

“REACHING THE UNREACHED”: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN
PROVIDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN
FROM MYANMAR IN THAILAND

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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คริสตินมิสวอร์สแดนเบิร์ก :การจัดการศึกษาสำหรับกลุ่มด้อยโอกาส(REACHING THE UNREACHED): บทบาทของประชาสังคมในการให้การศึกษาแก่เด็กอพยพจากพม่าในประเทศไทย. (“REACHING THE UNREACHED”: THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN FROM MYANMAR IN THAILAND)
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ความมุ่งหมายของวิทยานิพนธ์เรื่องนี้เป็นคือสำรวจสถานการณ์ปัจจุบันด้านการศึกษาของเด็กย้ายถิ่นชาวพม่าในประเทศไทยและวิเคราะห์บทบาทขององค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนซึ่งรวมไปถึงความร่วมมือที่อาจเป็นไปได้ระหว่างเจ้าหน้าที่ระดับท้องถิ่นโรงเรียนของรัฐและองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนเหล่านี้

แม้ว่าจะมีความตกลงระหว่างประเทศและนโยบายชาติเกี่ยวกับการให้การศึกษาอย่างทั่วถึงแต่ก็ยังมีคนชายขอบจำนวนมากที่ไม่มีโอกาสได้เข้าโรงเรียนการศึกษาย่อมส่งผลกระทบต่อบุคคลและส่วนรวมและก็มีการศึกษาวิจัยที่ได้ชี้ให้เห็นว่าโดยอาศัยความร่วมมือระหว่างเจ้าหน้าที่ของชาติและองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนเด็กเหล่านี้ได้รับโอกาสทางการศึกษาอย่างเต็มที่

ข้อค้นพบระบุว่าเด็กย้ายถิ่นจำนวนมากขึ้นได้เข้าเรียนในศูนย์การเรียนรู้หรือมีฉะนั้นก็เป็นโรงเรียนของรัฐแห่งใดแห่งหนึ่งเจ้าหน้าที่ระดับท้องถิ่นให้การสนับสนุนได้ระดับหนึ่งในเรื่องการฝึกอบรมครูการพัฒนาหลักสูตรและการพบปะของเครือข่ายโดยในส่วนขององค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนและโรงเรียนของรัฐก็ร่วมมือกันในเรื่องการยกระดับทักษะด้านภาษาของเด็กๆองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนเข้ามามีส่วนในการอุดหนุนว่างด้านการศึกษาให้แก่เด็กย้ายถิ่นในกรณีที่ฝ่ายเจ้าหน้าที่ไม่ได้เข้ามามีส่วนเกี่ยวข้องกรณีนั้นก็ตามงานวิจัยเรื่องนี้พบว่ามีความหลากหลายด้านคุณภาพโอกาสและความร่วมมือในบรรดา 3 จังหวัดที่มีการศึกษาที่ยังไม่มีการตระหนักในเรื่องสถานการณ์และความต้องการของเด็กๆรวมทั้งยังไม่ได้มีการรับรู้อย่างเต็มที่ถึงความสำคัญของการจัดการศึกษาให้แก่เด็กๆและนอกจากนั้นยังมีความบกพร่องในการดำเนินงานในทางปฏิบัติด้วยอย่างไรก็ดีความรับผิดชอบต่อความไม่พอเพียงดังกล่าวนี้ไม่ได้ขึ้นอยู่กับสิ่งที่เจ้าหน้าที่กำลังดำเนินการอยู่เท่านั้นยังมีความผิดพลาดในฝ่ายโรงเรียนของรัฐและองค์กรพัฒนาเอกชนดังนั้นจึงมีปัจจัยหลายประการที่จะต้องได้รับการส่งเสริมให้เข้มแข็งยิ่งขึ้นสำหรับการบริหารจัดการบริการด้านการศึกษาของไทยในอนาคตซึ่งรวมไปถึงคุณภาพของการจัดหาที่พักให้แก่ผู้ย้ายถิ่นทั้งระดับความรวดเร็วในด้านความก้าวหน้าและการขยายโอกาสด้านการศึกษาให้ครอบคลุมยิ่งขึ้นว่าไม่เพียงพอสำหรับเด็กย้ายถิ่นชาวพม่าทุกวันนี้นงานวิจัยเรื่องนี้เสนอแนะให้มีการพัฒนาความสามารถในระดับสูงเพิ่มการตระหนักและเร่งความก้าวหน้าเพื่อเป็นวิธีการที่จะยกระดับการเข้าถึงการศึกษาแก่เด็กย้ายถิ่นชาวพม่า

สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา ลายมือชื่อนิสิต.....

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5387644220 :MAJOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

KEYWORDS : EDUCATION FOR ALL, MIGRATION, CIVIL SOCIETY, CHILD'S RIGHTS, SOUTHERN THAILAND, BURMESE CHILDREN, INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

KRISTINE MISVAER STENBECK: "REACHING THE UNREACHED": THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN PROVIDING ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN FROM MYANMAR IN THAILAND. THESIS ADVISOR: ASST. PROF. THEERA NUCHPIAM, Ph.D., CO-ADVISOR: PROF. SUPANG CHANTAVANICH, DOCTORAT EN SOCIOLOGIE, 164 PP.

The aim of the thesis is to examine the current educational situation for Burmese migrant children in Thailand; and to analyse the different roles NGOs play, including the possible collaboration between local authorities, public schools and NGOs.

Despite international agreements and national policies there are numerous marginalized people without access to schools; no education has individual as well as collective consequences; and studies have shown that through cooperation between national authorities and NGOs can these children fully gain access to schools.

Findings report a growing number of migrant children enrolling in either learning centers or a public school. Local authorities support, to a certain degree, with teacher training, curriculum development and network meetings; while NGOs and public schools cooperate in improving the children's language skills. NGOs fill an educational gap for migrant children due to lack of engagement from authorities. Yet research discovers a great diversity in quality, opportunities and collaboration between the three provinces studied. Awareness of these children's situation and needs is missing; the importance of providing education is not fully recognized and it is a deficiency of policy implementation. Nonetheless the responsibility for this inadequacy does not only rely on what the authorities are carrying out. There are also faults amongst public schools and NGOs; hence, there are several factors that acquire enhancement for future administration of the Thai education services; and quality of accommodation for migrants. Neither the pace of the process, nor the magnitude of educational opportunities provided Burmese migrant children today, are sufficient. This study suggests advanced capacity building, increasing awareness and enhancing progress as means to improve future access to education for Burmese migrant children.

Field of Study: Southeast Asian Studies Student's Signature.....

Academic Year: 2012 Advisor's Signature.....

Co-advisor's Signature.....

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN – the Association of Southeast Asian Nations

CESCR – Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

EFA – Education For All

ESA – Educational Service Area

EU – European Union

ILO – International Labour Organization

LC – Learning Center

MOE – Ministry of Education

NGO – Non-governmental Organization

OEC – Office of the Education Council

UNESCO – United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNHCR – United Nation High Commission for Refugees

WDEFA – World Declaration on Education For All

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

“Make primary education compulsory and available free to all” is presented as an universal right to all children, in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in 1989¹.

Over the coming 20 years the focus on human rights concerning people in weak positions have only increased; resulted in a line of international and regional agreements for countries to take responsibility to improve their citizens' lives. In 1990 the Thai government ratified the UNESCO agreement on Education for All and are in present time taking part in the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education's program of *Reaching the Unreached*, and further included the rights of previously omitted children, in the Thai Cabinet resolution in 2005.

Marginalised people in a society are often a result of political, social or cultural disparities and the issue of human rights evolves into complex and diverse tendencies. Studies have been done to discover the obstacles of gaining equality in society; the issues have been recognised and acknowledged; and awareness has been created that the goal of Education for All cannot be achieved without collaboration between governments and non-governmental institutions. Therefore it is significant to examine the role of NGOs and contrive the highlights as well as the shortcomings in providing access to education for migrant children.

¹See Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights' home page to download the entire *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. One can also access all the human rights' bodies, publications and pressing issues that the Office is currently working on.

This thesis will centre its study on focused interviews with NGOs that provide educational opportunities for Burmese migrant children in Thailand. Additionally I will examine the possible collaboration with public schools and Educational Service Area (ESA²) and back up my research with conceptual theories on migration, education and similar research done in previous years.

1.1 Background

At the *World Conference on Education for All* in Jomtien, Thailand 1990, the participating countries proclaimed what reasons, aspects and challenges that should make out the declaration for *Education for All: Meeting Basic Learning Needs*. They started off by remembering themselves that nearly 40 years earlier, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was developed, it stated that “everyone has a right to education” (WDEFA, 1990: 74). Furthermore there are mentioned diverse dark numbers of education situations around the world, for instance “more than 100 million children [...] have no access to primary schooling” (WDEFA, 1990: 74).

The conference stresses general negative outcomes of today's globalised world that “constrain efforts to meet basic learning needs, while the lack of basic education amongst a significant proportion of the population prevents societies from addressing such problems with strength and purpose” (WDEFA, 1990: 74). But there are also highlights of the improved living conditions occurring amongst nations that have resulted in that the time has never been better and more arranged for the world

²“The 1999 National Education Act initiated an overall reformation of the Thai Education System. Considerable changes in the structure of management and administration have taken place in order to support the key teaching and learning changes [...] stipulated by the 1999 National Education Act. Emphasis is on the decentralisation of administrative responsibilities to local level with the consolidation of education planning at the central level. The reformation process of the Thai Education System led to the establishment of 175 Education Service Areas (ESA) in 2003, this number has increased to 185, in 2008” (Ministry of Education).

community to “make the goal of basic education for all – for the first time in history – an attainable goal” (WDEFA, 1990: 74).

The Declaration consists of 10 articles each enhancing a different perspective as to incorporate all children, disadvantaged and others that up until the 1990s have not been given basic educational opportunities. The conference advocated that education should be “designed to meet their basic learning needs”; education cannot be universal and alike for everyone. With this in mind there are descriptions of diverse positive outcomes from providing basic educational opportunities for all children that will gain not only at individual and local levels, but national and regional levels as well, from increasing mutual respect, social justice and environmental protection.

“To be tolerant towards social, political and religious systems which differ from their own, ensuring that commonly accepted humanistic values and human rights are upheld, and to work for international peace and solidarity in an interdependent world” (WDEFA, 1990: 75).

It is invested a lot of awareness and responsibility on the work of the member states' governments through “political commitment and political will” (WDEFA, 1990: 76), but it is highlighted that the job cannot be done without cooperation with other institutions, from religious groups, families and non-governmental institutions. Article 7 does state that only by “new and revitalised partnerships at all levels” can the goals of *Education for All* be met (WDEFA, 1990: 76).

The work of NGOs is also mentioned in article 5 which emphasis alternative approaches offered to children that before have been left out of the local schooling system, through non-formal and different approaches, as long as the standard of the teaching is up to date with formal education, these children will gain their prerogative rights (WDEFA, 1990: 76).

1.1.1 Regional Cooperation

ASEAN took the project of *Education for All* up in their socio-cultural pillar SEAMEO, adapted it to their region and started their own projects as means to reach this goal by 2015. The strength of the cooperation, as SEAMEO claims it, is that as a region they can collaborate on a higher scale, share practices and resources that will enhance the chances of reaching their common goals (SEAMEO, 2008).

SEAMEO, in cooperation with UNESCO and the ASEAN Secretariat, created the first collaboration of these three organisations; underlining the relevance of education and needs for “the unreached groups in Southeast Asia” (SEAMEO, 2008). Thailand has been one of the frontiers for this project and in 2008 they hosted a meeting called *Reaching the Unreached* where countries discussed different challenges and possible opportunities to execute³. One of the results of this meeting was that the different ASEAN ministers acknowledged that, after visiting different NGOs in Bangkok, the work done by these volunteer organisations have good foundations to give children a chance for a better future and that their results are better than public schools⁴.

The overall project goal is to decrease the education gap. UNESCO highlighted this at the meeting in 2008 and stated which aspects SEAMO and the Southeast Asian countries should concentrate on for the coming years. They mentioned the significance of clarifying issues already current and call attention to collaboration within the Southeast Asian region⁵. During this meeting the organisations decided on 10 projects as incentives to reach their shared purpose of EFA by 2015.

³At the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education’ home page one can get more information on what the organisation stands for and their main tasks. One can also access active projects and programmes, current news and upcoming events.

⁴At the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education’ home page one can get more information on what the organisation stands for and their main tasks. One can also access active projects and programmes, current news and upcoming events.

⁵At the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education’ home page one can get more information on what the organisation stands for and their main tasks. One can also access active projects and programmes, current news and upcoming events.

The different projects of *Reaching the Unreached* contains “tracking systems for students at risk of dropping out”, “Transition support for learners with disabilities”, “Conference to promote awareness of education for girls and women”, “Tracking mechanism for unreached populations”, “Pre-school programme for all”, “Multi-grade teaching”, “Development of more community-based learning centres in rural areas in Southeast Asia for literacy and livelihood”, “Inter-country schooling programme for stateless and undocumented children”, “Project on HIV and AIDS using an integrated approach”, and “Education in emergencies and disaster preparedness” (SEAMEO, 2008).

The representatives present at the meeting concluded that they need to realise the matters that are hampering the educational development, identify common challenges, suggestions to further progress and develop activities and plans for the future. They agreed on the need for special attention on this specific topic, and that learning from different countries will benefit the region as a whole, by sharing and collaborating; stating that “on future cooperation in education, the Ministers agreed that the focus should be on implementing Education for All (EFA) by 2015”⁶.

For this thesis, the project giving educational opportunities for the *Unreached* will be the main focus. The *Unreached* are defined as the ones who have “either been historically and culturally excluded, or have been pushed into difficult circumstances due to recent economic and political trends. People that have no access to education; neither participation, performance nor services” (SEAMEO, 2008).

In their paper *Migrant children and their difficult circumstances in Thailand* Vungsiriphisal, Auasalong and Chantavanich, express their concern for the growing and high number of migrant children living in Thailand without any support system. They indicate that the “largest number of child migrant workers in Thailand are Burmese

⁶At the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education’ home page <http://www.seameo.org> one can get more information on what the organisation stands for and their main tasks. One can also access active projects and programmes, current news and upcoming events.

ethnicity. Overall, Burmese child migrant workers make up more than half of the total number of child migrant workers in Thailand” (Vungsiriphisal, Auasalong and Chantavanich, 1997-98: 11).

These children, most of them born on Thai soil, are seen as illegal immigrants, creating complex matters for the Thai state to deal with, but “Thailand, as a member of the United Nations; must carry out measures to protect and provide the fullest benefits to children” (Vungsiriphisal, Auasalong and Chantavanich, 1997-98). This is important both to uphold international laws and regulations ratified, but also as a means to ease the chaotic situation Thailand seems to be in; not well looked upon on the international arena. This can create better relationships with the international world if it is known that Thailand is executing the ratified laws concerning children properly, showing that they are concerned with human rights; using their resources to help those less fortunate.

“Thailand needs to take action not only because it is a member of United Nations with a signatory to The Convention on the Rights of the Child, but to acknowledge that children are a vital human resource and a necessary foundation on which to build the future. Children must be taken care of and protected to assure they can enjoy a stable and secure life. They must be safeguarded against exploitation, assault, and violations of their rights, no matter what their nationality, language, or location” is (Vungsiriphisal, Auasalong and Chantavanich, 1997-98: 6).

Thailand's Education For All National Plans of Action 2002-2020 stated that “Thailand has seen education as a fundamental right of all citizens as well as an important instrument to improve quality of life and a basis for community development” (Chandavimol, 2002: 1). With this statement as foundation, there are defined nine core tasks that should be met in the process of reaching EFA. Amongst the goals it is mentioned that curriculum should be adjusted to the changes in society; also to suit previous excluded groups (Chandavimol, 2002: 2).

Of the excluded groups that Thailand remarks should be provided with education, is goal three that states “”To expand, by at least 2.5 times of the current level, all educational services for the disadvantaged, particularly the disabled, children from impoverished families, children in remote and rural areas, the culturally disadvantaged, homeless children, child laborers, underprivileged women and stateless children” (Chandavimol, 2002: 1).

Further it is requested a need for a finance reform in the education budget; for example to allocate resources and produce a sufficient budget both at national and local levels (Chandavimol, 2002: 2). Jointly it is mentioned the participation of NGOs and other institutions to improve the education opportunities; “”Encouraging private sector participation in educational provision by liberalizing the administration and management of education” (Chandavimol, 2002: 2).

In 2005 the Thai Cabinet came with a resolution stating that all children have a right to education. But as the years have passed by, not much has been done in providing all children, no matter background, social status, ethnicity, educational opportunities, from the government's side. Reasons are many and have been discussed, such as unwillingness, the migrants' unawareness of the possibility to send their children to school, etc.

The effects of this have been different NGOs and international institutions entering the arena, speaking the voice of the neglected; to emphasise the importance of getting all children into school and not to let political, cultural or other social connotations get in the way – in light of that more countries and organisations have realised that educating children will in the long run benefit not only themselves and their instant society, but the country.

One of the organisations that has for years been working for children's rights and improving their situation around the world is VSO⁷, and they have in collaboration with UNESCO, the Committee for the Co-ordination of Services to Displaced People in Thailand and the Migrant Working Group been able to present the Thai government with research and on-going lobbying. The result came in 2011 when “the Thai Cabinet approved the regulation on individual/institutions providing education for undocumented persons” (VSO International). With this approval there has been identified at the highest level the work done by other organisations than only public schools in providing educational opportunities for all children and “The Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC) has committed to improve support to the migrant schools” (VSO International).

Is it a promising and sufficient collaboration between NGOs and local authorities in providing migrant children with educational opportunities? If there are any shortcomings, what can be done to strengthen the cooperation and advance the educational opportunities for migrant children?

