Message from the Chairperson and Executive Committee

BMWEC 2012-13

Major Achievements
• Official recognition for migrant education from the Myanmar/Burmese Government
• Migrant learning centres in Thailand
• IDP education
• Professional development
• Pathways into further education
• Special learning opportunities
• Advocacy

Financial Summary

Acknowledgements

Contact information

Address
647 Samaksapphakam Road,
Mae Sot
PO Box 140, Mae Sot, Tak,
63310

Telephone
+66 892687708

Email
bmwecmaesot@yahoo.com

Specific contacts

Naw Paw Ray,
Chairperson

Kyaw Win Aung,
Secretary of the Executive Committee

Asok Kumar,
Finance Director
finance.bmwec@gmail.com

Jan McPherson,
Director of Operations
jan.mcpherson.nz@gmail.com;
(+66) 8 44535250

Websites

BMWEC
http://www.bmwec.org/

BMWEC (Facebook)
http://www.facebook.com/BMWEC,
BurmeseMigrantWorkersEducationCommittee

All You Need Is Love (UK)
http://allyouneedislove.org.uk/

All You Need is Love (US)
http://www.allyouneedislovecharity.com/

All You Need is Love (Documentary)
http://allyouneedislovedoc.com/
Message from the Chairperson and Executive Committee

‘Mingalaba. Our warmest greetings to all of you. We hope that this report will bring you up to date with all that we have been doing over the last year, as well as some of our plans and priorities for the coming year. Perhaps our main message is that, although much has changed in Burma-Myanmar; much remains the same for us. Our children still need access to schools and the hope that education offers. And we still need our supporters to make this happen.

Like us, you are probably excited by the prospect of change in Burma/Myanmar. However, despite these long-awaited transformations in the broader political picture, until there are significant economic improvements for ordinary people, as well as evidence that social and political progress is stable, it is unlikely that there will be a rush of migrants returning home in the foreseeable future. And here on the border, many of the issues for migrant workers have remained the same: most migrants do not have legal status; the work they do often falls under the heading of one of the 3Ds - ‘dirty, dangerous or degrading’; wages are almost always very low; and human trafficking, child labour, human rights abuses and poverty are constant features of life here. In this setting, children often face lives which are difficult now, and futures which seem equally bleak.

At BMWEC, our focus is these children; we want to make sure that as many as possible have access to an education which enriches their lives now and opens opportunities in the future. However, as the media, NGOs and donors increasingly turn their attention to what is happening inside, there is more and more difficulty in attracting support for the migrant community here.

In the past year, with the support of our donors and volunteers we made a difference in the lives of around four thousand children. Despite difficult conditions and poor pay, our teachers did an amazing job.

But we still have thousands of children who deserve and need the very best education possible. We still face challenges in terms of keeping children in school past the primary years. And although we are making progress, we still don’t have as many of our students crossing the bridge into further education as we would like.

As change looms, a major challenge for us is how we prepare our young people so that they are able to make the most of the opportunities that may open up for them, and contribute as leaders and participants in shaping their world, whether it be in Burma, Thailand or further afield.

Our deepest thanks go to our supporters here and our friends overseas (including donors and volunteers), who not only work to raise money for us, but also ensure that information about what is happening on the border is made available to a wider pool of potential donors and sponsors. Some examples include, two Scots teenagers who cycled the 1095 miles from John O’Groats to Land’s End raising both money and awareness; a young volunteer who set up an art project raising funds and awareness in Australia; and, in the US, another young volunteer who set up a massive garage sale at her old school. We are also fortunate in having a dedicated group of corporate and individual supporters who provide not only funding support but also capacity building advice and encouragement when the going gets tough. Locally, we find strength in networking with other NGOs and CBOs. We have also been lucky to have some fantastic volunteers whose help in the office and in schools has been invaluable.

To all of you– we thank you from the very depths of our hearts.
Who we are
We are a small community-based organisation working to ensure that as many Burmese migrant children and young people as possible have access to, and take advantage of, a quality education which enriches their lives now, and opens opportunities for their future either back in Myanmar, in Thailand or further afield.

We were founded twelve years ago, and have subsequently played a major role in the transformation of migrant education on the border. We currently oversee 25 learning centers providing education for approximately 4000 children and young adults in the Mae Sot area.

