3-year vocational certificate, and currently is completing a 5-year certificate, as she works in a factory and cares for her grandparents and siblings.



# Tsunami Mokaan Children Pioneer Education Initiative

Program Director  
Sombat Nunthavichitra



## Background

Following the 2005 tsunami, HDF served dozens of the communities that were devastated – building and repairing homes, fixing potable water supplies, creating income-earning initiatives, and making sure every child was able to return to school. To this day, we continue to provide educational funding for poor Mokaan (Sea Gypsy) children and Rubber Tappers' children in Phang Nga and Phuket provinces.

## Challenges

These children have no family history or culture of formal education. Coastal families raise their boys to be fishermen; those living inland expect their children to become rubber tappers. The parents, who in general are illiterate, do not see the need for their children to receive formal education. The education of female children is even less valued. Hygiene is very poor. Most villages do not have toilets. Economic levels are below subsistence.

## Total Number of Sponsored Mokaan Children

475 children.

## Teacher-Student Network

HDF created a sponsorship network between twelve schools. Teachers receive training in child outreach from Mercy Centre staff, where they learn how to select children for sponsorship, how to respond to urgent child protection issues (such as abuse or severe malnourishment), and how to help







the children by helping the children's families.

### **Village Partnerships**

We work together with the parents, teachers, and village leaders to improve hygiene (potable water sources and toilets), generate income (commercial vegetable gardens, fishing equipment, boat repairs, livestock maintenance), and help the Moka community integrate into Thai society and culture.

### **Additional Activities**

- Family outreach
- Leadership youth training
- Summer Camps
- Cultural exchange with our sponsored children in Bangkok

### **Retention Rate**

100% Since the program started in 2005, not one sponsored child has dropped out of school. Every child completing primary school has advanced to secondary school. One child has become the first person in his village to complete vocational college.



# Janusz Korczak School of S.E. Asia

**Program Director**  
Wannee Kidswad



## **Mandate**

- To educate street children and teach them to read and write and count – to write their own name – to survive.
- To believe that every child has special talents and gifts and give them a “window” to succeed at their own pace and rhythm.
- To give illiterate adults the opportunity to learn to read and write.
- To give all children under our care the opportunity to explore the arts, including dance, music, drawing, and woodworking.

## **The Need for a Special School for Street Children**

We have been caring for and educating orphans and street children for thirty years (it has never been easy), and we have always faced various difficulties with educating certain groups of children. One challenge that never goes away is teaching and giving self-confidence to older children from the streets who are far behind their peers and have little or no belief in themselves - in their intellectual skills. In addition, we care for children in our Mercy Centre who for various reasons, including emotional or physical disabilities, cannot attend formal government schools.

There is also a second group comprising the smartest kids at Mercy Centre and in the slums, who were also being left behind. Even the smartest children at Mercy Centre have had difficulties reaching beyond high school; and the smartest kids in the surrounding community have always been too poor to go to high school and college.

Without a special needs school, the chances for either of these groups to reach their potential are greatly diminished. Our new school has been a huge instrument of change. Our graduates walk tall and proud and confident. Opened in June 2004, the school is named in honor of Dr. Janusz Korczak, the great humanitarian, doctor, writer, orphanage director, and author of the first code of rights for poor children.

In 2006, we expanded the school’s mission into the arts in order to give all children in our care the opportunity to learn painting, music, and dance (even carpentry!).

In 2007, the school’s mission expanded further to Adult Education with “Back-to-School Curriculums” that include literacy courses, and primary and

secondary school equivalency training for adults in the community who never had the opportunity to study far beyond the second grade.

## **Curriculum**

1. Students enrolled in our literacy program receive individualized instruction with primary emphasis on basic Thai reading and writing skills, math, history, home economics - everything they need to enter normal government primary and secondary schools.
2. The curriculum for exceptional academic students is English - based, accelerated, and personalized to prepare them for college and university.
3. Mercy Centre children of all ages attend after - school and weekend arts classes.
4. After-work and weekend adult classes, focusing on preparation for primary and secondary school equivalency exams, are open to all our staff and neighbors.

## **Location**

The Janusz Korczak School comprises the entire third floor of the Mercy Centre administration building.





### **Staff**

The school employs four full-time teachers. Arts, dance, music, and woodworking instructors and volunteers provide additional support.

After two years, in 2006 we were able to place Ming in a local high school, where she is currently studying among her peers and excelling in mathematics, science, dance and music.

### **Success Story**

Ming joined our Mercy family as a young teenager. Raised in a poor hill tribe village, she had never gone to school and could speak only her local hill tribe language. Too old to join her peers in high school, she entered our Janusz Korczak School and began an informal primary school education.