⁷VSO International is an organisation that compiles of volunteer projects around the world. In Thailand they have been conducting activities and lobbying to improve for example the educational rights and opportunities for migrant children along the Thai-Burma border. See their home page <http://www.vsointernational.org/what-we-do/education.asp> for more information on their research papers and especially their impact on communicating to authorities on improving human rights.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To investigate the current situation of education for migrant children from Myanmar in Thailand.
2. To examine the role of NGOs in providing educational opportunities to migrant children from Myanmar.
3. To analyse the collaboration between NGOs and local authorities and public schools.

1.3 Research Questions

- What are the present social and material circumstances for Burmese migrant children in Thailand?
- What are the educational opportunities NGOs are providing to the Burmese migrant children?
 - How is it being executed?
 - What is the curriculum?
- What has been done from the local authorities' side in providing migrant children with educational opportunities?
 - Is it any collaboration finding place with public schools or NGO's?
 - How is this being accomplished?
- What can be done to develop and improve the process of providing migrant children with educational opportunities in the future?

1.4 Assumption

It is my assumption that the Thai education service is not adequate for migrant children from Myanmar; therefore, NGOs try to fill the gap by offering additional opportunities. Some kind of collaboration between national and local authorities, and non-governmental institutions should increase basic educational opportunities for these migrant children.

1.5 Significance and Usefulness of Research

The study will draw attention to efficient tools as means to reach the goal of *Education for All* by 2015, especially for the children in the weakest positions in society. This research puts forward the children that have a complex and difficult living situation, with few rights, and how NGOs contribute to secure some of those human rights.

Through the findings awareness can be created by highlighting limitations and strengths in the Thai educational system.

With the information gathered there will be created an important instrument for educators and policy-makers to improve the educational system in Thailand, but it can also be applied to projects concerning improvements for children in other parts of the world as well.

Chapter II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this section I will first explicate migration theory, migration settlement and children's rights. The next section will be examining the role of civil society and NGOs, before presenting a summary of similar research and experiences on migrant children and education in Thailand and other countries.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.1.1 International Migration

Castles and Miller explain and discuss different types of theories of migration in their book *The Age of Migration – International Population Movements in the Modern World*. The theory of the new economics of labour migration argues that “migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals, but by families, households or even communities”, while the neoclassical theory is “emphasising tendencies of people to move from densely to sparsely populated areas or from low- to high-income areas”, generally known as “push-pull theories” (Castles and Miller, 2009: 24).

“Push factors include demographic growth, low living standards, lack of economic opportunities and political repression, while pull factors are demand for labour, availability of land, good economic opportunities and political freedom”. It is in the combination of reasons to leave a country and the reasons to enter another, that together make up the cause of migration (Castles and Miller, 1998: 20).

These theories have been criticised. Due to the complexity of migration some believe that a theory has to be just as complex. Migration and people's reasons to do so are many; each definition can apply to different people, in different circumstances and places in the world. The causes to migrate to another country, might not be the reality of what will meet them, in addition the opportunities are better in the host country, but the push factor might mainly be because family members have already left.

“Research on Asian migration has shown that migration decisions are usually made not by individuals but by families” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 25). Consequently there can be drawn lines from different theories to explain migration. In the case of Burmese migrants entering Thailand for many years now; the knowledge and experience has developed, the situation in Myanmar has changed and friends and family may already have settled down on Thai soil.

Border lines and nationality are two man-made constructions and not something you can see in the geographical structure of our world. Where it before was an easy, almost normal task for some people, to move from one area to another; a part of their culture and way of living, there are today strict laws and regulations to follow; a necessity to uphold control and balance. Migration is not a modern phenomenon, but the character of migration as seen today, did change, it is said, with the European expansion from the sixteenth century (Castles and Miller, 2009: 2).

The development of infrastructure, technology, the political and cultural changes in the world, has created an easier way to migrate according to Castles and Miller; with what they see as “a central dynamic within globalization” (Castles and Miller, 2009: 3). On the one side migration is a phenomenon that has been around for a very long time, a natural way of living, but with the development and globalisation of the world it has become something that needs to be controlled in a mix of laws and regulations, in addition to making it more accessible for people.

2.1.2 Migrant Settlement

With a bigger flow of mobile people, more challenges occur, and Ananta and Arifin mentions in their book *International Migration in Southeast Asia* “ people becoming trapped between or within borders simply because they have moved across them” (Ananta and Arifin, 2004: 229). Despite a general view that the world more quickly adapts to changes in culture, politics and migration today, it is not an equal situation for every country and all people.

The different levels of development and opportunities a country can offer their people, have resulted in a growth of illegal migration in search for a better life; creating problems not only for themselves, but for the host country and other people following in their footsteps. The dual outcome of giving the host country for example cheap labour, pushing for a prosperous and growing economy, but also an increase of labour exploitation, illegal businesses and a turbulent flow of people, do create complex challenges and issues to be solved.

Migration from Myanmar to Thailand today, in many cases emanate from family members already settled in the host country or have previously been working in Thailand; primarily in view of the long tradition for Burmese migration to Thailand. “Networks based on family or on common place of origin help provide and support in personal difficulties” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 26). By having a common background creates a feeling of safety or at least a sense of belongingness in a possible difficult living situation. In the long run the circumstances can lead to migrants planning a future in the host country, being surrounded by family and peers in an unfamiliar place. But at the same time they are often dependant on “recruitment organisations, lawyers, agents, smugglers and other middle-people” that can both be an asset or a liability (Castles and Miller, 1998: 26).

It is said to be a connection between class domination, racism and sexism called “social normalisation and exclusion which are intrinsic to capitalism and modernity, and which have developed in close relationship to each other” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 35). Where it before could be an ideological direction that lead people to believe in superiority over another ethnic group; today there are rather explanations of cultural distinctiveness that create the hierarchy where the migrants usually are at the bottom of the ladder.

“Racism means making (and acting upon) predictions about people's character, abilities or behaviour on the basis of socially constructed markers of difference” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 32). One can draw lines from the theoretical approaches to actual situations for migrants in some areas of Thailand as well. A general assumption towards a type of people justifies the low payments, hard living conditions and prohibits both adults as well as their children basic rights they are entitled to.

According to *Thailand Migration Report 2011* migrant workers are often doing “heavy and difficult work for low wages, and are placed in unsafe or unsanitary work environments” (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011: 66). There are reported incidents of withholding payments and the workers' passports or other forms of documentations, and there are some workers that are being “prohibited from leaving their workplace due to the strictness of their employers or debt bondage” (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011: 66).

Even more severe cases of abuse, unlawful arrest or threats of reporting the workers to the police, and other kind of exploitation in their everyday lives will naturally disturb the migrant families attempt to live a prosperous and better life than the one they left in Burma (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011: 66).

“Immigrants are excluded and marginalised, so that they live on the fringes of a society which is determined to preserve myths of a static culture and a homogeneous identity” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 29), instead of blending in and becoming a part of a multicultural society. The idea that migrants bring threats of different character overshadows their participation in the economy. The unequal handling of their employees “involves the use of economic, social or political power, and generally has the purpose of legitimating exploitation or exclusion of the group so defined” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 32).

The point is not if a group of migrant workers are able to create their own communities in the host country, blending in with a multicultural society, or they are excluded and isolated. In both scenarios it “depends on constant interaction with the state and the various institutions and groups in the country of immigration” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 37). How the conditions are arranged by the host country will determine the accessibility to take part in the already established society.

For female migrant workers it is often work in domestic services and factories and they “tend to be overrepresented in the least desirable occupations, such as repetitive factory and lower-skilled positions in the personal and community sectors” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 34). Where incidents of physical abuse against male workers are rare, it is sadly “considerable number of well-documented reports of physical violence against children and women” (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011: 66). It is said that since women are being generalised as “wife and mother, dependent on a male breadwinner”, it could be easier for an employer to treat women worse than men (Castles and Miller, 1998: 34).

2.1.3 Migrant Children

The constant struggle for income and little time spent at home with their family can create stress and dissatisfaction with their own efforts, and there are problems of especially migrant fathers turning to alcohol abuse, gambling, or even domestic abuse towards the family¹. In cases where the father is working on a fishing boat, it can go several weeks without the children seeing their parent and their mother might also be working long hours. In situations where parents are employed in construction the family might have to move frequently to a new site, making it difficult for the children to get into a routine with stability and structure, before they have to move again.

In addition it is, as Huguet and Chamratrithirong state “a result of the substantial share of migrant with families, which in itself implies permanent settlement, and the high number of migrant children, different types of social services [.....] are required”, but there are unfortunately several cases where services such as health care and legal support, are only to a certain extent, or not at all, provided for (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011: 97).

Living under poor conditions can affect children in many ways. To live with instability and uncertainty of what tomorrow brings can weaken and diminish the important foundation children should be developing in their youth as to be fully equipped and ready to take on the world and its challenges later in life. Growing up with absent family, continually being concerned about income, and in extreme cases, added a constant thread of fears; going hungry, being alone, apprehension for harassment,

¹ See International Rescue Committee’s; “Children are puppets and parents move the strings” for more information. This is a study of Burmese migrants, displaced children and families on their well-being. To analyse possible risk factors and protective aspects that can participate to improve future livelihoods; “This study demonstrates the importance that Burmese migrant and displaced communities place on parenting practices and behaviours in determining positive outcomes for children and families. The protective capacity of the family, however, has been severely undermined by the many challenges and stressors faced by Burmese migrant and displaced families in Thailand. Child protection programming aimed at improving child well-being should therefore ensure that interventions are designed to strengthen the family’s capacity to protect and care for their children”.

deportation and so on, may combined, set a poor starting point for these children. Being capable of developing into strong human beings able to change their future to a more improved and promising life than their parents have, gets tougher.

According to Thai national statistics there were 1 625 968 Burmese migrant workers in Thailand, December 2009 (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 11). There were 263 721 Burmese migrant children in Thailand by the end of 2009; these children are divided into three groups; registered migrant worker, no registered status, and illegal entrance (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 96). Though these numbers might not be updated or accurate; it gives a proficient trend on the amount of Burmese that Thailand is hosting and to what extent improved living situations and enhanced access to social services will impact the society as a whole.

2.1.4 Children's Rights

The core of the Human Rights in general, and also accountable under the Rights of the Child is; “that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status” (UNHCHR, 1989). Children should have the same grounds to build and live a prosperous life, be part of a society and be free of any form of discrimination or alike.

The Convention calls attention to “the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity” (UNHCHR, 1989). It is also remarked that in especially developing countries, international cooperation should be in place, to ease and support the less equipped states to provide its citizens with the rights they are accredited to.

In Article 28 the Convention presents that “States Parties recognise the right of the child to education” (UNHCHR, 1989). Availability and access to a free basic education, no matter background or other circumstances, are prerequisites. Further in article 29, they have deliberated in-depth what the education should provide and contribute to the children's development. The education should enhance respect, peace and tolerance.

It should be an awareness created of one's own culture as well as the national values of the country of residence. A child should be taught to take responsibility for their own life, understand and accept diversity among classmates and others, in addition to respect and uphold peace and equality in society (UNHCHR, 1989).

In January 2011, Thailand withdrew their reservation to Article 7 in the Convention, that cite “The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents [...] States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless” (UNHCHR, 1989).

Considering that this reservation has only been withdrawn for approximately a year², it has to some degree been a progress in the rights of the child in Thailand. But at the same time it remains a shadow over the fact that the Thai state refused to acknowledge new-borns with any sort of documentation until recent times. The withdrawing of the reservation is a step in the right direction, at the same time it can stand as an explanation to why not more has been done from the state of Thailand in providing children with education.

²The time of writing this thesis

Migrant children living in Thailand are in many cases being denied rights at the same basis as Thai children as a result of missing documentations; either from their home country or from Thai authorities. The result is that the children become stateless. “Under international law, stateless children possess almost all right granted to other children but in practice they are often unable to exercise these rights due to national laws and practices. Statelessness [...] has innumerable and immeasurable consequences on children” (Lynch, 2008: 2). The complexity of the issues leaves the children in a constant state of uncertainty, in between a country of origin and a host country, neither willing to recognise them.

There are different reasons for denying citizenship, but what is crucial for these children is deficiency of rights they have in present time. “Missing education and poor access to health care has repercussions [...] Cannot take steps to ensure their future democratic rights” (Lynch, 2008: 2). The result is a constant harmful circle for the children. They do not receive education because of their lack of position in society, but by not gaining some educational opportunities they will not be given the proper tools to empower themselves and a chance to change their own and coming generations’ future.

In *Thailand Migration Report 2011*, it is stated that “Thai experts on the Registration Act often refer to undocumented people in Thailand as “having no personal legal status persons” (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 133). It can be people that may have been living most of, or even all, their lives in Thailand, but due to no birth records or other documentations, they are not legally Thai citizens.

“During the implementation of the registration survey as set in the National Strategy on Administration of Legal Status and Rights of Persons of 2005 by the Department of Provincial Administration of the Ministry of Interior, this group was documented and assigned 13-digit ID numbers” (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 133).

Children that cannot prove they were born in Thailand, or have Thai mother or father, can enrol in school but that their ID card will start with a 0; “a person without civil registration status”, but if proof can be given of birth registration or that they have been living in Thailand for “more than ten years continuously” they can gain Thai nationality (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 133).

One could claim that what often distinguishes migrant children from their parents is that children are born on Thai soil but that records of their birth are not available; a consequence of poor living conditions³, and with that their rights are diminished; even though they might speak Thai and never been to Myanmar.

On the one side the children would gain a possibility to some education and be to a certain degree registered in the Thai system. On the other side one can question the fairness and equality in being given a card saying that you are not entitled to progress and develop as you want to in your life, but “we” recognise you as a person. Sadly there are still many children that do not even receive this card and are left with no rights or recognition at all.

What is of significance for this thesis is the fact that in theory, “migrant children, even if unregistered, can enter the Thai state education system” (VSO International). Refugees International advocates that “The Thai Ministry of Education is supposed to issue the Regulation on Evidence of a Child's Birth for School Admission in honour of Article 29 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Unfortunately, not all of the children receive this document which is needed to attend Thai schools” (Lynch, 2008: 11).

³Consequences of giving birth at home, not receiving a birth certificate at the hospital, etc.

It is relevant for this thesis that even though there are conducted research with different angles, perspectives and goals, on what is called migrant children, the situation is complex. Many children did not have legal documentations with them from Burma, they were denied a birth certificate when born in Thailand or papers have been lost on the way.

It is of course not the situation for all migrant children, but it is a considerable number that do live like that, and makes the challenges more diverse but just as important to consider when conducting research. So for the order and clarity of the thesis; the term “migrant children” will be used as a general term throughout the research.

2.2 Education

Education is said to be essential to equip a person with proper tools to become a proficient participant in society; providing education generate individual and collective benefits. On an individual level a child will gain feelings of stability, affiliation and solidarity. It can also counteract human trafficking and child labour. On a societal and national level, giving education to children can reduce poverty, create understanding, tolerance and respect; hence, produce a peaceful environment.

“Basic education is not just an arrangement for training to develop skills (important as that is); it is also recognition of the nature of the world, with its diversity and richness, and an appreciation of the importance of freedom and reasoning as well as friendship. The need for that understanding – that vision – has never been stronger” (Sen, 2003).

According to Amartya Sen, there are especially two valuable factors in providing education to all children. The first aspect is what the human being itself gain as an individual through not being excluded to learn about their possibilities and take fair choices, and their increased chance to live a safe and prosper life (Sen, 2003). The other result is the common view point that “the nature of education is quite central to peace in the world” (Sen, 2003).

As reported by Refugees International it is not only for individual welfare that education is crucial, but there are vast numbers of affirmative results of providing and executing the right to education without strings attached. “Early education gives children tools to understand the world and participate in society. Girls benefit from early education and consequently tend to marry later. Education helps in the fight against child labour and exploitation and against HIV/AIDS. Education is also vital for economic development, as it gives individuals the chance to earn more and be more productive, lays a foundation for using new technology, and enables people to have a voice in politics and society” (Lynch, 2008: 10).

Mounier and Tangchiang stress the importance of reducing educational inequalities in their book *Education and Knowledge in Thailand – The Quality Controversy* (Mounier and Tangchiang, 2010). They draw attention to those positive impacts a more equal educational system a country has. It can bring social and economic prosperity to a country as a whole, to a bigger extent than high educational achievements will, in the long run (Mounier and Tangchiang, 2010).

They specify that “improving educational opportunities is a laudable effort, even if it entails a decline in relative scores in international tests. In order to school more children, education systems have improved their resources and organisation, have trained their teachers better, have adopted better-designed curricula and learning material, and have evaluated more accurately the progress of students ” (Mounier and Tangchiang, 2010: 57).

A nation will benefit from an educated population and labour force, and migrants might return home to continue studying or alike. By building up the children's knowledge, expanding their wisdom, their human capital will rise. They will be more capable to tackle the struggles in life and become an asset for the society; continue being a part of Thai society or going back to Myanmar. By getting these children into schools the Thai government is providing them with equipment to empower themselves, a chance for a prosperous future, possibilities for a better job, chance of going back to Burma with knowledge and a developed base to start believing in themselves; stand up against people wanting to exploit them, and being able to choose what life path they want to take.

2.3 Civil Society and the Role of NGOs

Civil society is a term that implies a movement among common people with the intention to participate in the public sphere. The idea of something that has to improve at an authority or governmental level is the promoter that creates an organisation of different types of arrangement in groups to influence policy changes, implementations of human rights, etc.

The term “civil society” has a long history, but the last 15 years it has been an increased focus on the work done by this type of organisations. There are diverse definitions and explanations concerning the term, from the liberals to Marxism. The World Bank has made an outline that sums up the ideas that comprehend “civil society” that works with social and human development; “the term civil society to refer to the wide array of non-governmental and not-for-profit organisations that have a presence in public life, expressing the interests and values of their considerations (World Bank, 2010). Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) therefore refer to a wide array of organisations: community groups, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), labour

unions, indigenous groups, charitable organisations, faith-based organisations, professional associations, and foundations (World Bank, 2010).