Quick facts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Founded</th>
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<td>Office Location</td>
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<table>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Training Centres</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP* Schools in Burma</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/Myanmar</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stand-alone Boarding House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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| Students in full member schools | 3807 |
| Teachers in full member schools | 196  |

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Migrant Learning Centres, Thailand</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDP Schools, (Burma/Myanmar)</td>
<td>13</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Local Staff (Burmese nationality) | 6 + 2 |
| Non-local Staff                   | 1    |

*IDP – Internally displaced persons

Our focus
Educational excellence, access, and opportunity
Children’s rights, safety and well-being

Our values
Honesty, responsibility and respect
In all our actions we strive for honesty and transparency. Decisions are guided by a commitment to social justice as well as a long-term commitment to the community we serve. We aim to undertake our responsibilities with care, wisdom and love.

We value and affirm children’s diverse ethnic backgrounds in our schools. The close relationship between our schools and communities mean that we are able to respond sensitively and effectively to the particular needs of migrant students - linguistically, socially and culturally.

Our role
Administration, professional leadership and support
This includes but is not limited to:
- providing the administrative structure for educational delivery
- helping schools set and maintain high standards of student achievement
- offering academic and curriculum guidance and support
- supporting teacher professional development
- co-ordinating funding
- liaising with governments and other external bodies
- advocating for migrant education
- creating paths into tertiary and higher education
In brief, our major achievements for the past year include:

- Gaining official recognition for migrant education from the Myanmar/Burmese Government
- Organising on-going administrative and funding support for 25 learning centres in Thailand
- Maintaining close relationships and supporting IDP schools in Myanmar and initiating new school projects
- Supporting and providing professional development opportunities for teachers through professional development programmes and a major teacher seminars
- Creating a range of opportunities for migrant students to continue their studies after leaving school (through vocational programmes; study for the Myanmar matriculation exam and seeking out scholarship options for students)
- Providing special learning opportunities for children to experience education beyond their village (especially children from IDP schools)
- Continuing to advocate in Thailand, Myanmar and internationally for children’s rights, support for and recognition of migrant education.
- Taking over independent management of our finance system and developing a team that is capable of meeting high standards of professionalism, transparency and integrity (see Financial Summary).

Greetings from 48K Learning Centre. Sadly, head teacher (right) San Tun Aung passed away during the year. We remember him for his unwavering commitment to his school, the children and the community. He embodies the best of BMWEC: and is an inspiration to those whose goal is to ‘make a difference’. If the question was ‘Can we do it?’. His answer was always a resounding ‘YES, we can!’
Official recognition of migrant education from the Myanmar government

In September 2012, BMWEC successfully negotiated with the Karen State Government for official recognition of migrant learning centres in the Mae Sot area. The agreement was then taken by Karen state officials to central government and approved nationally.

This was a groundbreaking achievement because it is the first time that student achievement within migrant education has been given official credit within a formal education system. BMWEC also ensured that this arrangement could be extended to migrant learning centres that do not directly come under the umbrella of our organization as long as BMWEC acknowledges the status of the learning centre.

This has had huge implications for migrant education:

- Children who return to Myanmar/Burma can enter school at a grade level appropriate to the level they have achieved in a migrant learning centre.
- Students who have studied in migrant learning centres can register for and sit the official Burmese matriculation exam (This is a pre-requisite to university entrance and a necessary qualification for many employment opportunities in Burma.)
- BMWEC was invited to collaborate with the Karen State education department in developing education, particularly in IDP areas. This in turn sets the stage for an on-going relationship with the state which should help facilitate the transition back home for returning migrants.

Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:

- Building on the official recognition so that our migrant children and teachers have as many opportunities open to them as possible
- Promoting cross border relationships to facilitate quality and access on both sides of the border
- Ensuring that curriculum and instruction in migrant learning centres adequately prepares children for study in Myanmar
- Making sure that as many migrant students as possible have the opportunity to take the matriculation exam.
Our main business continues to be supporting children's education through migrant learning centres in Thailand. There are three important points that we wish to emphasise with respect to this issue:

- Why migrant learning centres are crucial to ensuring access to education for migrant children
- The looming funding crisis which faces education for migrant children
- The importance of ensuring that the quality of migrant education continues to improve and through the provision of adequate support, funding and teacher training.