# Adult Respite Hospice

Program Director  
Chutima Jongjet



## **Mandate**

To improve the quality of life of poor people living with HIV/AIDS - to provide counsel and support, and to help strengthen family bonds. Whenever possible, to help our patients move forward and return to productive and fulfilling lives at home. To teach and practice love and compassion for all people living with AIDS. To visit the families of our patients; to provide homecare visitation to our former patients; to reach out to care for the abandoned poor with HIV/AIDS. To make sure that all their children are going to school.

## **Location**

Mercy Centre Klong Toey, Bangkok

## **Patients per year**

100

## **A Partnership**

The HDF operates the hospice as a partnership - a three-way agreement - between the patients, their families, and HDF: the families agree to share in the bedside and daily care of their family members while in our hospice. The patients agree that when they are able, they will provide assistance for our foundation in our AIDS efforts. We agree to teach the families homecare skills and provide follow-up visits when patients are able to return home.





### **Activities**

- Nursing and palliative care
- Providing a healthy diet and a clean, safe shelter
- Counseling and support for patient and family
- Preparing paperwork and providing transportation for hospital visits
- Teaching the family homecare skills

### **Origins/History**

The HDF has operated the city's first and largest free AIDS hospice since 1993. The Mercy Centre hospice was originally a final shelter for late-stage patients, and until 2001, cared for over

250 patients per year. As drug treatment evolved and became accessible, the hospice has increasingly become a place of respite for patients in their return home; and our primary hospice efforts are in helping our patients return to home and family. The hospice also continues as a final shelter for those who are destitute or without family.

Many of our former bedridden patients have recovered sufficient health to join our homecare teams, visiting our sick neighbors – teaching them of proper anti viral medicines and bringing them to hospitals.

### **Success Story**

Apiwat first came to Mercy Centre with late-stage AIDS in 2000. His doctors had told him he had only two months to live. In spite of their predictions, two months passed and Apiwat's health improved. With proper medical attention and support from family, Apiwat gained strength, returned home, and today remains strong and healthy as he leads and trains our HIV/AIDS Homecare, Outreach, and Education staff. Today he is a national figure working in HIV/AIDS prevention.

**The hospice has increasingly become a place of respite for patients in their return home.**

# Mothers' and Children's Home

Program Director  
Chutima Jongjet



## Mandate

To create a loving home environment for poor children and their mothers living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, to provide a high level of homecare for infected mothers and children who are able to live at home in their community.

## Number of Home Residents

56 children, 5 mothers

## Geographic Coverage

Over 30 slum communities in Bangkok with a concentration in Klong Toey, Bangkok's largest slum community.

## How We Care

All mothers and children in our family are ensured of the following:

- A loving home environment in Mercy Centre.
- Dedicated teams of nurses and auxiliary health care staff on duty 24 hours a day.
- Emotional support and special training to help mothers care for their own infected children.

- Educating the children. All of our children attend school. A computer training center, art school, and playground are also on the premises of Mercy Centre.
- Safety, security, a place where they need not fear shame and discrimination.
- Day-to-day provisions, from a steady nutritional diet to clothing, bedding, washing, etc.
- Field trips, cultural explorations, and holidays for the children.
- An opportunity for the children to play and develop as normal children, equal to their peers.

## Additional Program

### Parameters

- Providing homecare in cases where mothers and children with HIV/AIDS live with family outside of Mercy Centre.
- Job assistance, counsel, and other means of support to the mothers in our home.
- Educating the surrounding community and other slum neighborhoods on

various AIDS issues, including prevention, compassion, and care.

- Ensuring access to government hospitals and additional medical care, whenever required, by providing transportation, logistics, documentation, and paperwork.
- Arranging cremation ceremonies
- Coming to families' aid in emergencies.

## Origins/History

In 1993 the HDF opened an Adult AIDS hospice and began its AIDS educational programs to the poor throughout Bangkok. In 1997, we opened our Mothers and Children's Home and began building a comprehensive homecare program.

## Challenges

To reach poor infected mothers before they become homeless and to begin medical treatment for them and their children as early as possible. To educate the greater community in prevention, compassion, and acceptance to prevent abandonment. To prepare our





older children for a rich and fulfilling future.

#### **Our Growing Family**

Our doors are always open, and our family is always growing. Mothers learn specialized care-giving skills for their children. Children go to school and are treated as equals among their peers. The home itself fosters acceptance and empowerment. Our children have experienced a sense of loss and suffering that often defies comprehension, yet their joy in life and love of friendship are truly extraordinary.