Civil societies can put pressure on governments to improve human development issues in a country through the fact that by grouping they have a stronger voice. These CSOs can be the link between individuals and the authorities (Krishna), provide a community with information and education concerning health, economic issues and moral/norms that together can prevent crime, sickness and poverty; hence, ease some of the challenges for the authorities and the society as a whole.

“From the 1980s onward, Asian migratory flows have in fact given rise to many NGOs and other voluntary associations committed to addressing the dire needs and alleviating serious problems of migrants in general” (Scrase, Holden and Baum, 2003: 57). This has resulted in a different approach for the children in need of not only education, but a stability and an opportunity to build their knowledge and empower themselves for the future.

In their book *Globalization, Culture and Inequality in Asia* Timothy J. Scrase, Todd Joseph Miles Holden and Scott Baum explain that “In view of governments' inability or lack of political will to deal with labour migration issues from the perspective of empowerment and rights of foreign workers, it is very much up to non-state actors, such as NGOs, to take up the role as advocates to assert pressure on policymakers” (Scrase, Holden and Baum, 2003: 56).

They highlight that NGOs can be the voice of people around the world lacking power and position in society, to be heard in their case of injustice and lack of rights. Civil society and NGOs can be the buffer between domestic and international laws and regulations, and the people in question, most of the time the ones that are not being contemplated nor regarded as part of society, to the degree they are entitled to, by their own authorities or in the country they are residing in.

NGOs can help with documentations, legal issues, education and health information; they have expertise, experience and not least the goal to help the ones in a weak social and political position. NGOs have the advantage of being able to work on the domestic field, but at the same time cooperate on regional and even international arenas, without strings attached of a political or other connotations or guidelines; which other institutions might be held back on in view of the vision and position of the institution, etc.

“The recent economic and political situation in this country has also meant that a review of NGO activities is required” (Shigetomi, Tejapira and Thongyou, 2004: 1). Over the years Thailand has been stepping out of the poverty that characterises developing countries and has today considerable resources of their own. With such a progress, it is evidence of international funding to NGOs shrinking; this puts a larger responsibility on the government to support its country's NGOs.

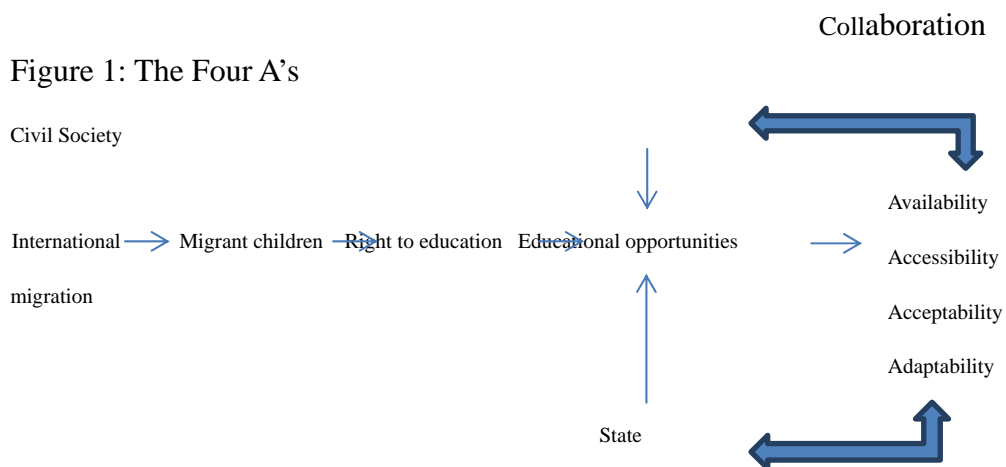
But in Thai society there have been critical voices towards the work done by NGOs, questioning their use of the funding received; believing that NGOs “neglect Thai national interests and use force for their purpose” (Shigetomi, Tejapira and Thongyou, 2004: 2). As a result of this negative prejudice, from both local and national levels in Thailand, it is a request to execute more research as to put forward facts on how the NGOs are working, in addition the Thai society “need to be taught about what the NGOs have been doing” (Shigetomi, Tejapira and Thongyou, 2004: 2); as a means to see the contribution and supportive link NGOs can be in a country's development.

2.4 The Way to Collaboration

The study's conceptual framework emerges in making clear international migration theory and migrant settlement in Thailand. Next the term migrant children is being elaborated upon; their situation in society and educational rights they are entitled to and not at least provided for in their community.

This thesis will be using “The Four A’s” put forth by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR, 1999) as a framework to establish if it the Burmese migrant children are receiving the education they are supposed to. The structure of this idea comes from the organisation of how to analyse people’s conditions concerning household and the UN Special Rapporteur’s accomplishment to create “The Right to Education” (CESCR, 1999).

2.4.1 The Four A’s



The first aspect that the research needs to establish is the availability in the education sector. For full coverage of this factor “all institutions and programmes are likely to require buildings or other protection from the elements, sanitation facilities for both sexes, safe drinking water, trained teachers receiving domestically competitive salaries, teaching materials, and so on; while some will also require facilities such as a library, computer facilities and information technology” (CESCR, 1999).

Next it needs to be accessibility for the children in terms of no discrimination, the children are entitled to access a school in reasonable distance, and possible payments have to be “affordable to all” (CESCR, 1999).

Then there should be acceptability – “the form and substance of education, including curricula and teaching methods, have to be acceptable” (CESCR, 1999) – set with quality, relevance and to be suitable for all children.

Lastly there has to be adaptability. The school or learning system should be regulated and adapted after the needs of the children, not the opposite way. In addition flexibility should be in place as societies and cultures are ever-changing and developing (CESCR, 1999).

By following these “Four A’s” there should be possible to see by which institutions and how, collaboration occurs to cover these remarks; discover which aspects that need improvement on the path to give all children the rights they are entitled to. Only by doing this will it be possible to be fully prepared to do the research required as a means to collect the information necessary and answer the research questions presented initially.

2.4 Literature Review

In 2010 there were less than 16% of migrant children registered in the Thai educational system and it is said that reasons for not accepting migrant children into public schools are difficulties with the language, lack of proper papers, economic difficulties and parents being unaware of their children's rights (Foundation for Rural Youth).

Over the years there have been written articles, documents and conducted research on migrant children's access and availability to education. There are different angles and perspectives; in the countries being studied, the education actors analysed and what research methodology has been used to collect the data. All the information, from state reports to student thesis' can contribute to fill out the picture of the situation for these children around the world.

2.5.1 National Research

There are MA theses conducting research on what opportunities migrant children have in the education system in Thailand. Zeya Thu has written a thesis about migrant children's access to education in Thailand. The study has done research in Samut Sakhorn province. The research found that these migrant children attend schools either by going back to Burma, entering public schools or enrolling in learning centers or informal schools. Further the thesis revealed that it is 10 per cent of the migrant children living in Samut Sakhorn that returns to Burma for schooling; while between 9 to 18 per cent attend public Thai schools. Only 5 to 8 per cent of Burmese migrant children go to learning centers or alike to study. Through interviews with authorities, NGO staff, migrant parents and the Burmese children themselves did the study discover several factors that hamper the education access in the province. Both the conditions in the household and community in general create difficulties in the children's path to

education. Also the school situation and the Thai education policy result in burdensome schooling conditions (Thu, 2006).

In 2009 there was conducted a research in the Tak Province, Thailand, “biggest education center for migrant children in Thailand” (Manutkasemsirikul, 2009). Wanlaya Manutkasemsirikul conducted research on the educational management among NGOs in Maesot in Tak province. The study found that in Maesot there have been established many NGOs to provide migrant children with education due to lack of access to public schools.

As a result of this situation Maesot has transformed into the province in Thailand with the most migrant schools and more than 6,000 migrant students. The NGOs provide these children with free schooling, transportation and accommodation. Teachers are said to be the most vital factor in developing the quality, quantity and conditions for the schooling of the Burmese students (Manutkasemsirikul, 2009). The study concludes that this aspect needs to be incorporated in further development of education management; to increase the knowledge of the children's background so as to improve their opportunities provided for the migrant children (Manutkasemsirikul, 2009).

The core of this study will be somewhere in-between what has already been presented. The opportunities and obstacles have been examined and the policy has improved over the last couple of years. This thesis will examine how the components are executed today, in three southern provinces and analyse the possible collaboration; and most likely give a different and complementary perspective to the academic work available today.

In 2006 and 2008 there were workshops and research with the aim of improving educational opportunities for stateless and cross national migrant children. International organisations and council from the Thai government collaborated through in-depth studies and brainstorming sessions with people in both the public and civil sector to

present key factors that should be implemented to enhance the educational opportunities (Chantavanich, 2008; ILO and OEC, 2006).

There were several main elements collected that the reports affirm should be implemented as a means to provide all children with quality education. The reports found that information available did not meet the target groups, public schools were lacking knowledge about already existing policies and in many provinces projects and plans were not implemented. It was evidence of insufficient financial support and a concern that immoderate numbers of different NGOs could create a chaotic situation and “will be harmful to the national security” (Chantavanich, 2008: 29).

The reports do acknowledge the contribution from NGOs, emphasising on “promoting learning centers provided by NGOs to make it possible to transfer learning outcomes from the centers to schools” (ILO and OEC, 2006: 9); presenting examples of successful accomplishments at NGOs in Tak Province and it is a general recognition of the right to education for all children (Chantavanich, 2008; ILO and OEC, 2006). The reports conclude with drawing attention to the need for an increased budget to implement new and existing policy, more and efficient teachers, school material, etc. In addition a mapping over the migrant children should be executed as to clarify the amount of children at school age and their needs; an instrument to improve policies for providing migrant children with education (Chantavanich, 2008; ILO and OEC, 2006).

Over the years, since these studies were conducted, projects have been developed and regulations have been set in motion. Knowledge is expanding, experiences are shared, through national, regional and international channels; hence, it has been progress in providing more migrant children with educational opportunities. But at the same time there are still challenges and issues to manage, children not receiving the rights they are entitled to and more research is needed.

This study will give a perspective of the situation in the southern provinces of Thailand, which can add a possible different outcome of what is custom in other areas. At the same time the research can contribute to what are the general strengths and shortcomings in the country as a whole; to understand what is crucial to improve and develop to be able to reach the goal of EFA.

2.5.2 International research

Immigration is something most of the world's countries are experiencing, to different degrees. Even though the circumstances and reasons for migration are intricate, there can still be some common themes and issues that both the host countries and the migrants themselves experience; hence, nations can learn from additional plans and regulations dealing with the complex and sensitive subject of migrants. It is not a question of which country that governs the issue of migration the “best” and should be a role model to be followed step by step; rather acquire knowledge of how projects and activities are executed in other countries, adapt ideas and customise to fit one's own country's situation.

In Sweden and Norway there are estimated around 40,000 undocumented people (Ottesen, 2008). In Norway it is no particular efforts for this group alone; these children are given the same rights as “Norwegian” children, but might be put in a so-called adaptation class to learn the language, etc. before being put in the regular classes. According to Norwegian law all children have the right to education if they will be staying in the country longer than three months. Furthermore, by law, it is not only a right and a privilege to attend school, but it is a duty you have as a person to complete at least until 16 years old (Ottesen, 2008).

Even though the police in these countries are allowed to enter a school if necessary, in Switzerland the teachers have confidentiality concerning a child's background. But by reason of the little research done on this particular group of people concerning education, the focus being first and foremost on health issues, it is little knowledge on undocumented children and in Sweden it is evidence of people in the school system working against these children; a result of ignorance and lack of awareness of children's rights. Sweden also has a problem with the law being unclear (Ottesen, 2008).

The Swedish Red Cross has a project called “Utan Papper” (Ottesen, 2008); an organisation where migrant families, children, social workers, etc. can call or email to ask for advice, help or support from therapists, legal experts, etc. In Zurich a NGO has been developed to put pressure on the government to improve human rights. In the board there are two politicians that execute lobbying, in addition that the NGO offers to follow children to school and explain their situation and rights to the administration and teachers so that it is clear from the beginning of the child's educational rights (Ottesen, 2008).

In Great Britain there are several projects and activities in integrating migrants, asylum-seekers and other children into the school system. Policies have been carefully planned “with support staff and teaching assistants” (HMI, 2003). Cultural after-school activities have been developed as supplementary approaches to help the asylum-seeker families integrate and the local community to be familiarised with their new acquaintances (HMI, 2003).

Investment in “time, effort, and money of their own to ensure that the pupil's experience was positive and affirming” (HMI, 2003), in addition to good knowledge of the children's situation and background through collaboration between schools, local

and national authorities⁴, amount to the solid foundation to provide for the children's rights (HMI, 2003).

Issues and challenges concerning migrant workers and immigrants in USA have a long and complex history. Many years ago the Supreme Court ruled that all children, even the ones without documentation were entitled to schooling. The administration at schools was told not to ask students for papers, social security numbers or other requirements that might unveil their social status. In addition the teachers have confidentiality of the students' immigration status and police are only allowed inside the school with either a warrant or subpoena (Hunter and Howley, 1990).

As knowledge and experiences have increased, the U.S Department of Education has established "Migrant Education Programmes"⁵ to develop and improve the educational opportunities for migrant children. Special school funds are available to encourage migrant children to enrol in school instead of working (Green, 2003). The state program provides the districts with grants to expand and advance resources, materials and teacher training to be well prepared when admitting migrant children.

It is in the supplemental services customised for migrant children that have shown to be of crucial importance for the students' "school persistence and academic success" (Gibson and Hidalgo, 2009), in addition to the more specific migrant resource teachers. But what has been an ever bigger realisation is where the migrant students have had teachers that themselves are mixed nationalities (often Mexican and American); coming from a background of migrating, difficult living situation etc. These teachers have been a face on a possible future of prosperity and progress; becoming the students' role models in an environment that seldom let these children realise their possibilities in life.

⁴Collaborating countries and NGOs can also apply for the EU funding plan to develop and improve education. See Huttova, Kalaycioglu and Molokotos-Liederman 2010

⁵See U.S Department of Education's home page and especially interesting the project called "No Child Left Behind" for more information

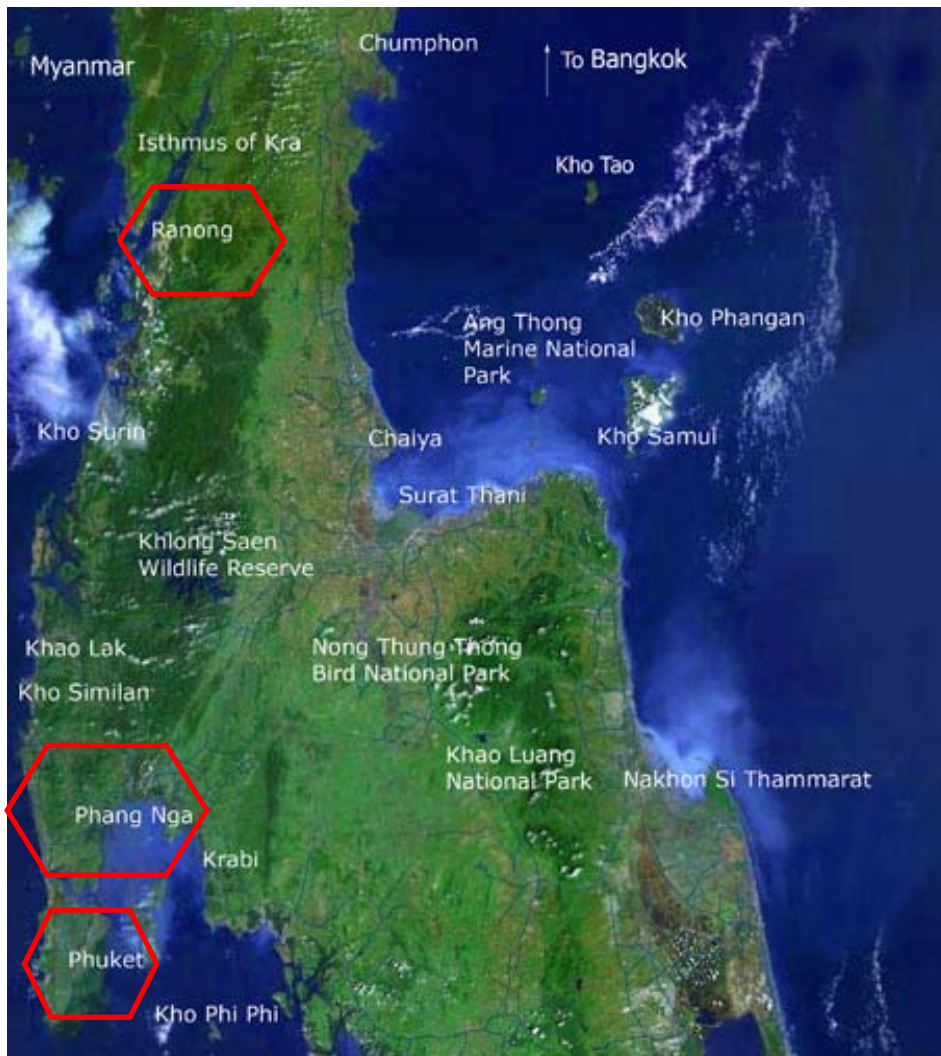
Chapter III

Research Methodology

3.1 Scope

The author is using qualitative methods to collect information, adding secondary sources. Most of the research was done through field trips to three different ESAs in Thailand; Phuket, Ranong and Phang Nga.

