

"HAPPY NewsLETTER"



Dear **Happy** Friends,

As the New Year begins we would like to take this time to share with you some of the incredible successes you have helped us to achieve since our journey began. Our program developer, Laura Giannini, recently returned from Thailand where she visited our programs and many of the children. Please enjoy her progress report on what has been happening in Thailand and what HHF has accomplished.

Five years ago, the world witnessed the impact of the tsunami that swept destruction across Southeast Asia. The waves hit six provinces in the south of Thailand alone, devastating more than 400 kilometers of coastline, killing nearly 9,000 people, and destroying the livelihood of some 35,000 families.

Scattered throughout the country, the effects of the tsunami haven't ended as they take a toll on the daily needs of the children that were orphaned by the disaster. Having lost one parent or both, these children face an uncertain future as they continue to deal with the destruction of the tsunami. In 2007, the Thai Ministry of Social Development and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security estimated that 2,050 children were orphaned by the disaster.

Whether the children came from one or two parent homes, many of them were sent to live with grandparents and family members that are far away from the tsunami region. This raised concern as to what will happen to the young children who have been placed with their elderly grandparents at their passing and how they will be monitored to ensure a healthy future.

When the disaster occurred in the last days of 2004, government and international relief agencies were the first on the ground to lend support and

bring aid. These agencies have since pulled away to assist with disasters in places like hurricane ravaged New Orleans and earthquake devastated Pakistan, which both happened in 2005. In addition, the Thai government has needed to place its focus on other needs that have been brought about by the ailing world economy.

Once the emergency was over, the gap between first response and rebuilding was created. This gap has resulted in a lack of follow through for both the orphans of the tsunami and the reconstruction of the 200+ schools that were previously serving 50,000 children, each of them losing teachers, pupils and buildings.

It is the existence of this gap that solidifies HHF's commitment to rebuild. HHF remains focused on building a strong future through education and self sustaining programs for each and every precious child and that is possible because of the generous contributions of our supporters.

Specifically, HHF has:

- **Rebuilt the Chao Thai Mai School**, providing an educational facility for 220 children. These students are the children of the families from the Moken sea gypsy community that was deeply affected by the negative social and economical outcome of the tsunami.



Chao Thai Mai School, Dec 2009



Chao Thai Mai School Classrooms, Dec 2009

- **Partnered with HP** to renovate, improve, and install a computer lab in the Wat Pattikaram School in Phuket for 126 children.



HP Computer Lab at Wat Pattikaram

- **Managed the Support A Child Program**, designed to give children that lost one or both parents to the disaster and live with their relatives in North or south of Thailand the opportunity to remain in school and get an education that will give them a stronger future. The generous contributions from all around the world have made it possible for HHF to support 138 children.



Support A Child Program

- **Partnered with Teens for Technology** to open computer labs in seven Thai schools (Lampee School, Po Daeng School, Ban Don School, Kao Pilai School, Bua Kok School, Kam Nok Kok School, and Ta Bpak Wang School). In total the project helped 1,036 children to learn technology skills and tools that will pave a greater future for each of them.

Natural disasters change the life of a child in an instant and forever, but it is the love and embrace that the child receives in the recovery time that brings a strong future that is full of hope. Thank you for bringing that hope to these children.

With our heartfelt happy wishes,
The Happy Hearts Fund Team

Please let us know if you like our "HAPPY newsLETTERS" and feel that they are informative. If you have any questions or comments on what you would change or programs you want to hear about please email us at <mailto:feedback@happyheartfund.org>.

We would be really happy if you connect with us – remember, communication is a two-way street!