**Why migrant learning centres are important**

Although the Thai Ministry of Education recognizes our 'learning centres', they are not officially classified as 'schools' under the Thai system. This allows us independence in terms of curriculum, language of instruction and so on, but also means that we receive no government funding. (In practice, we usually refer to the learning centres as 'schools' because this is what they are in the normal sense of the word!)

Thailand has an 'education for all' policy which means that, in theory, migrant children could all be educated within the Thai system. However, in reality this is neither practical nor possible. For a number of reasons, including cost, attitudes towards migrant children, lack of inclusive curricula, concerns about security, and geographical location, many migrant parents choose not to send their children to Thai schools. In addition, the aspiration for many parents is that they or their children will eventually be able to resettle back home. For these parents the priority is that their children have the language, cultural and educational background that will enable them to establish successful futures in Burma rather than Thailand, so their preference is that children attend a migrant learning centre rather than a Thai school.

In those areas in which migrant learning centres are not available, there are much higher percentages of migrant children who are out of school. In Mae Sot and the areas that we serve, it is estimated that approximately 60 – 65% of all primary school aged migrant children are in education. In other areas, where migrant education is not available, estimates of attendance are as low as 10 – 20%. This is equivalent to the situation in Mae Sot ten years ago.

Clearly, whilst we have made considerable progress in the last decade, there is still much work to be done if we are to ensure universal primary education for migrant children.

For many communities, the migrant learning centres are a tangible symbol of hope for the future and the dream of a better life for themselves and their children. These schools not only provide a pathway to a better future, but are also the best way of improving the quality of life for children in the present. Children have the opportunity to learn, have fun and grow in safe and nurturing environments. Schools are the most effective way of ensuring some protection from child labour and human trafficking.

In summary, migrant learning centres:

- Make education accessible to the migrant population
- Increase school attendance
- Provide an education in which children’s language and culture are respected and supported.
- Improve the quality of children’s life in the present
- Provide a pathway to a better future, for children and their community
Funding

We have struggled to fund schools adequately during the year. Although some schools receive part or full funding from specific donors, most of our schools are reliant on ‘general’ funds that we receive from our supporters, local fund-raising efforts and parent/community contributions. A major and often hidden contribution to school operational costs has come from teachers, and head teachers themselves.

Prior to the commencement of the academic year, we were fortunate to receive a major donation that covered rents for most of our schools. This was crucial in establishing a sense of security and essential in maintaining good relationships with Thai landowners. Knowing that rents were covered was a huge weight off the mind for teachers, communities and BMWEC staff. (Our thanks to this donor are boundless!)

Having covered rents, our next priority was to pay our teachers’ salaries. Although the minimum wage in Thailand is 300 baht/day (equivalent to approximately 6,000 baht/month), it was not possible to pay our teachers at this rate. We had hoped to sustain a minimum rate of 3,000 baht per month but this was not possible, and in the final months of the academic year many teachers went unpaid. (Note: In those schools that were covered by specific donors, salaries were maintained at the rate set by the donor).

As we move into the coming academic year, funding remains our greatest worry, and establishing a secure financial base remains our greatest challenge.

An emphasis on quality

Despite difficulties in maintaining adequate funding, our teachers have really done a wonderful job over the last year. They have participated in training and teacher seminars (see below), maintained a remarkably positive attitude and worked hard for the children in their care.

BMWEC field officers and finance staff visit schools on a regular basis, and many of our volunteers spend time in schools involved in both teaching and staff development. We, and they, are constantly impressed by teachers’ level of commitment and professionalism and there is ample evidence of good teaching and learning going on in our schools.

At the same time, we acknowledge the need for further professional development, particularly in the areas of active learning, critical thinking and specific subject areas (especially science and mathematics). We are also keen to support our staff obtain the qualifications necessary for them to obtain positions in government recognised schools in Burma/Myanmar, should they decide to return home.
Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:

- **FUNDING**: Quite simply, without funding, learning centres will close, and the chance to attend school will be lost for many other children just like those in the picture above.
- **ACCESSIBILITY**: Continuing to work towards universal access to primary education (e.g., by continuing to support small schools in remote locations; night schools in urban areas etc.)
- **ATTENDANCE**: Finding new ways of encouraging attendance – both for children who have not attended school on a regular basis (if at all) - ‘reaching the unreachable’; and, encouraging children to remain in school beyond the primary grades (working with community leaders and teachers to educate parents on the importance of schooling; ensuring that children attendance records are maintained and non-attendance is followed up on etc.)
- **QUALITY**: Continuing to provide appropriate and targeted support to individual schools and teachers as well as professional development opportunities for groups of teachers
- **CURRICULUM**: Finally, as indicated in the previous section, it is clear that schools will be required to demonstrate that they are able to adequately prepare for children to transfer to the Myanmar education system. Increasingly, our students also wish to have the option to move into the Thai system, either at school or tertiary level. This is a challenge not only in terms of quality but also in terms of language and curriculum. BMWEC will continue to work with our teachers to find ways in which these different demands might best be met and balanced in and across migrant learning centres.

Ngwe Hnin does not go to school. Most of her days are spent looking after her younger sister while her parents work. Without learning centres, there would be 1000s more children left to fend for themselves. This is just not OK.
We have two IDP schools in Burma/Myanmar that are full members of BMWEC and another thirteen that are associate members. In 2012-13, BMWEC donors provided salaries at the two member schools, and stationary at all fifteen schools. Support was also made available so that teachers were able to attend professional development opportunities and children could participate in the Superkids Camp (see below).

The IDP schools are an essential, though under-recognised, facet of the education system in Burma/Myanmar. The schools have been established by communities themselves and function in areas in which it is generally not possible to attract trained teachers because of remote location and lack of access to the luxuries of the 21st century (including electricity, running water and so on).

Our support for IDP schools is of considerable relevance to the migrant community, and is part of our commitment to making sure that the educational needs of migrant students if they choose to return home. It is inevitable that some of our migrant children who move back to Burma/Myanmar will live in areas where the only available education is in IDP schools. This may be because their immediate families are still living in these areas, or because these are the areas in which their families used to live before coming to Thailand.

In June last year, we initiated the construction of a high school in an IDP area in which there was no access to secondary education. The school is now complete (though still unfurnished) and will start to be used for grades 5 to 10 in the coming year (and then growing to include grades 9 and 10 in subsequent years). Although like other IDP schools, it has been built by the community, it was necessary for BMWEC to work in partnership with both the KNU and the Karen State Government to ensure that things ran smoothly.

We also support flexibility in terms of the future for schools that are currently based in Thailand. In many cases, the reason that families, children and schools initially moved to Thailand was because of on-going fighting. Now that the cease-fire appears to be permanent, some of our learning centres in Thailand are also considering either relocating to Burma (especially in those cases where the majority of children who are currently boarding are from a specific area), or setting up partner schools in these areas. We are very supportive of such developments, especially if it means that children can be living with their families (or at least closer to them) rather than having to board at a school where distance means that they seldom have contact with their parents.

At BMWEC, the partnership with IDP schools will continue to be important in terms of making sure that the educational needs of the migrant community are met if they return to Burma/Myanmar. We also welcome the invitation of the Karen State Government to collaborate with them in developing and improving IDP education. In sum, we are working hard to be both responsive to the context and needs of the community, as well as proactive and flexible in seeking solutions.

Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:

- Maintaining and developing established relationships with IDP schools
- Encouraging flexibility in terms of school location – including the relocation of migrant learning centres to Myanmar where appropriate
- Supporting the development of new IDP high school both through administrative support and academic leadership
- Establishing a boarding house for students attending the IDP high school
Professional development

Early Childhood Education: Training for Nursery Teachers

BMWEA partnered with the *Taipei Oversee Peace Service (TOPS)* and VSO to organise training for nursery teachers during the 2012-13 academic year. The training was provided by TOPS/VSO trainers lead by Alice Harwood. In May 2012, teachers from five schools undertook special training at BMWEA and this was followed by school-based professional development for this group of teachers. They, in turn, worked with TOPS/VSO to provide a three-day training for a wider group of eighty IDP and migrant nursery teachers at Hsa Thoo Lei in October.

Our thanks go to the TOPS team for sharing their time, experience, expertise and enthusiasm. We look forward to working with them again in the coming year, when they will focus on teaching at kindergarten level (though they will also maintain their support for the nursery teachers). We really appreciate the important contribution they are making to early childhood education through their work with teachers.