Map 1; Research area¹



¹Source; <http://www.southernthailand-all.com/Map%20of%20southern%20Thailand.jpg>

In the case of Phuket, only in 2008, there were 58,672 new registered migrant workers from Myanmar alone (Mekong Migration Statistics, 2008), out of a total of 953,352 in the country. Phuket is known for its tourism and with that comes a request for low-skilled labour in construction, in addition to fishing and fishing related industries where Burmese migrant workers count for a huge amount of the work force. Another interesting perspective researching educational opportunities for migrant children in Phuket brings is that it has not been done so much, if any, research in this area compared to for example Samut Sakhon, and northern Thailand. Migrants have been immigrating to this island for many years now, settling down with a family.

This can indicate that there are many children with migrant parents in Phuket that are in need of educational opportunities but are not given any prospects for basic education. With this in mind it is crucial to map the current situation for these children as a mean to improve the conditions and opportunities.

My other research area is Ranong, a border town to Myanmar. In 2008 they had 36,976 new registered Burmese migrant workers (Mekong Migration Statistics, 2008). For many years Ranong has been hosting a significant number of migrants from Myanmar, either as a first stop on Thai soil before moving on to work in other areas of Thailand, but many have also chosen to settle down in Ranong; creating a life there with work and family. Previous research reveals that Ranong hosts migrants “not only in the fishery and seafood processing industries, but also in agriculture, forestry, construction, commerce, domestic service, and in the sex industry. Myanmar migrants were the dominant class of people who were at the bottom of the local economy” (Fujita, Endo, Okamoto, Nakanishi and Yamada, 2009: 3) but still of huge value to the local economic structure in Ranong.

This can also be seen in family situations where either mother or father is Burmese and the spouse is Thai and their children are born on Thai soil but are not considered Thai because of lack of proper documentation. Out of the total population in Ranong, approximately 300,000, it was estimated that Burmese migrant workers

amount to 130,000 (Fujita, Endo, Okamoto, Nakanishi and Yamada, 2009: 3). The discovery that “it is very clear that the local economy of Ranong can no longer be sustained without these Myanmar workers” (Fujita, Endo, Okamoto, Nakanishi and Yamada, 2009: 4), makes it an appropriate research site for this thesis.

Migrants have been a part of the Ranong society for a long time and the local economy has become dependent upon them. Both registered and unregistered migrant workers play a significant part in this province’ development and acts as an intriguing aspect in the improvements of social services for these families. There have been NGOs engaged here for quite some time, and with this comes an experience and knowledge regarding migrants' children, that can be of significant relevance to the research. Being able to collect information from such an area with first and foremost so many migrant children, creates an interesting perspective. Additionally the fact that without these children's parents, the economy in Ranong will not maintain, should count for an applicable argument to why these children should be given opportunities to learn and be a part of the society.

My third research area is the Phang Nga province, a province where in 2008 there were 24,834 new registered migrants (Mekong Migration statistics, 2008); there are in addition some records amounting illegal, undocumented migrant workers to around 100,000² The highest demand in this area is in rubber plantations, but also construction, fishing and fishing related industries and domestic labour are represented³.

²The Grassroots Human Rights Education and Development (GHRED) is a grassroots committee of Burmese teachers, democratic activists, social workers, health workers and migrant workers. They are promoting human rights, without political connotations. They are working for Burmese migrant workers and their children in the south of Thailand. For more information on projects, activities and news visit <http://www.ghre.org/en/about-grassroots/>

³ibid

The location of Phang Nga makes it desirable for Burmese migrant workers to travel there to obtain work. It is placed in between Ranong and Phuket, and the demand for cheap labour is considerable in this area. But what can be related to this thesis is that there have been NGOs working there for the migrants' rights for a long time (for example World Vision⁴).

In view of the workers living and working under severe harsh conditions⁵, it is interesting to identify how the children of these migrants are coping and being treated in comparison with other places, where there might be more documented than undocumented migrants, like for example Phuket.

What has to be remembered in this context is that even though there are available statistics over registered and documented migrant workers for all provinces in Thailand, it is highly important to also consider the hidden amount of undocumented migrants; the ones entering the country illegally on purpose or being cheated by a broker or employer on their way to a better life in Thailand. They are secluded by their employer that might have taken their documents, many are not allowed to move freely outside the work site and it is evidence of migrant workers having to pay the local police a monthly fee to not be deported back to Myanmar (GHRED).

This illegal activity, counteractive behaviour and negative experiences can naturally have severe effects on migrant children. Both in their everyday life and in the possibilities to receive education in an area where there are many issues with both illegal immigrants, as well as discriminating treatment of the documented migrants. One could express that it is crucial to give the children (that most likely did not migrate to

⁴A NGO that works to help the poor and oppressed to promote human transformation and seek justice for them. See www.worldvision.org for more information.

⁵In the paper "From the Tiger to the Crocodile", written by the Human Rights Watch, there are presented different problems and challenges that migrants experience on a daily basis, in Thailand. From being prohibited to drive a vehicle or using a mobile phone to crucial rapes and violence. For more information visit <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?page=search&docid=4b84ec212&skip=0&query=Phang%20Nga>

Thailand by own choice) an opportunity to basic learning, a stable and safe environment and the assumption of being recognised and acknowledged.

3.2 Sampling and Case Study

This thesis has the main focus on the performance by non-governmental organisations that have over the last decade been an increasingly important factor in alternative approaches in the social development process. For this thesis it will be the advantages NGOs have as independent organisations that will be analysed in the context of educational opportunities for migrant children. Where state authorities and public institutions have to either follow a budget plans or a political view point put on them, NGOs do not have these restrictions.

Doing qualitative research through focused interviews with only one establishment that is offering education for children, in this case NGOs can provide a rather uniform viewpoint of a complex situation. Therefore the study triangulates information by interviews with public schools in the current area and local authorities that are working in social development matters; hence, should be supporting migrant children with health information, education, and protection in their Thai community.

Table 1; Details of Sampling and Cases of Informants

<u>CASE</u>	<u>TIME FRAME</u>	<u>SAMPLING</u>					Total (Person)
		Local government ESA	NGO/Learning Center		Public School		
	<i>Weeks</i>		Director (Person)	Teacher (Person)	Headmaster (Person)	Teacher (Person)	
<u>Phuket;</u>	3	1			1	1	3
NGO 1			1	2			3
<u>Ranong;</u>	2	1			1	1	3
NGO 1			1	2			3
NGO 2			1	2			3
<u>Phang Nga;</u>	1	1			1	1	3
NGO 1			1	2			3
Total	6 <i>(Weeks)</i>	3 <i>(Person)</i>	4 <i>(Person)</i>	8 <i>(Person)</i>	3 <i>(Person)</i>	3 <i>(Person)</i>	21 <i>(Person)</i>

3.3 Data Collection Methods and Focused Interview

The study conducted focused interviews with different respondents that in one way or another are educational providers. So-called open-ended questions added to following up questions to a response made by the interviewee, is assumed the best way to truly grasp the situation. Even though there were prepared, in advance, a set of

questions to be answered at the different NGOs, there were space and time for the respondent to elaborate on the issue; and the interview became more of a conversation where the interviewer was leading the topic of discussion.

The research accomplished interviews at three different sites in each ESA. At each site interviews with at least four respondents were conducted. There were questions customised to each respondent, touching upon selected topics, as to be able to create a complete portray of the educational opportunities provided for migrant children in the ESAs, at current time. In addition to discover possible “Achilles' heels” in both existing collaboration between the actors, as well as arguments for lack of cooperation.

The following table demonstrates four questions established by Kacem Bensalah for UNESCO (Bensalah, 2000); that the study will be using as the main topics when collecting the information. These questions enclose many of the factors in which are important to establish as a means to answer the study’s research questions. They reflect on the details of collaboration among various organisations in education services.

Table 2; Types of Collaboration (For Discussion)

TOPIC	What types of organisations involved?		What activities are these organisations undertaking?		What are the coordination mechanisms?			What role to expect in the future?	Aims?	
	Local	District	Teacher training	Information	Funding	Resources	Work shops	Local /District	Local	District
<u>INFORMANT</u>										
<u>NGO;</u>										
Director	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Admin	X	X					X		X	
Teacher	X		X					X	X	
<u>Public School;</u>										
Headmaster	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Teacher			X					X	X	
<u>Local Government;</u>										
ESA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

At the NGOs the director and administration were interviewed about what they are offering the children, the process of finding and admitting children and future goals for both the organisation but especially for the migrant children. There were also inquires about the possible collaboration with public schools and what support is being

received from local authorities or possible counteracts experienced. Next the study looked at the curriculum being taught; trying to envision the ideas and plans they try to execute for the children and possible results already occurring, in collaboration with local authorities and public schools. This information was used to examine what are being carried out at the provincial level to inform, adapt and work towards the goal of *Education For All* by 2015.

Further the author interviewed the teachers at the NGO schools/ learning centers to recognise what they find significant in teaching these migrant children; seeking out potential restrictions coming from irregularly tough living situations. The teachers are the adults the children will spend most of their everyday with and the teachers give a good insight into children with difficulties at home, in their community and how they are coping in a learning environment. For these interviews there were executed focused interviews with prepared questions, also as a means to try to gather a pretty similar pattern from the different NGOs and areas visited, as to create a completeness of the present situation for migrant children. But as the interview progressed following up questions were asked when necessary.

It is irrelevant to gather data from the headmaster at public schools, through questions prepared in advance concerning *Education For All*, collaboration with NGOs and ESAs. It was especially of significant importance to see possible differences between the public schools having Burmese students and those that did not; and reasons for this irregularity. For the public schools responding to the request of interview; headmasters were the target group⁶.

It is relevant for this study to see how they themselves observe the challenges and positive outcomes of having migrant students. How it was possible in the first place, who was cooperating to make it possible; or why there are not any Burmese children enrolling in their school at present time.

⁶See 3.5 for more information on limitations to the study

Lastly it was of substance for the research to conduct material from state authorities, first and foremost at local levels. Officials in positions that work with social development of their ESA; health, education, children, family, migration, were contacts of interest.

These interviews were conducted for the study to unveil plans, projects and funding, that the authorities are in charge of; collaborating projects with public schools and NGOs, or other economically funding for the schools and learning centers to adapt their educational offers; to be prepared to teach children of different backgrounds and needs. Activities that have tried and failed, plans that might at present time be developed and will be implemented in a short time period; or they might be waiting on funding from national authorities and institutions to be able to execute their projects.

It is important to confirm what has been gathered of the information from interviews with NGOs: also to obtain a possible explanation to how and what projects and plans have been executed, successfully or inadequately. Further it is relevant to grasp the reasons why not more has been done by local authorities. In addition the study investigated why they do not accept migrant children to attend schools with other Thai children. Or what are the reasons for the acceptance of migrant children, and the background and causes to how they have made it possible for them to gain the same educational opportunities as other children.

There have earlier been impressions that migrant parents themselves are an obstacle for migrant children gaining education, but for this thesis it will be substantially focused on the actors involved in the education system; and rather draw some lines from the views of the parents' participation, both Burmese and Thai's.

3.4 Ethical Consideration

The ethical considerations and sensitivities this thesis will have to take a stand and adapt the research thereafter can be in the touchy history between Myanmar and Thailand, and the occurring negative attitudes from Thai communities towards Burmese migrant families. Migration is a complex issue anywhere in the world. On the one side are the reasons why people migrate in the first place, on the other how they are being treated by the host country.

Some migrants travel with documentations and legally work in another country, while some people migrate illegally and do illegal activity; creating problems for other migrants. There are situations in the host country where employer and authorities, exploit migrants desperately in need of a job, generating discriminating attitudes – forcing them to live under strict control in rough work and living conditions. The complication of issues, from security to human rights to economy, makes the challenges difficult to both manage and discuss. This study will not be pointing fingers at who's to blame, but examine how cooperation and planning can benefit children in gaining their right to basic education.

Regarding this the author brought with her a letter of confidentiality to each interview conducted; stating that there will not be any mentioning of names of area, persons or organisations in the final thesis. The purpose of the study is to put emphasis on how NGOs are contributing in providing migrant children with educational opportunities, how a stronger collaboration with local authorities and institutions can improve the process; and how this can be transferred to other ESAs, schools and communities.

For this reason the name of the research area is not mentioned while analysing collected data. The successions of provinces that have been mentioned as areas of scope for the research are not correlating to the numbers used in discussing the findings. The

combined data from all three provinces are the appealing matrix; not which situations apply to which province.

3.5 Limitations

Before conducting the research there were self-explanatory aspects to be aware of that could affect the data collection; and as the research progressed other unforeseen factors were revealed. All these aspects are necessary to mention as to understand how the data was collected and under which prerequisites.

First of all is the time frame, for the researcher, when conducting interviews. It was planned approximately with 2 months available to travel, all things considered. Further it is also an economic perspective one has to bear in mind.

Language barriers were present in most of the interviews executed, especially at the learning centers. During some interviews there were people translating from English to Thai, while others translated back from Burmese, via Thai to English again. This can naturally affect the answers given and information can be lost in translation. To prevent too much vital material to be missing, there were follow up interviews to fill the gaps and recheck some of the data collected.

Next the time available for the respondents could be a factor to determine possible limitations. They have their own schedule to follow and not everyone had the time to drop their plans to meet for an interview. Additionally it was an issue with arranging follow up interviews. Some interviewees did not have time at all; some cancelled planned appointments, while others did not answer on the request to schedule another meeting.

Lastly is the matter of subject. Migration and human rights are sensitive and complex issues touching upon social, as well as economic and political aspects. This predicament became apparent especially when interviewing officials from ESA. During the meetings one could perceive a lack of interest in the questions asked, the conversation did not flow as smoothly as when talking to NGOs or public schools. To assume it comes from attitudes or lack of awareness will only be to speculate, but it is important to mention as to explain why there can be shortcomings concerning certain topics.

Chapter IV

CURRENT SITUATION OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN AND ROLES OF NGOS

This chapter deals with the two first objectives of the thesis. First there will be an overview over the current situation of educational opportunities for Burmese migrant children in the three provinces visited. The study will present estimated numbers on migrant children in each province, their place of origin and their living conditions with different struggles and circumstances. The other section under the first objective will look at the educational opportunities provided; by the state represented by ESA's and public schools and next by the civil society.

The second part will be highlighting the roles NGOs play in these children's lives. The study will be analysing three major aspects that the NGOs themselves, and the research consider as vital for improving the living conditions and access to education for Burmese migrant children in the three provinces visited.

4.1 Migrant Children

4.1.1 Estimated Numbers of Migrant Children

When addressing numbers of migrant children in research site 1 it becomes evident that there are different and unclear statistics. One of the respondents from ESA said that according to the unofficial statistic, there are more Burmese inhabitants than Thais in the entire province, and that he suggested this estimate to be “correct”, even though not official. The varying estimates of migrants makes it very difficult to state numbers of migrant children, especially when considering factors like illegal and legal entrance, born in Thailand or in Burma, and registered versus not registered (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

There are some numbers from previous years that can give an estimate over the current situation. In 2004 there were registered 40,548 boys and 36,480 girls at the age between 0 and 15 years old; a total of 77,028 Burmese children (Vungsiriphal,2010: 2).The research found that in 2007 there were approximately 13 000 Burmese migrant children in research site 1 (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

In one of the research sites there were born 10,388 Burmese children in 2003, while 3,918 babies were born in another research site the same year (Vungsiriphal, 2010:27).For children of these migrants there are complex and difficult matters surrounding legal status and rights, since some travelled with their parents to Thailand legally, some enter illegally, others alone.Today it is a growing number of the migrant children that are born in Thailand and have never been to Burma (ESA, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

Remarks

Even though the statistics are somewhat unclear and in some areas missing, there are presented numbers that can give an overview over the huge amount of Burmese children living in Thailand today. As previously mentioned there are more than 264 thousand migrant children in total, in Thailand, per December 2009 and for the three provinces the study has visited there are at least 91,000 Burmese children living in these areas; from the findings one can draw the conclusion that it is a higher amount of Burmese children residing in research site one and two, than in site three.

4.1.2 Place of Origin

NGOs in the first province affirm that most of the migrant children in learning centers are born in Thailand; by cause of the long tradition of Burmese settlers in the area. However a number of older children migrated from Burma to Thailand, alongside their parents or other family, while some came for the purpose of working. Nevertheless, the current students have all been entering the country as a minor, with or without adults, as a worker or accompanying someone else (Managers, NGOs, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

For most of the children, being born in Burma or Thailand, consider for the most part Thailand as their home. Many of them have never been to Burma and perceive it as something foreign and unknown (Teacher, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012). When parents imply that they might go back to Burma, the children seek support in their teachers; telling them that they are scared of leaving. On the other hand they are aware of their heritage; speaking Burmese at home and the parents are interested in their children not “forgetting where they come from” (Teacher, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

There are statistics concerning migrants and children, developed by the Thai national statistics organisation. But there are vast gaps and errors in view of different factors, like great and non-lucid areas, illegal entrance, unregistered migrants, children not given birth certificate, etc.;

“We have not had the statistics of migrant children in the province since the geographical area is wide and difficult to survey it. Even you cannot get it from the government” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

In view of the average high age in one learning center, most of the students are born in Burma. They came to Thailand with their parents and several children were found by the NGO while doing child labour (Headmaster, learning center, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

When interviewing the director of a NGO in research site 3 she explains that they do not have any clear statistics on Burmese migrant children in the province;

“Though we try to get an overview over the current situation, we do not get a clear answer or specific numbers of children when contacting authorities” (NGO director, research site 3: June 4th 2012).

Remarks

The following table is based on the information given from the NGOs and learning center’s interviewed. It is an estimated division between the Burmese children born in Thailand and those born in Burma. It is based on the perspectives of the informants and it is only to present a general overview over the current situation.