**An opportunity  
for the children  
to play and  
develop, equal to  
their peers.**

# AIDS Homecare

**Program Director**  
Chutima Jongjet



## **Mandate**

To improve the quality of life of poor people living with HIV/AIDS.

## **Objectives**

To ensure that poor children and adults living with HIV/AIDS – when not requiring hospitalization – can reside at home, receive proper health care, and continue living productive lives with their family. Simultaneously, to educate the family about prevention, care, and compassion for family members afflicted.

## **Geographic Coverage**

Klong Toey and other congested slum communities in Bangkok

## **Homecare Staff**

12 staff, majority are people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA)

## **Current Homecare Reach**

640 patients and families

## **Homecare Origins/History**

From the very beginning, when we opened Bangkok's first free AIDS hospice, we also established a pioneer HIV/AIDS homecare program.

Originally our homecare program focused on preparing our hospice

patients for their return to home. Through the years, our reach has broadened exponentially, and our goal now is to reach as many of the poorest of the poor living with HIV/AIDS with the care required to remain with family in the relative comforts of their home and community.

## **Homecare Initiatives, Activities, and Projects**

### **Home visits**

Home visits always include one-to-one counseling, family counseling, an assessment of medications and quality-of-life support. Our homecare teams, as PLWA themselves, are able to provide first-hand knowledge of treatment and medications; advice on combating opportunistic infections; and psychological support.

### **Screening new patients**

When we receive requests for hospice assistance, HDF-Mercy Centre staff will first visit the prospective patients in their homes to make an assessment. In most cases, the patients are able to remain at home and gain strength through medication, nutrition, and other forms of home care assistance.

### **Hospital Group Visits**

HDF-Mercy Centre staff work with government hospitals, making monthly visits to groups of poor PLWA, where we conduct workshops on receiving and administering proper medication; insuring access to treatment; and assessing, maintaining and strengthening health at home.

### **Mercy Centre-based counseling**

We receive phone-in and walk-in inquiries from new patients, existing patients, and family members of PLWA - approximately 20 inquiries per day. In addition, our homecare patients have a direct line to inquiries about treatment, medication, and timely advice for medical and family problems and emergencies.

### **Hospital registration/paperwork/bureaucracy**

HDF-Mercy Centre homecare staff assist in all facets of patient registration at government hospitals. Many of the poor living with HIV/AIDS lack identification papers required to receive government health benefits. In such cases, we assist in gaining the proper documents, a process that often requires travel to home provinces, paperwork, registration, and many impediments.





### **Home maintenance and repair**

Our most destitute homecare patients often live in squalid conditions, where it is difficult to maintain proper hygiene. We make home repairs whenever necessary and also help relocate families and provide emergency assistance for those facing eviction.

### **Nutrition**

Nutritional supplements, rice, and dry foods are provided to those who are economically destitute.

### **Transportation assistance to and from hospitals**

Many patients are unable to carry themselves to a hospital on public transportation or lack the means to pay for transportation. We provide whatever assistance is required to ensure our patients visit their doctors for regular check-ups and hospital visits.

### **Children's Outreach Network**

We have begun a network that brings together all the children we reach through our homecare programs, HIV positive and negative children alike, and unite them in regular activities with our own children living in Mercy Centre. Children from our homecare network now have a place, outside their own homes, where they know they will always be welcomed and loved. We make sure each child goes to school. No one is refused.

Our goal  
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the poorest  
of the poor  
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community.

# We teach the parents what the children living with us at Mercy Centre have taught us from their own experience living with AIDS

The parents and families of these children also join together with our homecare staff at Mercy Centre and work together to resolve common issues, which include:

- Their children's education. We visit schools whenever the children are experiencing discrimination and provide funding assistance whenever needed.
- Their children's future. We work with the families to identify each child's family support system, including grandparents, aunts and uncles who can care for and love these children in the event they are orphaned.
- Communication. It is critical to explain to these children the meaning of HIV, as well as their families' HIV status. We teach the parents what the children living with us at Mercy Centre have taught us – from their own experience of living with HIV/AIDS.

## **Job placement, income-earning activities, and micro-loans**

HDF Mercy-Centre helps place PLWA in both full- and part-time positions. We also provide micro-loans and

emergency loans for PLWA and families registered in our homecare program to relieve debts and earn regular income. As one example, in June 2007 we provided a loan to a PLWA and his family who earn their income collecting recyclable garbage on Bangkok's streets. Previously the daily rent for their collection cart was too costly for this family to make ends meet. Our micro-loan allowed them to purchase their own cart, which has substantially increased their daily income. This family is now economically self-sufficient.