Reading, Writing, and Critical Thinking Skills (RWCT) Teacher Training

In October 2012, (concurrent with the TOPS nursery training and with funding from DCA), BMWEA organized a weeklong RWCT (Reading, Writing and Critical Thinking) training for forty-five teachers from the IDP and migrant schools. The trainers included three expert BMWEA teachers, another local head teacher, a trainer from Mae La and a volunteer from Italy and focused on Science, Burmese, History and Geography and English (phonetics). The training team led the other teachers through a range of activity-based exercises challenging them to think, learn, have fun – and become better teachers.

We would like to thank DCA and our teacher trainers for making this informative, lively and professionally valuable training available to teachers.

Teacher seminar

With funding from DCA, BMWEA held the fourth Teachers’ Seminar in February. Just over three hundred teachers from BMWEA and other education providers, as well as others involved with the administration and management of education participated in the seminar.

The theme for this year’s conference was *Education: Creating the Future in Changing Times*. Not only is the political situation in Myanmar undergoing dramatic changes, but the wider changes across Asia (including the development of ASEAN) also have important implications for migrant education. The seminar aimed to provide a forum in which migrant voices could be heard, and teachers were given the opportunity to listen to presentations and discuss their views on the priorities for policy makers in Thailand, Myanmar and on the border at the present time.

The seminar also provided an opportunity to recognize those teachers whose commitment and long years of service to migrant education have had an impact on thousands of lives. This was both touching and inspiring. Our teachers are seldom given formal recognition for their hard work and dedication – and the both young people and older teachers who participated in the presentations were visibly moved.

Overall, the presentations stimulated lively discussion, and participants tackled both complex and contentious issues with insight and good humour.
We particularly liked a comment made by one of the ‘foreigners who attended the event: “I wish that the donors could have been here. If they could see your (teachers’) talent, commitment and professionalism – they would be feeling pretty good right now about how their money was being spent.

As noted above, continued support for in-service teacher training, professional development and certification are important in terms of the raising the quality of educational provision, acknowledging teacher professionalism, and ensuring that teachers have the skills required to teach both at all levels from nursery through to preparation for matriculation.

Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:

- Organising and delivering the third RWCT training in October, 2013 (with funding from DCA)
- Supporting TOPs/VSO kindergarten training programme
- Providing in-service, school-based professional development programmes when donor funding makes this possible
- Organising and hosting a professional teacher seminar in February, 2014
- Continuing to offer these professional development opportunities to all teachers in migrant learning centres and IDP schools (including those that do not currently come directly under the umbrella of BMWEC)
Pathways into further education

The option for students to study for and sit the Burmese matriculation exam has been a huge step in creating a pathway into further education for our students. Not only does a pass in the exam provide entrance into university or technical school in Burma/Myanmar, but the qualification is also recognized by the Thai university system. We were really pleased to be approached by the Rajabhat Universities System, which runs forty universities in regional provinces in Thailand. They advised us that they would be keen for successful matriculation students to consider continuing their education with them if they wished to stay in Thailand.

The exam itself is already having a ‘backwash’ effect on curriculum and student motivation to achieve academically in the lower high school and senior primary grades. Increasingly, higher education is being seen as a realistic possibility for these students rather than an out-of-reach dream. This in turn highlights the need for us to ensure that teachers are supported in their own academic learning and certification. Wherever possible, we are encouraging our teachers to participate in distance or part time university education, and we are also supporting younger staff who wish to return to part or full time study in order to sit the matriculation exam.

We are also active in supporting students who wish to study in Thailand or abroad. Currently, we have a number of students applying for university scholarships in Bangladesh, India, Chiang Mai and Bangkok.

Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:

- Providing matriculation classes at both STTC and Hsa Thoo Lei
- Supporting the establishment of matriculation classes at two other schools (New Blood School and SAW, neither of which come directly under the umbrella of BMWEC)
- Acting as liaison and administrative centre for all matriculation students in Mae Sot
- Providing professional leadership and teacher support for matriculation programmes in Mae Sot
- Liaising and building on relationships with tertiary providers in Thailand and overseas to facilitate entrance and scholarship opportunities
- Continuing to negotiate with educational authorities and providers in Thailand for recognition and accreditation of study undertaken in migrant schools
- Actively seeking scholarship opportunities and financial support for students who wish to undertake further study (in Thailand, Myanmar or abroad)
- Actively supporting staff who wish to undertake further part or full time study
Special learning opportunities

Superkids Camp

At the end of March, DCA funded our annual Superkids Camp at Hsa Thoo Lei School. Just over 300 children were treated to three days packed with fun and learning. Senior students and teachers from HTL and STTC worked together with a small group of volunteers from Chiang Mai University and two ‘independent’ BMWEC volunteers to plan and organize this special event.