Table 3; Place of Origin

	Born in Burma (%)	Born in Thailand (%)	Total (%)
Research site 1	20	80	100
Research site 2	50	50	100
Research site 3	85	15	100
Total			100

4.1.3 Living and Working Conditions

The study did find that negative attitudes from the general society are present. One can see similarities to the definition shown earlier, from Castles and Miller, on racism, where behaviour and viewpoints are coloured of socially made differences (Castles and Miller, 1998: 32). Respondents' replies to the research have the appearance of people easily generalising and labelling Burmese migrants; resulting in a low position in society;

“The children know they are not welcome here” (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Manifold of migrant families work hard to make ends meet, both emotionally and materially. On the emotional level they experience hostility, discrimination and a country that does not provide them with many rights. Respondents express distress over migrants being randomly stopped on the streets by police, neighbours calling authorities, claiming they are doing illegal business; and hospitals refusing to proceed medical checks (Managers, NGOs, research site 1, 2 and 3: Feb – June 2012). Materially the migrants receive commonly low payments for long days under harsh working conditions.

“They can be away for weeks at a time, on a fishing boat. They get very low salary, working almost 20 hours a day and can only spend few days at home before they have to go out again” (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Fishing and fishing related industries appear to be the most common occupation amongst the Burmese students' parents in the part of research site 1 the study visited (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). The workers and their families tend to settle down close to the harbour; a community has been created from years of migration (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

With reference to fishing related occupations the struggles are not only exhausting and time consuming; there are reoccurring violence and degrading behaviour towards the Burmese migrant workers. Recent years have unmasked several incidents of workers being killed, people escaping on open sea and employers being attacked by their employees as a result of years of harassment and attacks (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

Many migrant families in research site 3 work in fishing related industries, like peeling shrimps, cleaning fish or work on a fishing boat. Other common jobs are construction work where the migrants have to move between projects; creating an unstable and ever changing living situation that makes it difficult for the families to settle down (NGO assistant, research site 3: Oct 5th 2012). Rubber plantation work is another common occupation for migrants; employment that leads migrants to isolation from the rest of the society.

“Most of the Burmese here have a tradition working in rubber plantations. It is common that the entire family works side by side; adults and children, to supply the household economy” (Teacher, Public school, site 2: March 20th 2012).

These occupations insinuate that it is a separation between Burmese and Thais in the provinces. There could be the characteristics of the types of jobs the migrants usually have, thus creating dissociation. At the same time it appears to be a

lack of initiative from society's side to accommodate for the Burmese to integrate, or at least have the opportunity to integrate; which “depends on constant interaction with [...] groups in the country of immigration (Castles and Miller, 1998: 37).

It is typically a short distance between home and work place when employed in fishing related occupations, making it accessible and convenient; bearing in mind that there are reoccurring issues with police and negative attitudes from the locals. The location of the settlement and work place ease some of the burdens that migrants do experience in other occupations; they are not isolated from the surrounding society as happens in plantation work, or having to constantly be on the move as in construction work (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). Besides, as the study will unveil later, it makes it easier for NGOs to place their learning centers, having a continuous dialogue with the Burmese community; and can follow up on issues being presented by parents, etc. (Headmaster, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

Since many of the migrant families have difficulties getting ends to meet, it is a rather significant number of students that either drop-out in the middle of a semester, or not returning from a school break because they feel obligated to participate in their families' work for an income. The children do not consider they can afford to spend time focusing on studies and their own future, when at the same time their families struggle (Headmaster, learning center, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

The research found that most of the oldest Burmese students appear to be living with a constant dilemma; on the one side is the pressure from parents to help out with the family economy and on the other side a desire to study, be a child and gain the same opportunities as their Thai peers (Headmaster, learning center, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Usual child labours are in fishing, construction and plantation employments (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012). It is even common that children, young as 8, 9 years old, work regardless of going to school. Several participate in their parents work at the rubber plantations; and the work is heavy with inconvenient hours and unsuitable for young children;

“Get up early in the morning to work before school and returning to the plantations in the evening”
(Public school teacher, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

The education level amongst older children is low at research site 2, even though half of the students were born in Thailand. This has to do with the fact that it is still more common for migrant children to either work with their parents or have their own jobs, a result of struggling family economy in addition to lack of knowledge of education rights (Headmaster, learning center, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

According to a NGO education coordinator in research site 2, about 80 % of the children have domestic issues;

“Most of our students here, frequently experience beatings, alcohol, drugs, and mum and dad fighting”
(Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

The fact that often the parents do not have any education themselves is another determinant for achievements in school;

“The children are slow learners due to the home situation” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

One situation that they believe is affecting the students' performances lies within families striving households, because of the low salary; also since they have to send money to their families in Burma; causing them to take up loan from money lenders. Migrants are often “dependent on agents, smugglers and other middle-people” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 26). In research site 3 it is a problem with Mafia

controlling the transfers; money is lost on the black market when trying to send money over the border (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

Remarks

There are several reasons to migrate; often one cannot show one main cause for migration; family and social networks are usually additional factors for the movement. The importance of networks was clearly seen in the light of the history of migration from Burma to Thailand; not only the request for a job (Castle and Miller 1998).

It is of course a desire and need to find work, but data collected assert that reuniting with family is noteworthy. This seems to be the common situation after conferring with respondents in all three provinces.

For all the three provinces there are more similarities in the living conditions between the three provinces than there are differences. The provinces are experiencing negative behaviour from their surrounded society through exclusion and isolation. It is child labour still present in all the areas visited and it is a majority of the migrant families struggling, both emotionally and financially, on a daily basis. Domestic abuse is a common and reoccurring aspect in Burmese children's lives, in addition they are often left alone for long periods of time; exposed to crime and exploitation.

If one were to put light on any differences between the research sites in the matter of living conditions, there have been some improvements in the migrant families' situation in research site 1 and 2; while in research site 3 there are still a clear separation between the Burmese and their Thai neighbours. Integration and inclusion have increased in the first two provinces visited, but in the third province this is still totally lacking.

4.2 Educational Opportunities for Migrant Children

International law states that all children should be given the same opportunities in life and Thailand has ratified these laws (UNHCHR, 1989). In theory it is therefore said that factors of ethnicity, religion, nationality and so on and so forth should not determine the possibilities to succeed in life. Even so these factors do affect migrant children's everyday lives through social, as well as economical struggles, personally and inside the family (Huguet and Chamratrithirong, 2011).

As seen in presented data, migrant children in all three research sites struggle; as a result of their parents' circumstances, the lack of rights in Thai society or being a child worker. There exist child labours, despite laws trying to prevent it. It is common for migrant children to;

“Work in fishing industries like diving into the sea to take of the fishing net, repair fishing nets or collecting fish. In rubber plantations the children will collect rubber liquid early in the morning to make rubber flat” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

As mentioned earlier, the importance of education has become a general view point by highlighting the social as well as individual benefits. By educating people they will be empowered to take responsibility for their lives, children are given tools to prepare themselves for the future and it is said to be a participating factor in decreasing poverty and enhance understanding and respect in society (Mounier and Tangchiang, 2010).

Yet, research show a diversity between the view points, what is written in the laws and the reality for children in certain areas. On the one side the importance of education has become a guideline for Thailand in the way they have put the issue on their agenda; on the other side there are certain levels and aspects of the education sector that are not mentioned as just as significant.

When migrant children are not mentioned in the education debate it can create doubt in the range and genuineness of stating that a government regards education and equality as of substantial significance. Through interviews with personnel in different institutions and provinces, the answers keep touching upon uncertainty and lack of belief in the authorities' will to evolve and advance the educational conditions for Burmese migrant children in Thailand.

The development of a global world has made education a vital tool for competitive participation in society, but where inequalities in who receives schooling have shown to be vast and have to be dealt with. In 2005 it was stated by the Thai state that all children have the right to education, but it was first in 2011 that also undocumented children had the right to education (VSO International). There are varied factors affecting the migrant workers lives and naturally this disturbs their children and influences the household, negatively, on a daily basis.

Thailand is the country the Burmese children know and grew up in. Their networks of friends and family surround them. Either being settled in a Burmese camp or an integrated part of the local Thai society, the familiarities and the networks give the impression of being the vital factors of where one consider home to be.

According to a NGO it was about 1/3 of the total amount of Burmese migrant children attending some form of schooling in 2007, in research site 1. While in site 2 it is said to be "between 500 and 1000 migrant children enrolled in either a learning center or a public school in the province" (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

Comparing these figures to the total number of Burmese migrant children is difficult not only due to the lack of correct statistics, but also the floating definitions on migrant, legal and illegal, as mentioned earlier. Yet it can be said that these numbers do, at least to some extent, imply that there are improvements happening,

policies are implemented and people's mind-set seem to be changing. But one can question who is responsible for this change and if the speed of the process is acceptable, in the matter of covering the substantial needs of these children.

4.2.1 Educational Opportunities Provided by the State

There are currently around 75 migrant children that attend public schools in research site 1, in 10 different public schools (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012). The NGOs interviewed for this research have currently transferred about 40 Burmese students from their learning centers to different public schools (Managers, NGOs, research site 1: Feb – March 2012).

The NGO visited in research site 2 have currently 80 Burmese children in public schools, while they are expecting to send 150 new students this semester, aged 5 to 9 years (Manager, learning center, research site 2: date). At one public school they have presently 110 Burmese students enrolled (Public school teacher, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

There are public schools in research site 2 that accept migrant children, but differences are present. Some public schools are each year still reluctant to accept Burmese students, saying that language barriers, cultural differences, etc. will be halting both the child's education and affect the Thai students and teachers.

When asked about experience of children's continuing to study at a public school in research site 3, a NGO director is discouraged. She affirms that the organisation has tried to contact local public schools to enrol children from the learning center, but they have all rejected.

“The first problem occurring is that the public school cannot give the children a school certificate when they graduate, since they do not have legal papers available” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

Other factors the public schools use as arguments to not accept the children are concern for language barriers and possible conflicts with the Thai students (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

In research site 3 they study did not find Burmese migrant children attending public schools. When interviewing a headmaster at a public school, one can sense a completely different situation compared to the two other research sites. The headmaster has no Burmese students in his school,

“But they are more than welcome if they do come” (Headmaster, public school, research site 3: March 28th 2012).

He says that there have not been any migrant parents asking the school to admit their children, nor have there been NGOs requesting on the Burmese families' behalf. The headmaster states;

“I believe they send their children back to Burma for schooling and return to Thailand to work when they are older” (Headmaster, public school, research site 3: March 28th 2012).

When conferring with ESA in the current province, the deputy mayor argues that there are some Burmese children that have transferred from learning centers to public schools. Anyhow, he “believes the children do not want to go to school in Thailand”. Further the deputy mayor claims that there are cultural differences present that make the parents send their children to attend school in Burma instead (ESA official, research site 3: April 3rd 2012).

Nonetheless, he states that;

“The Burmese do feel freedom in this province. They have been here for many years now; they speak Thai and are Buddhists. Burmese are more Thai than other migrants and Thais feel more alike the Burmese migrants than migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh” (EFA official, research site 3: April 3rd 2012).

On the other side there are public schools that have been accepting migrant children for some years now, in the two other provinces; by reason of the hard work and good grades these children achieve, being good role models for the other students. A headmaster of a public school that has been enrolling Burmese students for 3 years;

“Called our office and asked for a higher number of migrant children for the coming semester, because he is so pleased with their work ethics and exam results” (NGO teacher, research site 2; March 19th 2012).

In view of that these situations do occur, it can be argued that, regardless the law, by accommodating Burmese students puts pressure on the Thai students; create a school environment where the children understand the importance of achieving satisfactory grades and be encouraged to study harder. As the example above shows, the appreciation of being accepted and given the opportunity to study has the qualities of resulting in good achievements.

In the matter of some public schools not accepting students and others where almost half of their students are Burmese, a NGO manager anticipate this situation pertaining from the success of having these students. Yet, some Thai parents do not want their children in a school with migrant students and choose to transfer to another school. Burmese students tend to do very well on required school tests; the school's reputation is respectable;

“This has made it more desirable to accept the Burmese students“(Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Every public school receives funding from the local government. They pay per student, so it can be attractive to admit Burmese children as a means to increase the number of students; hence, obtain a wider budget. One could argue that this is not the right way to provide Burmese children with their entitled rights. Yet it can be advocated that having this type of funding practice, will gain smaller schools in the villages to sustain their assignment. Concurrently it will gain the children; both the

Thai students and the Burmese students can pursue education close to their local community.

By having mixed nationalities in a small-scaled environment could be a factor to success; an intimate atmosphere with familiar faces instead of a big school with children from the entire province that can create distance and insecurity; triggers for discrimination and bullying.

The process of enrolling in public school requires the Burmese children to hand in legal documents; in addition their level of written and oral Thai language will decide which grade to put them in. Even though the language skills differ amongst the children, it is a significant number of children that do work hard with their Thai, so even though they are put in a lower grade than their age, they are seldom “alone” in the class. One can see a trend that as soon as the Burmese students learn the Thai language, their achievements in the other subjects are just as good as their Thai classmates, if not even better (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

Remarks

The first two provinces visited have a rising number of Burmese migrant children in public schools. NGOs that have been working in the area for a long time, establishing good contact with “the right people” have developed a preschool language test, where the children the NGO thinks are ready for public school, will take a test to determine their level of Thai skills and present the result to a school nearby (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

The public schools that have a history of accepting Burmese children are each school semester admitting more students. For the older Burmese children it is again an issue of being placed in classes with younger Thai students, but exam results show that it is only a period of adjustment before acquisitions are accomplished.

It is however still more public schools not accepting Burmese children since the administration at the schools believe the Burmese have poor Thai language skills, problems with behaviour and concentration and that the children do not want to study.

4.2.2 Educational Opportunities Provided by Civil Society Organisations

As remarked earlier, NGOs have been developed to influence governments; to be a platform for a public grouping; especially on behalf of the people that are in weak positions in society (Scrase, Holden and Baum, 2003). In Thailand it is said that the growing number of migrants seem to be the cause for the growing number of NGOs; a representative example where lack of initiative and action from authorities makes NGOs come in and provide help in alternative ways (Scrase, Holden and Baum, 2003).

The study found that there are several NGOs providing educational opportunities for migrant children in research area 1. There are currently 13 learning centers under different NGOs situated around the province (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

NGO 1 is an international organisation that has been working for less fortunate people around the world for a long time. They started up in research site 1 almost 20 years ago. The management tells about a development characterised by slow progress due to police harassment for one; and the NGO was standing alone in providing migrants with support, opportunities and advice (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

About 5 years ago the local government in the province starting participating and establishing a dialogue with the NGO. In their talks they discussed improving and expanding the rights of migrants in general, in the province. Furthermore, three years later, the local ESA started collaborating with the NGO on developing a suitable curriculum for the learning centers (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

The NGO in research site 1 have currently 500 migrant students divided into three different learning centers. They give schooling to children from the age of 3 to about 17 years old, through kindergarten and elementary school (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

Furthermore, the learning centers support the oldest children with adult school. These students have been working for many years already, not having any previous education; this is an opportunity to learn how to use a computer and other practical skills in an environment of peers (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

At kindergarten the children first and foremost study languages; Thai and Burmese, while at elementary level they teach in addition English, Maths, Geography, Science and they also have physical education. But the Burmese headmaster of 16 years at one of the learning centers opines that;

“It is most important to learn languages for the migrant children, so we put the most weight on that through all the school levels” (Headmaster, learning center, research site 1: 28.02.12).

6 years ago, after a failed attempt to establish a learning center in the north of Thailand, NGO 2 settled down in research site 1, and have been in the office they work from today, for approximately 4 years. They started their work by providing support to already established learning centers in the area with funding, books and

teacher training. However, they soon decided to start their own learning center because;

“We wanted to take another direction, since we did not like the teaching style and environment in the already established learning centers” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

Even so, it was a quiet start by reason of “we felt disliked by other NGOs already established in the province” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). Yet the most strenuous issues lay within the constant harassment from the local police and army; “we felt constantly afraid of the authorities and it affected the children even more” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

“We had just started the learning center, in a middle class area of the province's biggest city, when two big army trucks showed up unannounced. They walked straight in the front door, refusing to talk to any of the Burmese staff.

They were carrying heavy weapons and started searching each room. They told our Thai staff that they should not educate the Burmese, which are not good people and it will be dangerous to give power to the Burmese. Then they asked if the school was teaching history to the children.

When they came to the second floor they found all of our students, the youngest only 4 years old, sitting on the floor meditating. We could clearly see how embarrassed they were. But it did not stop them from coming back several times and soon we understood that there were neighbours that had complained about our work. People believe that we and the children are doing illegal gambling here and circulating drugs.

Today the army and the police do announce their visits, but we still feel insecure and that the relationship we have been fostering with local authorities is fragile” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

Presently there are 150 students enrolled in the learning centers at NGO 2 and they teach the children 8 different subjects; a mix of the Thai and Burmese curriculum (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

There are no requirements for having legal papers and documents to attend this learning center. This has been and to some extent still creates difficulties with local authorities, but the learning center is engaging towards receiving a form of work permit for the oldest students, so they have something to expose if they were to

be stopped by police. This is an expensive and intricate process, yet to be fulfilled (NGO teacher, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

There are mostly students from 12 to 17 years old, but it is also a kindergarten for the youngest children. Moreover, the NGO teaches a computer class where the students can study online with teachers in other countries. The learning center provides the children with transportation; picking them up in the morning and taking them back home in the evening (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

In research site 2 it is a NGO that has been running a learning center for migrant children for about 8 years. After the tsunami struck the coast of Thailand in December 2004, NGO 3 established an office in the province (NGO manager, research site 2: March 16th 2012). Today this NGO provides education at 3 nearby learning centers, in addition to 2 other learning centers out in the province. At the start of the semester, October 2011, there were 625 students, but there are reoccurring drop-outs and at the end of the term there were around 460 students left (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012)¹.