## **A Typical Success Story**

Like many of our homecare patients, when Somchai first became too ill to support himself, his family wanted to move him permanently to a hospice, so they contacted us. An HDF homecare team visited Somchai at home and observed that he was suffering from uncontrolled skin infections. Since the infections did not appear life threatening, the team elected to first try treating Somchai at home and teach his family

homecare skills. The infections disappeared quickly, Somchai's health improved, and today Somchai drives a taxi part-time, supports himself, and is a valued member of his family.

## **Challenges**

Ignorance, discrimination, guilt, shame, and poverty.



# AIDS Education and Outreach

Program Director  
Chutima Jongjet



## Mandate

To reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS and the stigma associated with the disease.

## Objectives

To increase awareness and knowledge of HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention among teenagers, factory workers, and the poor who currently lack access to HIV/AIDS education. To demonstrate compassion and understanding for those living with AIDS.

## Current Reach

Over 11,000 high-risk men, women, and youth per year throughout greater Bangkok.

## Strategies and Activities

The Education-Outreach Program is being implemented in schools and community centers. The courses consist of small group discussions, case studies, lectures, workshops, games, and question and answer sessions, based on the target group. A two-member team conducts each course. One member of each teaching team is a person living with AIDS. The HDF continuously monitors, evaluates, and modifies each course based on tests, interviews, and surveys to course participants.

## Target Groups

- i) Youth - Government high schools, youth detention centres, children on the street, the children in our care, neighborhood children.
- ii) HDF Staff, Community leaders and our Mercy School Teachers: we are training these groups as seminar and organization leaders.
- iii) Parents - The parents and extended family of the 4,000 children enrolled in our preschools throughout Bangkok's poorest neighborhoods.

## Program Origins/History

The HDF has operated the city's first and largest free AIDS hospice since 1993. Even before the hospice opened, HDF began an intensive day-by-day education program in the Klong Toey neighborhood through the HDF Women's Group, reaching poor neighbors house by house and family by family. We formalized our Education Program in 1999 and began reaching out to specific high-risk groups throughout Bangkok.

# Community Services

**Program Director**  
Virat Somphobsuphanart



## **Mandate**

To empower the men and women living in Bangkok's slum communities by giving them knowledge about their rights, providing access to everything that is rightly their own, and by transferring our experience to them so that their communities will continue to improve in future generations.

## **Geographic Coverage**

Primarily Klong Toey, Bangkok's largest slum community, in addition to over 30 densely populated slum communities throughout Bangkok.

## **Activities**

The HDF oversees the following community services:

- Housing - Construction and repair for the elderly and indigent, and rebuilding after slum fires: over 10,000 homes to date.
- Community Organization - Consultation, leadership, education, and coordination with welfare organizations and government ministries, the national housing authority, metropolitan police authorities, and the Port Authority of Thailand.
- Drug Rehabilitation - Program placement.
- Documentation - Obtaining proper birth and identity certificates required for government schools, health benefits, and hospitalization. This is a huge, labor-intensive task.
- Sports - Construction and maintenance of drug-free playgrounds.
- Financing - Small business start-ups and emergency low interest loans.
- Klong Toey Women's Group and Savings & Loan - Empowering poor women to control their finances and strengthen their neighborhoods.







- Klong Toey Handicapped Program - Uniting the physically handicapped in seeking their rightful benefits and gainful employment.

### **Fires and Other Emergencies**

In the past three decades, responding to over 80 major slum fires, we have worked through the night and following days, organizing the fire victims, electing ad hoc committees, coordinating with local government, beginning credit unions, and establishing the community members as a juristic residents, and thus eligible for government long-term assistance. These fire victims are primarily squatters and need to immediately rebuild their homes to prevent eviction. In most cases, we provide the materials, social workers, and community organizers while the victims, their families and neighbors

provide the labor. We also respond daily - often hourly - to individuals and families in crisis.

### **Origins/History**

This program has been in existence since the HDF founders, Fr. Joe and Sister Maria, first arrived in the Klong Toey slums in 1973. In the early 1980s, the HDF developed the resources to build and renovate slum communities; and the National Housing Authority began turning to the HDF for assistance. By 2007, the HDF had completed the construction or renovation of over 10,000 homes in the slums. As with construction and housing, all our community efforts have been initiated to fill a void in a critically needed service for the poor. We meet each problem by starting with modest yet practical solutions in one poor neighborhood and then refining and

expanding their implementation into the greater slum communities.

### **The Challenges**

Housing, health, and welfare have generally improved over the years, especially in the more established slum communities. However, the migrant pull into Bangkok has swelled the numbers of urban poor. In addition, rampant amphetamine abuse has created a far more violent and unstable slum environment than in decades past.

Most of all, there are slum children who need to go to school. To learn to read and write and count to survive.



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