The camp was specifically geared to children from the IDP area, and they were given first option to attend the camp. It was then opened up to a small number of BMWEC and other schools from in and around Mae Sot. For many of the IDP children, it was the first time they had travelled outside their home area and certainly the first time that they had met so many new and different people.

This year the theme - *Working Together for a Sustainable Future* - was taken from the ASEAN curriculum for schools. Under the ASEAN curriculum the notion of ‘sustainability’ includes not only the idea of environmental health and long term well being, but is also applied to individuals, communities and nations. (So, for example children might explore the concept of kindness and its role in maintaining ‘sustainable’ interpersonal relationships; health policies and practices could be analysed in terms of their impact on sustaining individual or community health.)

In the actual event, the theme sometimes appeared to get lost under the general chaos, excitement and fun. However, the activities had been designed to foster collaboration – so there were lots of opportunities for the children to share ideas and skills with each other and the atmosphere was 100% positive with lots of mutual encouragement and appreciation.

The children worked in teams and there was lots of opportunity for shared creation of art and performance, as well as inter-team races and competitions. Mae Tao Clinic also ran some useful sessions on first aid and other activities included a Student Talent Show, Voting for World Children’s Prize for the Rights of Children, and a General Knowledge quiz.

Our thanks go to the students, teachers and volunteers for their hard work in putting together such a wonderful camp.

Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include:
• Organising another Superkids camp in March 2014!
Advocacy has been crucial in terms of gaining recognition of migrant education in Thailand and Burma, promoting the rights of children, gathering financial backing and obtaining professional support. BMWEC has played an important role in advocating for migrant education in the past, and this has continued during the 2012-2013 academic year.

In the negotiations with both the Karen State Government and the national government, BMWEC was very clear in making sure that we working on behalf of ALL migrant learning centres, not just those that came under our umbrella. Similarly, we are committed to making sure that teacher seminars and teacher training events are open to all teachers.

Our teacher seminar in 2013 had, as a specific goal, the gathering of teachers' voices in relation to the role of education in contributing to social change, and we are conscious of the role that we play in ensuring that those voices are heard by policy makers and others working in the educational arena.

In December, former Thai Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva visited Hsa Thoo Lei School and this provided an excellent opportunity for HTL and BMWEC staff to talk with him about the challenges facing migrant education. Visits such as this also raise the profile of migrant education locally and nationally.

Our donors and supporters play a crucial role in keeping the migrant agenda alive and in the public eye in overseas contexts. As acknowledged in the message at the beginning of this report, the international press may give the impression that all the migrants can go home, but here on the border we are all too aware of the need for continued support from those of you who live in other countries.

A small but active group of supporters have set up All You Need is Love as a registered charity in the UK, and progress is being made to establish it as a charity in the US. All You Need is Love raises both awareness and funds, and the forthcoming film made by Portfolio Productions is set to bring the border to a much wider audience.

Increasingly, advocacy and information is made available through the internet. Again, we must thank our supporters for setting up our new website and Facebook page, as well as the huge amount of work that has been done by All You Need is Love, UK and All You Need is Love, US. (The two organisations which were specifically set up to support local initiatives in education for Burmese migrants in Mae Sot and the surrounding area).