The NGO provides kindergarten, elementary school and, similar to the NGOs in research site 1, this area also offers a learning center for the children at 17 years old (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

“In our learning centers we basically use the Burmese curriculum for the subjects of Burmese and mathematics. We also teach Thai subjects with Thai teachers and English subject curriculum by Let's go series from Oxford” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

At research site 3, the study met with a NGO that has provided education for migrant children for a few years now. The director of the organisation tells me that the condition they got, to be able to open the school, was that;

¹Some do return after the summer break. Or the staff try going to the community and talk to them. Mostly they quit to work instead

“All the children's parents needed a legal work permit and with that in order a personal interview was set up where the organisation will let the parents know what the values and goals of the learning center are, and if they agree to the terms, their child would be accepted” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

First and foremost, the learning center for the migrant children is providing pre- and primary education, with a highlight on maths, social science, religion and practical skills. All subjects are taught in Burmese. The director sees a positive attitude from the children; “they are eager to learn and gain knowledge” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

As the years have passed by, the parents seem to be more involved with their children's education. It is a common attitude that most migrant workers want their children to go back to Burma to attend school, but after being in this province for a while, not wanting to be separated from the children too much, and seen the work the organisation is doing, it has been an enhancement.

“Almost all Burmese parents show up for parents meetings at the school, and if they cannot participate they will send someone in their place. Previously they would sit there quiet and listen; it has been a vast increase in questions and discussion concerning their children's schooling” (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 3: October 5th 2011).

The information gives the impression that after the new education law came into action, the situation for migrant children in school has to some extent improved. There have been policies implementations, the NGOs have a stronger foundation to advocate the children's rights and the study revealed that there presently are many migrant children attending some form of schooling.

There are however big differences in the quality of attainments at the different learning centers, it is also significant diversity in public schools accepting and admitting Burmese students. In one province there were more than 4 schools that each term accepted a number of students, another province even had a school requesting more Burmese students in light of their commending results and

integration with Thai students. But in the last province the NGO had still to receive any positive feedback from public schools in regards to accepting Burmese students.

Remarks

As concluded in the previous section, the third research site is differing from the two others, also concerning Burmese children's access to public schools. The NGO interviewed had no positive confirmation from the schools they had been in contact with, while in research site 1 and 2 they are closely collaborating with several public schools and seeing an improvement and increase of Burmese students transferring from learning centers to public schools, each semester.

All the provinces have learning centers that provide some form of schooling for Burmese children. In research site 1 it is a long history of NGOs working in the area. While the situation in research site 2 is somewhat similar, this is a wide province with long distances, making it more difficult to offer all children schooling. In addition it also makes it difficult to prevent child labour and reaching out to migrant families at for example rubber plantations. In research site 3 there are currently only two learning centers available presently and from the interviews conducted educational opportunities for Burmese children seem to be a relative untouched topic up until recent times.

4.3 The Role of NGOs in Providing Educational Opportunities for Migrant Children

This part is divided into three sections; each highlighting certain factors that the study perceives as noteworthy and characteristic roles of NGOs in the subject of providing support to migrant children. Through research it was discovered that the work done by NGOs might be to contribute to lack of opportunities for migrant children to attend public school. But after conducting focused interviews the study revealed that learning centers cultivate more aspects of not only the migrant children's lives, but their families and the society surrounding them.

4.3.1 Caretaker

NGOs in research site 1 see themselves to be first and foremost “a caretaker for children who spend a lot of time alone, prevent children from becoming child workers and street beggars” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb – March 2012). Due to all the different and complex factors surrounding the migrant children's lives, both at home and out in the society, the NGOs stress their role of preventing children from being exploited and harmed, physically and mentally. As seen in the study, factors like child labour and violence can disturb a childhood. Consequently children from migrant families are more endangered for drugs, trafficking, and exploitation in the future.

One NGO in research site 1 conveys confident and self-development as maybe the most important aspects in the educational opportunities they provide at their learning center. They aim at engaging the children in planning and developing their own future; “dear to dream and hope” (Teacher, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012). Since their students are constantly in danger of being exploited, or

have already been victims of trafficking, drugs or other forms of perversion, it can be seen as crucial to give these children a meaning in life, a goal and vision for their adult life. The NGO try to provide them with the tools to advance, instead of being dictated by parents or employer.

The NGO manager explains that they try to teach the children about critical thinking, through all the subjects they teach. In other respects to not take anything for granted and ask questions about academics, parents decisions and experiences in life, hence; to make up their mind, take a stand and create their own mind-set (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

There are unfortunately vast matters of domestic issues of parents' alcohol abuse, physical abuse and lack of care. In these situations NGOs staff will go to the family and try to talk to the parents (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Though; counselling does not always help and it is a high number of regressions amongst the troubled students. A headmaster anticipates it comes from the constant strives and worries, and that many parents do not see an end to the struggles.

One teacher in research site 2 tells;

“We had known for a long time that a student has a father with a serious alcohol problem. At times the student would not come to school and when he came back he explained that he had to work because his father was drunk all the time. We could see that the student was struggling at school; being tired and sad over the situation. One day the father all of a sudden showed up at school. He was very drunk, walking from classroom to classroom, screaming and disturbing the teachers and students. When he came to the classroom where his son was, his son tried to calm him down and finally the father fell asleep on the floor. When the school day was over, the student brought his father home and did not return to school” (NGO teacher, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

There are cases of drug and alcohol abuse in the Burmese camps in research site 3 as well and also physical abuse of the children. This naturally affects the children's behaviour in school, and the organisation has in the curriculum to teach the children about control and order.

“It is a lack of knowledge concerning upbringing among the migrant parents. The children are not taught at home how to behave respectfully towards others and it is no structure or schedule for them to follow” (NGO director, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

The school puts a lot of effort in giving the children responsibilities, a strict schedule to follow and chores that they have to do, in addition to educate them in basic maths, computer, language and social science (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011).

At the present time the NGO in research site 3 is more of a care center, than a clear school. The organisation has many challenges and the first and foremost goal when a child is admitted is stability and discipline, so the director explains that is why she would rather characterise the project as a care center than a learning center (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

The children are to attend school every day, but this is not always the case. The difficult living conditions, for example the home situation with parents gone a lot of the time, cause children to care for younger siblings or they sometimes stay home because their parents are back for only a short while (NGO assistant, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011).

To prevent any further difficulties for the children, being often limited to move outside the area where their parents live and work, the director has made sure they all receive a school ID card, so when they are stopped by the police, they have some sort of legal pass to show them. But even though this has been proven to work, the organisation has established the learning centre's location close to the Burmese

migrant workers' camp, as to make it more reachable for the children (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011).

“The NGO has strong Christian guidelines and the way they teach the children from the Bible is through compassion, understanding and caring. But it is also very important to teach the children discipline and structure, something they do not learn at home” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

Other than having a focus on language and religion, it is also a pressing focus on social and practical skills learning. The children are given chores to follow, respect each other and their surroundings, and take responsibility for whenever they are at school. The director sees how important it is to give these children something to do, not only for the purpose of schooling, but for them to learn that what they do will give consequences if not followed. When they uphold their responsibilities it will help the children in a positive way (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

Remarks

All NGOs interviewed highlight care, support and protection as the most significant duties they provide at their learning centers. Developing qualities of self-esteem and confidence enhances the way to empowerment and academic achievements.

4.3.2 Intermediary

The research found that the second vital role of the NGOs is that they act as a buffer between migrants, society and authorities. NGOs appear as the advocate for the Burmese in meetings with local authorities when discussing safety, salary, health and general rights. The NGOs know the situation and circumstances of the migrants efficient after years of hearing the Burmese' stories; and at the same time possessing

the knowledge of processes and practices in the Thai legal and labour system. NGOs can give an overview of numbers and settlements for mapping; which issues are most critical to erase or improve for the migrants but also for the authorities to anticipate they are in charge of the situation.

Concerning the process of enrolling migrant children into public schools the NGOs are a frontrunner and mediator. Thai teachers and an education team from NGOs are in charge of conferring with parents of potential students about transfer to public schools. The manager explains that many parents are scared their children will experience discrimination; also they might “forget” that they are Burmese and will not learn enough of their own heritage in a public school. The parents and children that agree they want to go to a public school; the NGO education team contacts possible public schools in the nearby area and makes the necessary arrangements (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Further, when the children have started school, NGO staff will have meetings with headmaster and teachers at the public school and support parents with information throughout the school year. In some situations there are staff that can provide translation during parents meetings (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

Conjointly, many learning centers offer the children already in public school, to study language 4 evenings a week; in such manner that the Burmese children can keep their Thai skills on par with their academic knowledge in the other subjects. The children can likewise use the transportation provided by the NGO, though they are no longer a student at the learning center (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

For the children transferring to public schools, away from their friends and networks, can be a frightening alteration. The study found that when the students leave learning centers, the NGOs do not consider their job completed. They continue their contact with the student and family, the feeling of safety is upheld through transportation and there are extra classes in the evenings where the children can meet their friends and talk about their experiences with staff.

For the public schools it is also an easier shift when NGOs provide with materials, support and not at least knowledge. At a public school in research site 2, where it is a high number of Burmese students, a local NGO provides the management with Burmese teacher for the language classes and someone the children can turn to if their Thai skills are yet not sufficient (Teacher, Public school, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

Additionally there are learning centers that are working closely with local clinics and doctors that will give medical attention to migrant students. NGOs in two of the three provinces have moreover managed to play the role in providing migrants with regularly access to health services (NGO management, research site 1 and 2: Feb – March 2012).

NGOs have been a vast impact on registration processes that provides migrant families with work permits and other types of identification papers. One NGO remarks that in 2011 there were only 20% of applications that were approved, while this year it is almost 60% receiving some sort of legal documents (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

As a means to prevent the children from being exposed for incidents with police, there are several NGOs that arrange documentation like student cards or school papers, so the children can show that in addition. Even though this can be

seen as just hiding the core of the problem, it has shown to work as a good temporary solution; in addition it gives the children a feeling of belongingness.

Remarks

In research site 1 and 2 the learning centers act as mediator between the Burmese and public schools for enrolling the children in higher education. The NGOs in all the provinces also give legal information and promote the Burmese case to the authorities.

4.3.3 Promoter of Informal Learning

The third noteworthy role that the study unveils lies in that much of the teaching and information flows are happening outside the classrooms. NGOs in all the provinces aspire to incorporate parents, neighbours, authorities and the society as a whole, in their work. NGO staff will travel to areas where migrant workers are located and talk to them about their children and the importance of education.

“It is just as important to change the child's mind-set, as it is to change the parents” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

NGOs also use the yearly parents meeting at the school to inform and answer any questions the parents might have, in addition to travel to the Burmese communities and talk to the families there (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012). The NGOs try to make the migrants understand, that even though it is a pressing issue to make ends meet and that the entire family should help out to earn money for the household; this is only a temporarily solution and that it is crucial for the children to access education. Not only for the child sake but for the family in the future;

“Education and knowledge is the biggest power” (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

The NGO in research site 2 conceive that if it should be a positive change in migrant children's lives and future; it cannot happen without an attitude change and participation from the society as a whole. This is why different types of activities have been arranged, like cleaning the beach, fixing roads, and other community work as a tool to bring the Thais and the Burmese closer together (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

The NGO conceives that a lot of the negative attitudes from both the Thais and the Burmese come from lack of knowledge and fear of the unknown; in addition to stigmatising teachings in schools and society with reference to the history between the two countries (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012). NGOs use their role to erase some of the misapprehension the Thais have of their neighbours. Simultaneously, it is presently a perception amongst the Burmese community that have been shaped from years of distress and bad experiences; “Creating an unwillingness to adapt and integrate” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

By creating events for the entire society, there will be socialising, cooperation and interaction between the two. There are evidences of friendships being made and not at least a growing mutual understanding of the lives and jobs of the migrant workers from Thai perspective; and a bigger interest of integrating and taking responsibility in society, from the Burmese side (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Additionally it is a common activity of supporting and to some extent educate the students' parents through orientation concerning their children's rights and possibilities, counselling when there are domestic issues and a place where the parents can ask questions in a safe environment (NGO director, research site 3: Sep 28th 2012).

Consequently the social projects are meant to create a joint understanding environment, where the Thais and Burmese can find a similar ground to build mutual respect and not at least be role models for their children. The NGOs can work as a buffer between these two communities, a neutral institution that provides information and arrangements without political, economic or other types of agendas.

“Community and the locals, Thais and Burmese, can put more pressure on governments than international organisations” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

This vision was the foundation for initiating the integration programme 3 years ago in research site 2.

NGOs have the qualities of being an institution that teach the children more than academics. They work to give the children confidence and learn that what you do matters. Not only are networks and family pressing necessities, but individuality is highlighted as a key factor in improving the migrants’ lives. Responsibility for actions when they desire to be part of society is vital.

The NGOs stress the fact that migrant children do live under difficult circumstances, inside the family and in the community, and only through empowerment on an extended scale can they themselves find a path to a better life and future aspects. The organisations provide the chance to foster this in a safe and caring environment.

Remarks

All the provinces put the role as a caretaker as the most significant job they are doing for Burmese children in Thailand. In research site 1 the NGOs want to prevent abuse, crime and exploitation, in research site 2 they are trying to decrease domestic issues like alcohol abuse and home violence. In research 3 they believe there are missing structure and discipline in the communities; and that the children need to learn this to become strong and empowered individuals.

In research site 1 the NGOs give information to both public schools and migrant parents concerning enrolling Burmese students into Thai schools. For the students already accepted, there are additional language classes offered and transportation. In research site 2 there are community activities being arranged to bring the Thais and the Burmese together; erasing myths and misconceptions. Additionally for both these provinces the NGOs have had a significant impact on registration processed, though the development has been bigger in research site 2 than in site 1. To advocate the rights of migrant children, an important factor is to inform and educate the parents as well. In all three provinces there are parents meetings where there are discussions on the migrants' rights, factors concerning their children's future and knowledge about Thai society in general.

The biggest diversity between the provinces and the NGOs' roles is perhaps the scale of the extended job they are doing; by incorporate the community as a whole and communicating with other instances like public schools and authorities. It seems like the NGO in research site 2 has managed on a higher level, to integrate the Thais and the Burmese and not at least decrease negative attitudes and create friendships and mutual respect.

Chapter V

COLLABORATION AMONG NGOS, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS ON MIGRANT CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

Through discovering collaboration between various institutions it can be properly shown which educational opportunities are given to migrant children. The previously established “Four A’s” (availability, accessibility, acceptability, adaptability)¹ should be in place, to its fullest, for all children to be equally treated. Satisfactory school environments with proper buildings, good sanitary conditions and competent teaching materials are some of the requirements. The children ought to attend a school a reasonable distance from their home and any school payments should be “affordable to all”. The curriculums taught have to be of a good quality, have relevance and be suitable for the children. In addition any form of discrimination is unacceptable; schools and its staff ought to take responsibility to adapt to the needs of the children and be flexible for changes (CESCR, 1999).

By separating the Four A's and analysing the data collected, the study anticipate that highlights and limitations in possible collaborations occurring in the research areas would be established. Subsequently the weaknesses and strengths can create the foundation to evolve practices and advance projects for the future.

¹See chapter 2.4 “The Way to Collaboration”

5.1 Availability of Opportunities

A significant outcome of migrants bringing their families to a host country, or creating a permanent life when settling down, will set an ever greater need for human support, hence; the circumstances require enhanced collaboration to provide these services (Huguet and Chamrathirong, 2011: 66).

Data from the three provinces the study visited indicate both developing collaboration and total lack of involvement. The research found that no common policy practices that apply to projects and law implementations are in place. Although improvements have been done and some NGOs tend to esteem a growing support and collaboration, the diversity is great.

Though all research sites have one or more learning centers that provide migrant children with education services; there are varieties amongst the provinces' public schools. In some areas public schools have Burmese students and are increasing the number each semester. Other public schools are still refusing to accept migrant children entirely.

5.1.1 Teachers

A factor that has been practised for the last two years in research site 1 is the teacher training provided by ESA. Staff from ESA educates teachers at learning centers, not only pedagogic teaching methods, but human rights and other issues pertaining the lives of the Burmese in Thailand. The teachers have to learn and adapt to different aspects to be properly equipped with the migrant children's interests in focus (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

It is influential and vital to supply more qualified teachers. Many Burmese and Thais that choose to work at a learning center, wanting to participate in helping the migrant children, are not qualified teachers (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012). Since the local government is offering this informal and alternative schooling, they are given a sort of education themselves, even though they might not have a teaching degree before starting work.

The children's complex and reoccurring hard living is being considered when the teachers are not only given facts of the circumstances but also knowledge of how to understand, handle and grasp issues that might come about;

“We want, and try, to teach them the importance of respect. Not only to be respected as an adult but that the children also deserve respect just because they are human beings. As a teacher we believe you will gain much more respect from your students if you start the school year by showing that you respect them. This will create self-confidence in the children, mutual understanding and a better school environment, we believe” (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

The study can embrace how crucial this demeanour is, for the children, their families and the teachers. The NGOs play, as the research has shown already, a meaningful role as an extended information channel. Migrant parents and Burmese communities will ask questions relevant to their situations; labour rights, health services and so on and so forth. Accordingly it is necessary to gain this type of information since many migrants are scared to question their employer or the authorities about which rights they are entitled too.

ESA and learning centers show respect towards migrants' hesitant and reserved character by contributing a safe environment to discuss their predicaments; and the children are given academic knowledge in an atmosphere of equality and human dignity.

According to the management at one NGO, the collaboration has seen vast improvements over the last two years, after the national law stated that all children are entitled to education. The public schools they are in contact with accept Burmese students, as long as their level of Thai language skills are proficient (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

So by emphasising Thai language skills, knowing that there are public schools willing to accept Burmese children, the NGOs have a more clear aim to work towards. The children would know about other Burmese already in a public school; a role model and achievement to strive for and not only a dream to admire.