Our Chairperson, Paw Ray has also made two trips abroad during the year, which have yielded important opportunities for advocacy. In June – July 2012, she travelled to the US and the UK and spoke at schools, to Burma support groups, and also gave a number of public talks organized by the supporters who were hosting her. In January, she was an invited speaker to the ‘Make a Difference‘ forum in Hong Kong. The forum brought together 1,200 young people and “international change makers” to share inspiring stories, discuss challenges and plan “to make a difference”. Paw Ray’s topic was Fighting Oppression with Knowledge and the key theme of her presentation was that it is through education that people can fight oppression and find a way forwards to a better future. She pointed out that denying people access to education is in fact a tool of oppression, and that migrant education represents the community’s efforts to ‘take back’ their right to education.
Priorities for 2013 – 2014, include being:

- **PROACTIVE** in letting our current supporters (including donors, and volunteers both here and abroad) know what a difference they make to the schools and students they support,
- **PURPOSEFUL** in advocating for our migrant children so that new donors and supporters can be brought on board
- **PROFESSIONAL** in maintaining relationships and networking with policy making bodies, our partners and other organisations so that we are in a position to negotiate on our members behalf when appropriate
Financial summary

The finance department

In 2011 – 2012, BMWEC implemented a rigorous new finance system under the leadership and guidance of one of our donors, and with the full-time help of an experienced accountant. This year, we have taken over management of the finance department ourselves. Our new finance manager, Asok Kumar, was appointed in August and is currently assisted by two interns who came to us from Help Accounting School.

The BMWEC finance team has worked hard to maintain the high professional standards of efficiency, transparency and accountability that were established by the external team. Capacity building has been a priority for the team:

- the donor who set up the new finance system has continued to act as consultant to the team;
- we receive on-going advice and oversight from our Finance Steering Committee, which meets three times a year; and
- we have also had capacity-building input from volunteers with international finance and business management experience.

The finance team has also been proactive in establishing very positive relationships with schools, which has been especially important during the latter part of the year when funding has been inconsistent and there have been periods in which it has not been possible to cover salaries and operational costs in some learning centres.

Finance update

The information below summarises sources of income in 2012-2013 (Table 1 and Figure 1), and how we spent the money we received (Table 3 and Figure 3).

What these data do not reveal is the contribution made by teachers, head teachers and community members on an on-going and regular basis. These contributions and the willingness of staff to continue teaching despite salaries that fell below minimum acceptable rates are what enabled learning centres and BMWEC to continue to operate despite the shortfall between funding received and our proposed budget for the year (See Figure 2 below).

In donor-supported schools, teachers often covered shortfalls in school operations (such as electricity, internet access and so on) out of their own packets. In schools without a specific donor, these costs were almost entirely paid for by teachers and communities. In some schools, gifts of food, school equipment, building materials and volunteer labour served to reduce costs and supplement the low salaries that we were forced to pay as funding during the year depleted.

Where did the money come from?

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<td>11,421,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTA (Parent-Teacher Assoc.) + Direct Donation</td>
<td>354,285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund Raising</td>
<td>123,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Total + c/f from 2011/2012</td>
<td>11,898,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,438,427</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Income source: Amount in THB

Donors: 96%

Fund-raising: 1%

PTA + Direct donations: 3%

Figure 1. Income source: % of total.
Based on 2011 – 2012 expenses and best estimates regarding potential roll changes our finance consultant put together a budget proposal identifying minimum and optimum budgets for each learning centre and for the organisation as a whole:

**Minimum:** THB 30,422,879 (Covering the least amount required for the organisation and schools to operate)

**Optimum:** THB 37,776,341 (The amount required for the organisation to reach its potential).

The shortfall between the minimum budget and actual funds available had most impact on salary levels. In many cases operating costs were ‘carried’ by teachers and community but this is not sustainable.

**Figure 2: Funding shortfall**

Where did the money go?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cost centre</th>
<th>THB</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School salaries</td>
<td>7,135,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food programmes</td>
<td>1,213,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1,057,761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School operations (including rent, electricity, water, telephone, internet)</td>
<td>859,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special projects (Including Superkids Camp, capital expenditure, external staff appointments and garden/livestock projects, matriculation class, audit costs)</td>
<td>891,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational management and administration. (including central office salaries, transport, photocopying, electricity etc.)</td>
<td>777,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development (teacher seminar and teacher training)</td>
<td>462,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary health</td>
<td>41,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12,438,488</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3. Expense by cost centre: % of total.**

**Expenses by cost centre (baht).**
Acknowledgements

BMWEC would like to sincerely thank all of our partners and supporters who made the 2012-2013 academic year possible by donating their skills, expertise and time, advice and guidance, equipment and materials, encouragement and moral support, and funding. You have made a huge difference to children’s lives.

Donors, volunteers and local partners: We decided to combine these groups – because so often the roles overlapped or merged. Donors helped out by becoming volunteers – providing expertise, advice and on-the-ground practical hands-on work either in the office, in schools or from a distance. On the flipside, volunteers have been our advocates, fundraisers and givers of gifts. Our local partners have stepped in, helped out, and worked with us across a range of activities.

WARNING: The following list has been a bit nerve-wracking to put together – because it is almost inevitable that we have left someone out, identified you as ‘anonymous’ when you would prefer to be named, or named you when you would prefer to fly below the radar. For any errors at all – we apologise and ask that you let us know – so that we can make sure we don’t make the same mistake twice.

ADRA                                Curriculum Project  Jeanne Koth
Altrusa, Ashburton, NZ              DanChurchAid     Jill Sorkin
Anonymous                           Daniel Spiers     Jonathan Nield
Alberto M.                          David Ting        Joyce Burnett
Alice Royer                         Doctor Alex       Joyce Militello
Alisa Felgate                       Dominik Opitz    Karin Nilson
All You Need Is Love,               Doris Hilber      Kay and Thomas
  UK;                               Elisabetta Leonardi Kammachat
All You Need Is Love,               Elizabeth Gachet  KED
  US;                               Emma Thomson      Khurram Mumtaz
Allison Fitch                       Endura            Mumtaz
Andrew Jackson                      Erin Terzieff     Korinna Knoll
Antoine Taylor                      Eunice Stephen   Lauren Ivery
APIBIMI                              Fidenza          Lexie Keller Sheard
Asami Katami                        Global Neighbors  Liam Burnett
Ashleigh Chu                        Gloria Grimm      Lidice Hernandez
Australian Donor                    Grant Gordon     Line Benczak
BEP                                 Heart to Heart    Ludmila V.
BMTA                                Help Project      Lynn Behar
Briana Yancey                       Help Without Frontiers Mea Sot Education Project
Brian                               ICRA International Maie Tao Clinic
BVP                                 International Society for
Certosa’s Friends                   Human Rights      Mahnaz Jahangiri
C Leighton                          Australia        Marguerite Kimberley
Chiesi Foundation                  Karen State       Maria Kennedy
Child Action                        Government       Marjo Ann Dy
  International                     IRC              Markus Kaistra
Christopher Robinson               Irene Croal       Martin Brands
Clemmie Newton                     Italian donor     MECC
CPPCR                               Jacqui Reeves    Meddy Ezrah
Craig Gordon                        Jane Ryan        Mokpo University (With
Craig Meyerink                      JC              Jin Hyekyung)

PLUS: Thanks to our invisible donors including teachers, staff, executive committee and friends who have reached deep into their pockets so many times – quietly making sure that things keep going. And our invisible volunteers: the people who seem to appear just when they are needed, help out, and then disappear again – expecting no thanks or recompense.
And finally greetings from the full team at BMWEC:

**Executive Committee**

Chairperson: Naw Paw Ray  
Vice chairperson: Saw Myint Then (Tee Dar)  
Secretary: U Kyaw Win Aung  
U Aung Aung  
Daw Thazin Htay Naing  
U Han Sein Lwin

**Financial Steering Committee**

Director of Finance: Asok Kumar  
Teacher representative: Zaw Min Tun (Phyo Kin School)  
Head teacher representative: Hsa Eh (Hsa Thoo Lei School)  
Donor representatives: Suchawalee Sutthikhanueng (DCA)  
Elisabetta Leonardi  
Jan McPherson

**Current staff**

Director of Finance: Asok Kumar  
Interns: Naw Moo Sisi, Naw Paw K Mwee  
Help Accounting (Finance): Jan McPherson  
Daw Cho Cho Mar  
Tee Dah  
Mg Kyaw Htet  
Zin Min Kyaw  
Returned to the office in April after spend the year studying at Wide Horizons

**Staff who left during the year**

Accounts Assistant: Kway Zin Maung  
Eh Po  
Left in November to apply for visa to the US to join his wife and baby  
Field officer: Wai Wai  
Left in October to undertake university study  
Logistics officer: Saw Wah Ler Shee  
Left in April to undertake further study  
Interns: Nan Aye Mya  
Brighter Futures (Administration)
B.M.W.E.C
nurture the child
release the potential