A public school in research site 2 that has a significant number of Burmese students of all ages, has for many years now been cooperating with NGOs in the province. Since it is lack of expertise concerning Burmese migrant children amongst the teachers and staff, the NGO provides Burmese teachers for the public school (Public school teacher, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

Since they receive the common funding from the local government, the public school cannot afford to put extra money in educating their teachers further or hire more teachers; the NGO eases that burden. The result has been a contact person for the migrant parents that do not speak Thai, translation during parents meetings, and the youngest children have someone to turn to if necessary, without having to deal with language barriers. Another consequence is the knowledge that the Burmese teachers can bring to the Thai staff. Being a Burmese themselves they can talk about their own experience as a foreigner in Thailand; the possible obstacles and sense of not being part of the society².

²See example in Chapter 2.5.4 about Mexican students in USA

The teachers can also talk to the students about Burma and in one public school they have expanded the additional knowledge;

“We have got an ASEAN stamp on our school. That means that once a week we have a subject called ASEAN class. The vision is to bring the entire staff and all the children together and learn about Burma. The most fun part is the language session where Thai teachers, staff and students also learn to speak Burmese” (Public school teacher, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

Notwithstanding the data uncovered, it is a common problem with teachers without the right qualifications in the learning centers (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012). All the three provinces have insufficient staff and strive to acquire enough Thai teachers. Both the public schools and learning centers have to depend upon non-qualified people to teach the students. In this matter the knowledge flow is deprived and chances for the children to transfer to public schools are diminished.

At a learning center in research site 1 they struggle to get enough teachers to cover the number of students, so the older children have to look after the youngest (Teacher, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012); occasionally leading to misuse of responsibilities by the older children. It is difficult to give each child the attention it needs; and considering how vital personal attention is for children, not only as Burmese migrants with poor and difficult living situations, but as young individuals.

Also it appears to be an initiative deficiency from staff at public schools to demand of the parents that the children should not work during the school week and emphasise the significance of letting the children have their childhood and be fully focused on education.

For this, it is uttered a concern for the quality of the teachings, not only in the learning centers, but also in the public schools where there should be more Burmese teachers (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012) and the consequences it might have for the education system. More, at NGOs in research site 2, it is an issue

up for discussion at network meetings (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

Remarks

There are common issues of teacher shortage in all the provinces visited; additionally it is a lack of qualified personal teaching the students. However, in research site 1 it has been established collaborating teacher training provided for by the ESA where teachers at learning centers learn about the children's living situation, the importance of mutual respect and other relevant aspects of how to teach with quality and variety.

5.1.2 Learning Buildings

Lack of governmental funding cause inadequacy to the needs of the learning centers and the children, and it affects the quality of the teaching. The Burmese headmaster of a learning center has been in charge for 16 years. He reveals a struggle to survive as an education institution and simultaneously provide the children with not only basic schooling but quality teachings and healthy environment. Yet, after 16 years he still feels discriminated and judged;

“For 16 years I have been given promises from the government, but have yet to see any major changes. I am tired of fighting but I am more tired of listening to plans and projects said to be developed and then not given any reasons when they are not put into action. They keep talking the talk, instead of walking the walk” (Headmaster, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

A visit to the learning center revealed poor school environments. A one storey building where more than 200 students are studying at the same time with no physical separation between the classes. The students are aged from 3 to 17 years old with loud volume and an apparently chaotic situation. As a result of low roofing and overcrowding it has poor air quality. The learning centre staff gives the idea of

making every effort work, but one can question how much the children are actually learning and the maximum capacity of the current staff can seem to soon be reached.

With that being said there were other learning centers the research visited that had good conditions and a suitable environment for teaching the children. For those learning centers the economic support came from national and international funding. Moreover, at another learning center in research site 1 they had placed most of the classrooms in the same building as the NGO head office. There were clean and spacious rooms with proficient air quality and proper amount of students in each class (Learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

Remarks

Common for all the provinces is that the connecting NGO support the teaching facilities. There are no ESAs or other authority institution that provides buildings, etc. and the quality of the schools depends solely on the size of the NGO funding.

5.1.3 Health Services

Another aspect that should be covered to have full availability to education is health services. To fulfil the requirements there can not only be academic teachings. Medical attention and follow ups are just as important, and when referring to migrant children they are of vital substance. Many students come from poor families, often characterised by contaminated conditions at home, malnutrition and hygienic deficiency.

A NGO in research site 3 is providing social services to both poor Thai children and migrant children; and they can clearly see the diverse difficulties of gaining equal rights. The organisation hope to establish the same medical advantages as the poor Thai children the organisation provides for. While they have monthly visits from a doctor of a local clinic, support from a dentist and a good relationship with the hospital; the director has yet to receive any response on her request for a similar arrangement for the migrant children.

When an accident does occur and a Burmese child is injured;

“We have to arrange a fund raiser to collect the money needed. One of our Burmese children was in a traffic accident and was in desperate need for medical attention. After many hours on the phone we managed to collect the money needed to give him medicine. We do not have a long term health plan and have to handle every issue as it happens. It is stressful and not a suitable situation for neither the children nor us” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

For the NGOs in the two other provinces the cooperation with local health service is developing. Notwithstanding the study found that it is not due to achievements from authorities; no cooperation on any levels provided contact or other types of arrangements with local health clinics were discovered. Some of the learning centers are connected to big institutions with more equipment and a longer experience; a seemingly reoccurring and crucial connection for the work NGOs do.

The study discovered a factor of disparity in the size of the NGOs connected to the learning centers. One NGO in research site 1 has access to doctors since the organisation they work under has stationed a health clinic in the province, with the purpose of serving Burmese migrants and their families, hence; the students gain the privileges provided (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

The examples demonstrate the differences between provinces and institutions, along with the conditions to provide various services depends on diverse support and funding from the size and capacity of the connected NGOs. Conjointly it is a pattern

of absence from governmental activity to contribute to health services; neither by pushing policy procedures nor encourage equal treatment by health personnel.

Remarks

In research site 1 the responsible NGO provides health services for the students; this is the situation in research site 2 as well. The learning center in the third province visited has to collect money each time a student gets sick. Ergo; it is still a shortcoming in health support from the local authorities concerning migrant children in all the provinces.

5.1.4 Materials

The administration of school materials is a supply the learning centers themselves are in charge of. In research site 3 the Burmese teachers have been bringing books with them from travels to Burma. But the contribution has not been sustainable since it is not easy to gain access to educational materials, so currently the institution is dependent in the most on private donors (Manager, NGO, research site 3: Sep 28th 2011).

In research site 1 the curriculum collaboration network provides each learning center with one book for each subject. Then the teachers make copies of the books and give them to every student (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). At NGO 2 there are currently 20 students that are enrolled in a public school. To ease and speed up the process of admitting Burmese children, the NGO provides the schools with supplies each semester.

It seems that the urgent need for learning centers for migrant children positioned quantity ahead of quality, in previous years. But because of today's situation the learning centers have not, to their fullest potential, been able to follow the development and adjust the focus to the importance of proper teachings, tools and environment for the children. The development appears to have come to a halt.

It can be discussed who's responsibility it is that there are mixed qualities in the educational opportunities are provided. One can question if this is a result of government failure. Or have learning centers and NGOs been impatient in the process and development; causing a reluctant learning environment, unfinished planning and an easy blame on local authorities? Although one would only be speculating the answer, the study enhances the importance in viewing and analysing the entire picture and be cautious to choose a side and point fingers.

All the provinces have network meetings where NGOs and officials participate, to discuss issues and concerns that the learning centers as well as the officials might experience³. However, there appears to be little cooperation with local police and army.

Remarks

Concerning the availability in the three provinces visited there are some differences separating the areas. In research site 1 teacher training activities provided by the ESA have been practiced for 2 years already, which is only happening in this province. In research site 2 a NGO is providing a collaborating public school with a Burmese teacher to support both the other teachers, as well as the Burmese students.

³The paper will return to the discussion of network meetings in chapter 5.4

It is however a common issue in all the sites of teaching staff without teacher education, which hampers some of the quality and diversity the students should have. In addition lack of teachers is a problem; causing older children to take care of the younger ones, instead of focusing on their own development and receiving the adult attention they should have.

There are general low standards on the school buildings, but certain NGOs have bigger international funding, resulting in better conditions and quality in the teaching surroundings for the students and staff.

In research site 3 it is no support for health services for the Burmese students and whenever it is an crisis they need to have a fund raising. While in site 1 and 2 they have their own arrangement due to the size and means of the connecting NGOs; so they can provide basic health services for the children, and their parents.

The curriculum development collaboration in research site 1 provides quality material, while in research site 2 a public school is supported by a NGO with some teaching materials for the Burmese students. In research site 3 however, most of the material the learning center uses comes from donations and teachers' contributions from their trips to Burma.

5.2 Accessibility

According to UNHCR there should be a reasonable distance from a child's home to school (CESCR, 1999). Considering the length of travel to school is of importance for migrants especially because many families sense an insecurity travelling around the area alone. In addition there are some workers that are not allowed to move outside their workplace and it is a policy practice of curfew at night. By placing the school in either walking distance or close by, eases at least one aspect that amount to the many restrictions migrants have to live with.

5.2.1 Distance to School

The research has already established that learning centers are usually placed either in a Burmese community or close by. In one of the provinces the learning center is placed at the harbour since a large amount of migrant workers are settled there (NGO education coordinator, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011). In the two other sites there seem to be a similar pattern where the placement of the learning centers is a vital part in the matter of access and convenience for the children and their parents.

For one of the learning centers in research site 1 the location is placed with some distance from the children's home. It is a middle-class area with only Thai neighbours and the NGO head office is located on the same street. To compensate for the length of travel, the NGO provides transportation, free of charge, that each morning picks up the students and bring them back home in the afternoon (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). This transportation practice is also being used by the other learning center visited in the area, in addition to research site 2. Practices and expenses do vary, but most of the learning centers appear to be capable of providing free transport.

However; the offer of transportation is a costly expense for the learning centers. They have to pay for a driver, the gas and maintenance of the trucks. This can explain why some learning centers have to request payments from the migrants to be able to accommodate transportation. Pertaining the distance and likewise the effects it has on the possible costs for families; the study found that it is a significant difference between the travel for students enrolled in learning centers and the ones attending public schools.

A teacher at a public school in research site 2 explains that most of the migrant children live very far away. They have to pay between 300 and 700 baht each month and usually spend at least one hour travelling; in the morning and in the afternoon (Teacher, public school, research site 2: March 20th 2012).

Relating to the long distance from their home to school, in addition to the transportation costs, many parents feel that it is too much of a struggle and sacrifice enrolling their children in schools (Teacher, public school, research site 2: March 20th 2012). It gives the impression of requiring the children to adapt to the school; an arrangement that should be the contrary⁴.

The study esteems it is a lack of supportive cooperation from ESA concerning transportation; an activity that would be possible to provide. It is not attainable for all children to attend a school that is in a convenient distance, also the schools located close by are not always willing to accept them. Therefore one could question why ESA is not collaborating with local transportation or alike, an expense that could be low, for the children to easily and cost free travel to school.

⁴See chapter 5.4

However, there are some collaboration between NGOs and public schools. When the migrant children transfer from learning centers, the support of transportation continues. Each morning and afternoon the truck that brings students to the learning centers also stops at the public schools. This is an arrangement that has been sustained since Burmese children started enrolling in public schools (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb – March 2012).

The study apprehends that the contribution of transportation serves as an essential factor to ease the switch from learning center to public school for the children. They can see their friends during the day, it is familiar and safe; sustains in a changing and intimidating every day.

Remarks

It is similar for all the learning centers that they place their school facilities close to the Burma homes; and the ones that do have a certain distance to travel will be provided for with school buses both mornings and in the evenings.

The students transferring to public schools can still use the transportation the NGOs assist with. There are however quite a few students in both research site 1 and 2 that have to spend at least an hour to and from their public schools each day.

5.2.2 Affordable Payments

The second factor that should be covered to attain full accessibility is “affordable payments” (CESCR 1999). On the one side it needs to be a discussion of the expenses the migrant children and their parents have; in coherence with the budget and means the learning centers and public schools have. It can only be demonstrated shortcomings and possible adjustments that should be made to make it

more affordable for not only the migrant families to send their children to school; additionally readjustments local governments can provide to make the most out of the education budget.

At the first learning center in research site 1 a child has to pay 30 baht a month. But if there are siblings the price reduces and the learning center takes 50 baht for two children and 100 baht for three children;

“But we do occasionally have children that come to us and cannot pay the fee. Some of the children's parents might be out on a boat and cannot pay before they are back. Others are prevented from receiving a salary each month. But we also have the children that simply cannot afford to pay. In any case we make an arrangement for them to pay when they have the money. We do not deny any child to attend school, even though they cannot pay” (Teacher, learning center, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

Every learning center the study visited had their own regulations concerning school fees and payments. One could opine that this is a natural cause of having a budget set by others. The research presumes the pattern of size of the supporting NGO to be valid also for this factor.

A risk by being dependent upon outside and often international funding is first the tendency of insecurity and short time planning available because the economic support is given once a year and might be varying. The second factor that has been evident just the last years lies in diminishing international interest in social aid support to Thailand. Due to economic growth the public eye has started to turn its attention to Burma; a country in strong transformation and seemingly more attractive for NGOs (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

Though there are complex and considerable needs to be taken care of, the situation for Burmese migrant children is still widely apprehensive and NGOs fear the concern of disappearing funding. Conjointly there are promises from government and improved laws that misleadingly give the impression of a rapid and evolving

policy practice in the Thai education system (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012)⁵.

Since there are only certain schools that are willing to accept Burmese students they are usually placed in the peripheral parts of the province. Schools that are located close to for example rubber plantations, far away from settlements; seem to be more accepting of the Burmese students. The result is that they will have a long way to school, as previous example demonstrated, hence; the costs for the family is increasing and the time children spend away from home rises conjointly.

Yet again one can draw the impression that complications with reference to covering children's access to quality schooling is hampered by missing governmental support. Poor school environments, lack of books, materials and qualified teachers are some of the results said to come from funding shortages. In addition there are insufficient food supplies to provide the children with lunch at school.

Nevertheless, the study suspects the reality to be more diverse. Taken into account all the learning centers in each province, with different knowledge, capacity and means, one could imply that it is additionally a lack of willingness amongst the informal school system to enhance cooperation between NGOs. There are arguments opining that by merging or dividing responsibilities between learning centers could diminish the distinctive vision for each NGO.

Regardless, the research perceives that an evolving NGO collaboration will in the long run benefit the children, while at the same time efficiently spending of budgets and equipment at each learning center. Reported by an official it is no

⁵Conversations with NGO headquarters in Bangkok that provides funding to provinces in the south imply planned reductions and even full stop in future economic support after MOE has given promises to increase their support to learning centers.

earmarked money in the ESA budget to supply learning centers in any economical way;

“As long as learning centers are not standardised they will not receive any funding from us” (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

But at the same time the grant of standardisation has to come from ESA. This issue arrays a predicament of substance that appears to be trapped in a bad circle. It is clear that the point in question has the qualities of a political framework and the power to change lies within ESA and Ministry of Education (MOE).

Remarks

The data collected reveals varied fees and payments that the learning centers require of their students. One learning center in research site 1 requires 30 baht per student per month, but with a discount if there are siblings in the same learning center. For the other learning centers it is usually a small fee for transportation only; except in research site 3 where there are no charges.

A similarity for all the provinces is the aspect of no financial support from the authorities. Their capacities and size of budget depends fully on NGO funding and donations; and reflects in what they can offer their Burmese students.

5.2.3 Discrimination Against Migrant Children

The last aspect to be contemplated to achieve total accessibility to education is relating to the matter of discrimination (CESCR 1999). This factor is an issue of attitudes and behaviour; a more abstract part of society compared to previous subjects.

The study finds it important to emphasise that perspectives can be perceived in different angles, regarding diverse frameworks and starting points. Therefore it needs to be taken into consideration when presenting and analysing data about discriminating behaviour and attitudes; while keeping in mind the definition of discrimination;

“The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age or sex” (Oxford Dictionaries).

As described earlier by Castles and Miller, it is a common attitude that with migrants emerge national security concerns (Castles and Miller, 1998: 32). As arrayed in the previous chapter there are official instances in Thai society that believe Burmese are not entitled to education with reason in the threat they put upon the country⁶. This is used as justifying explanations for the exclusion and exploitation executed.

According to the deputy mayor in research site 3 there are cultural differences between Thailand and Burma that bring about difficulties for the teachers, to accommodate Burmese students;

“Public schools do not get extra funding when admitting Burmese children. This makes it challenging for our staff when they eat different food and have distinctive customs. When our teachers do not know their culture and the children do not like Thai food, it creates complications. We need funding and means to be able to adjust and gain knowledge” (Deputy Mayor, research site 3: April 3rd 2012).

Even if one were to define these matters as excuses, they are reasons given to not accept Burmese migrant children into public schools. Conjointly are the language barriers that are presented as a concern. In all three provinces the public schools that do not admit these children use the issue of language as explanation for their actions. This is even the case without having given them an oral and written test first.

⁶See under the development of the NGOs in chapter 4

Castles and Miller further explain this as a way to “preserve myths of a static culture and a homogeneous identity” (Castles and Miller, 1998: 29). When additional excuses of not having Thai nationality (Deputy Mayor, research site 3: April 3rd 2012) are being presented, one can question if the institutions in force do not realise they are breaking the law; or if it is a genuine sincerity for the concern of the children.

The study can apprehend that not being able to follow the classes since the language can be a reasonable concern. Yet there are not any justifying factors in not providing migrant children with a diploma when graduating “because they hold an ID card starting with zero” (Deputy Mayor, research site 3: April 3rd 2012). By refusing a child many years of education and stimulation just because the future does not seem so prosperous for migrants, is an argument the study views as without substance.

In addition to language difficulties, NGO management in research site 1 cites bad behaviour and concentration problems in the classroom as common reasons why public schools are hesitant to enrol Burmese children;

“If the child learns quickly at the public school, they can stay. But if the teacher observes that the child has difficulties following the subjects; the student will be asked to leave” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 24th 2012).

To use concentration or learning disabilities as reasons to be kicked out of school resemble unequal treatment of Burmese and Thai children. Despite the fact that if a child has any sort of difficulties in a school environment one would expect the teachers and staff to look into the cause. The matter of nationality or social status should not be a determining factor for a student's struggle for achievements; rather a factor for the school staff to find means to help them reach the same levels as their peers. The study finds it a peculiar excuse since research reveal that Burmese children in public schools tend to achieve over average grades, and their academic level tends

to rise above the Thais, as soon as their language skills are proficient (Management, NGOs, research site 1 and 2: Feb – March 2012).

Other factors the public schools use as arguments to not accept the children are concern for language barriers and possible conflicts with the Thai students (NGO director, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011). To explain the many reasons provided by the public schools only as pretences would be too easy; rather the current issue lies in shortcomings in awareness and policy practices.

The study believes there can only be so much responsibility put upon the education system without regarding the role of MOE and ESA. These institutions are supposed to be the power of information, administration and implement policy practices and law regulations. Without pressure and demands from governmental level the public schools can carry on the way that suits them the best;

“The public schools know the new law and are fully aware of the situation. But they rather choose to be ignorant. As long as the local government do not put pressure on the schools or execute reprimands towards the education institutions that do not implement the law, they are free to continue their practices” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

When interviewing the deputy mayor, as previously unfolded, he answers that most migrant children are sent back to Burma to attend school, or they do not want to study at all. Next he replies that there are no proper means to accommodate migrant children in their schools since MOE in Bangkok do not provide them with enough funding (Deputy Mayor, research site 3: April 3rd 201).

The research considers this as a conflict of interest in play. This assumption is backed up by both a NGO manager;

“After years of working here we have realised that not much is being done without knowing the right people. We need contacts high up in the system. The collaboration has not improved, but now we have more relations and communication with important people” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

An ESA official from research site 1 illustrates the province current situation;

“It is a common issue in Thailand concerning corruption and sadly is also the education sector affected by this. It is a division inside the department. On the one side you have the ones truly working to improve the migrants’ rights and are willing to implement laws and regulations. On the other side there are people really working against the Burmese gaining their entitled rights. In addition are the ones willing to be bought to close their eyes, or not interested in helping certain groups of people because it is no personal profit” (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

The study met an official from research site 1 that mainly works with curriculum development and teacher training for learning centers. He has the impression that Thai teachers in learning centers only half-heartedly support and help migrant children. He notices a hierarchy issue towards the Burmese teachers, in addition to occasional attitudes against the children (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012). The management of a NGO, on the other hand, apprehends that the teachers at public schools want the Burmese students there;

“The teachers are really trying to include all children and talk about that being different is not bad” (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012).

The study perceives that this is variable and rather a personal decision from each teacher's perspective and not a conscious general school policy. This comes from the discrepancy in experiences learning centers have encountered.

The NGO 1 manager puts forth that there are some bullying occurring at public schools, where Thai students attack the Burmese students; and that this probably originates as a result of being the “new kid” in addition to the fact that they are Burmese (Manager, NGO, research site 1: Feb 28th 2012). On the one side children do “take after” their parents and the general surroundings. If they are affected by a lot of negative perceptions, this might be the foundation for bullying and disfavor the migrant students.

However; children adapt easily and are less critical than adults, in general. Playing in the school yard, common hobbies and interests are more relevant than nationalities, religion and ethnicity when getting school friends, for most young children (Headmaster, learning center, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

Hence; adult role models, teachers, parents and others, have a responsibility towards children. Their visions and beliefs will be reflected upon by the next generation and they have to consider how they want their children to perceive the society they live in. By enforcing certain traditions and cultural behaviour to sustain what they believe are important aspects in their family's life. To dictate attitudes and opinions however, can lead to inequalities and "old-fashioned" hierarchy.

Remarks

Generally, all the learning centers visited have located themselves in an accessible distance for the students. And for the ones living further away, the learning centers provide transportation both to and from the homes each day.

For the students at public schools, most of them have a long way to travel and they can spend up to 700 baht each month and hours on a bus to get to school every day. Opposite to the expenses a student would have to pay at a public school, most of the learning centers offer free transportation, or a small amount to pay for the gas and the driver.

Discrimination does occur in all provinces. Children are denied enrolment in public schools by claims of cultural diversity and language struggles making it impossible for Burmese children to perform. These reasons are common throughout the provinces; though there are acknowledged some improvements in awareness and recognition in research site 1 and 2.

5.3 Acceptability

At school institutions the students should be taught subjects and discourses that are relevant and have suitable frameworks; together with the content holding a respectable quality (CESCR, 1999). In another respect there should be a variation in topics and angles to cover the requirements for an acceptable curriculum, hence; provide students with the leading foundation of knowledge to foster a critical and multifaceted mind-set.

Leading in to this section it is relevant to point out that the curriculum that the NGOs initially teach at their learning centers are not approved from the Ministry of Education; hence, it is not a standardised learning material.

In research site 1 the local ESA and NGOs, combined, cultivate curriculum for the learning centers to be as similar to the official Thai curriculum as possible, and also uphold the quality for what the children are learning (Management, NGOs, research site 1: Feb – March 2012). This is an activity that has been going on for two years and has the aim to improve the Burmese children's possibilities to enter public schools. For one it is a requirement from public schools, additionally it prepares the children to study in a Thai environment.

As mentioned earlier, teacher training is provided by ESA⁷ (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012). To give the teachers a base to build around all the topics taught, what the study observes is key for the students to receive relevant and suitable curriculum. In view of the learning centres' and the children's surroundings it is influential to colour the school days with equality and respect. It serves as a good reason why Burmese migrant children should go to school and the difference they can put upon their futures by being educated.

⁷See chapter 5.2 for more details

It has already been reflected upon the stigmatisation and marginalisation migrants often experience. The study anticipates it can bring children to question the purpose of attending school, when they are told they will follow their parents' life path. At the same time they see what is happening around them in their communities relating to child labour, exploitation and discrimination.

So even though the curriculum at the learning centers is academic mathematics, languages, computer, exercise and science one can assume that the teachers give the impression of genuinely working for the children to learn and flourish as individuals.

For the Burmese students planning to attend public school, ESA in research site 1 holds language courses during the school breaks. Furthermore ESA is in charge of collecting the numbers of students that have the required knowledge to transfer to public schools, at the end of each school year;

“And we are in contact with about 10 different schools in the province and had last year 75 Burmese students in public schools” (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

All learning centers have as a goal to improve and flourish the children's Thai language skills. It is the most vital academic teachings they believe they can provide; however the goal is hampered by Thai teacher deficiency⁸. By being a learning center and not a standardised school, the NGOs can offer the children language classes in Burmese, something that is important for their parents and also they learn a lot about their country of origin; though they would like to have even more emphasis on Thai skills.

⁸See chapter 5.1

The Burmese teachers at NGO 4 have brought books from Burma and this is something that is important for the parents (NGO education coordinator, research site 3: date). Since they usually would like their children to go back to Burma for school, the organisation provides some of the education they might have gotten back home. This makes it more desirable for the parents to not send their children back home and rather use the supply in Thailand.

The organisation stresses the fact that they want the children to be exposed for information and knowledge – empower them for whatever the future might bring. Combined with possibilities for some basic computer skills teachings, languages and not at least compassion, responsibilities, discipline and structure; the organisation's goal for the present time being is to provide the children with a sense of belonging to the society they live in (NGO director, research site 3: Oct 5th 2011).

This demonstrates the difference that separates the first two research sites from the last one. The NGO in research site 3 seem to be first and foremost thinking about the children in the current times, since it is little hope, for the time being, getting the Burmese students into public school. While in the two other research provinces they can prepare the children in view of several public schools are willing to enrol them. Actions and practices at public schools imply to be the leading cause to how learning centers choose to teach the children.

None of the learning centers have history as part of their curriculum. Responding to the question why, teachers and headmaster explain the intricate and sensitive matter of teaching this subject (NGO education coordinator, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

The study anticipates that it can be too difficult to adjust the history subject to the children's situation. Considering that the wars between Thailand and Burma are said to be taught in a unilateral matter that maintain negative attitudes amongst

young Thais⁹. Lately critics have spoken up about a pressing need to rewrite this part in the Thai history curriculum.

Taken into account one can understand the dilemma and difficult situation it puts learning centers in. On the other side the study questions if it is right to rather silence an aspect of the children's background. Especially when it can explain certain behaviours they experience from Thais; that Thai children learn this part in public schools. It is a crucial issue to elaborate upon but for this study it will not be analysed furthermore.

The general attitude at most of the learning centers is the importance of teaching language; Burmese since the children speak the language at home and will be better equipped if they go back to Burma, and Thai to prepare the children to possibly attend public school; making future living and working in Thailand less troublesome and more prosperous. Some centers follow the official Thai curriculum with additional language classes, whilst others adapt the curriculum to the students' needs and the complex living situations the children have to cope with.

Remarks

In research site 1 one could claim that the acceptability is advancing and expanding with the curriculum cooperation between the ESA and NGOs. It is the only material out of the three provinces that is the closest to the standardised public school curriculum. The two other research sites focus their teachings on mostly language skills and vocational training.

Reflecting upon the adjustments made through curriculum collaboration, the study assumes relevant and quality it is present. Factors like lack of teachers and the issue of history puts a halt on the variation of subjects and short comings in language

⁹A conversation with Burmese in one of the provinces tells about children fighting after seeing movies at school about the wars.

development for the children. Anyhow, will and good intentions for a suitable curriculum is existing; important qualities for future advancement. Further it is an vital factor that through this collaboration the teaching materials in learning centers will be similar to the standardised curriculum in public schools. The Burmese students will achieve just as good a knowledge as their Thai peers in pursuing future studies and the learning centers' contribution to the education services could be even more prosperous.

5.4 Adaptability

The fourth and last criterion to provide children with the most suitable educational opportunities is a system regulated after the students' needs (CESCR, 1999). A child should not have to change and have sacrifices to be able to attend school. Instead the ones offering education should make adaptations; make it desirable and not at least attainable for children to become a student and gain knowledge (CESCR, 1999).

5.4.1 Adapting to the Needs of the Children

The school system needs to keep in mind that no society is static, hence; teachers, curriculum and additional factors that amount to the education provided should follow the changes and continue advancing in accordance with society (CESCR, 1999).

A matter ESA has discovered is that when migrant children are on their holiday breaks for so long and return to school, it is often necessary to retest their language levels. Not speaking enough Thai outside school, they tend to lose continuity, progress and advancement (ESA official, research site 3: March 2nd 2012). ESA proffer awareness of the situation, by providing language classes during the summer holiday and trying to adapt after the children's needs.

At present time there are 4 public schools that are accepting Burmese students from a particular NGO and there are close collaboration between three of the schools and the learning centers. When the child is admitted to the school, the NGO arrange an agreement to give the Burmese students documents, in case the family has to move for work in another province. This is intended to make it easier for the child to keep studying, whilst travelling (NGO education coordinator, research site 2: March 19th 2012). The study assumes that this demonstrates the recognition of the Burmese children's living situation. Both NGOs and public schools mount an understanding for migrants having to move around and dispense a means for the students to continue studying where ever their parents might have a job contract.

As analysed previously, it is an issue concerning distance to school and high transportation costs for many students. In light of adaptation it can be argued that it is a lack of flexibility resulting in children's long travels and high expenses. On the one side it is a fact that many public schools that have room for migrant children are located far away from communities. On the other hand one could suspect that certain institutions are unwilling to follow policies and intractable to adjust to the changing system; contrary to what education institutions should be granting. It could be blamed on the schools or on the local authorities for not enforcing policy implementations enough.

Remarks

The study considers this aspect is one of the most important ones to cover in the process of improving the migrant children's rights. Furthermore the study believes it is due to lack of will to adjust to the children's needs is exactly the reason for the poor educational opportunities for Burmese children in Thailand.

The study did not find any particularly prosperous aspect for the future that focuses on adapting the conditions after the children other than the one public school in research site 2 that gives their students documentation of school admission in case they were to move location.

The difference between studying at a learning center and a public school, for a migrant child, can be in the lack of support system at public schools. As previously shown, NGOs put a lot of effort in caring and helping the children in their everyday lives. Contradictory to what international laws state, the schools do not adjust in accordance with the needs of the students, and do not take into account their difficult living situations.

5.4.2 Flexibility

After years of supporting Burmese children with education, the NGO in research site 2 has found their way of effectuating the educational opportunities for migrant children, contrary to what is present in other areas;

“It is better to cooperate with public schools, to put pressure on governments. Public schools know more about the current situation” (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

A result of this flourishing relationship benefits the children in the long run;

“We had a Burmese student at one of our learning centers that really liked making food. He was doing well in school and improving his Thai language skills but there was only so much we could do for his interest. So we contacted a local vocational center and today he works as a chef at a 5 star hotel in the province” (Educational coordinator, NGO, research site 2: March 19th 2012).

When local governments are changing after elections, the NGO has to establish new relationships and again has to start the process of being heard and acknowledged (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012). Continuity and progress are difficult aspects to uphold when it appears to be more important building relations, instead of having tangible plans in the system, to pursue the cultivation and advancement of Burmese migrant children's entitled rights.

All the NGOs experience “a lot of talk and promises and little action” from the local authority's side, and even though the cooperation has improved, the NGOs apprehend they have been waiting for many aspects to improve and projects to develop without getting any reasons why these are postponed or yet to be fostered. Complications with providing continuity in policy practices cause promises being made without then being accomplished. On the one side activities and programmes are said to be prospering. This resembles a will and interest of wanting to contribute to the job done by learning centers and improves the conditions for Burmese children.

Anyhow, the end result of planned projects appears to be lacking. This brings up another point in question; lack of will to adjust to the situation and fully grasp the pressing importance of getting children into schools. As mentioned earlier, there occurs discriminating behaviour against Burmese migrants and it can be argued that negative attitudes could be the cause for not completing and implementing certain promises.

One viewpoint creating obstacles are reoccurring discussions of national security. Authorities claiming that learning centers for Burmese children use their premises to distribute drugs, gambling and provide teachings that are harmful for the nation state (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012). Even though the deputy mayor in research site 3 believes a growing acceptance towards the Burmese;

“Because here we have welcomed a lot of new migrant workers from Bangladesh and Cambodia, we feel more alike the Burmese. They dress like us and they are Buddhists; while a lot of crime is committed by the Cambodians and the culture difference with Bangladesh is considerable” (Deputy Mayor, research site 3: April 3rd 2012).

This could be seen as a discrimination issue but the study believes attitudes and behaviour of this type can be explained as stereotypes and misplaced fear as a result of lack of awareness and knowledge. It is evidence of improving conditions for the Burmese migrants. Police and society have become more accepting over the last years. The research suspects growing awareness and a natural interaction has been developed; factor of substance that over time decreases misconception and mutual respect evolves.

An activity that suggests being similar for all three provinces are network meetings being held during the year. ESA is the institution that arranges the network meetings amongst the NGOs in each province. At present time there have been arranged three network meetings, where the sub-director of ESA is the chairman; and leaders and teachers from NGOs are invited (Management, NGOs, research site 1-3: Sep 2011 – April 2012).

The attendants discuss various topics concerning migrants and education; both issues and improvements. They share knowledge, experience and try to solve problems occurring. The last network meeting in research site 1 concerned a rumour of a new law stating that learning centers can be standardised; a prerequisite for the NGOs to be able to give their students a valid diploma; beside receiving funding from the local government (Manager, NGO, research site 1: March 1st 2012).

In spite of the similarity of having network meetings, there are some differences in regard to people invited and showing up. Where in research site 3 there would be representatives from ESA, NGOs and maybe social services; in research site 2 they have invited police, health personnel, etc. (Manager, NGO, research site 2: March 16th 2012).

In research site 1 they did invite the chief of the province's army;

“But the meeting got quickly very tense. Due to the sensitive topic migration is, the discussion got heated, some started asking personal questions to the general about him and the rights he wanted his children to have, and rapidly the meeting grown to a halt” (ESA official, research site 1: March 2nd 2012).

The idea of network meetings can be seen as a huge step in the development and advancement of collaboration. By arranging a set meeting with ESA and NGOs in the province, in addition to inviting other institutions, an environment has been made for valuable and essential discussions. Ad hoc meetings and talking to one institution and then referring with another one; this can be time consuming and troublesome to accomplish.

Alternatively there are pre-planned meetings where known influential representatives will be present and questions or information can be elaborated on a larger scale; the outcome can be substantial since all involved can speak their mind inside the same frames. On the other hand, since the practises seem to be executed in various ways; there are discrepancies in the network meetings; resulting in rather negative influence for the results and inequality between the different provinces.

Where in research site 1 it is a growing relationship with ESA, any collaboration with public schools appears to still be at a standstill. In research site 2 the cooperation with public schools is evolving each school term and the NGOs rather work with schools than ESA regarding their experience.

In research site 3 it is seemingly a total lack of any sort of collaboration. By completion of the study's analysis the NGO director informed that the monthly network meeting in the province has been cancelled;

“Without any reasons given or information for when it might eventually start up again” (Manager, NGO, research site 3: June 4th 2012).

What this data has displayed are improvements and advancement in certain factors relating to educational opportunities for Burmese migrant children. There are traces of increased awareness and not least an understanding of the pressing need to prosper the children's rights.

Nevertheless, the inconsistency and lack of progress is vast; inside the provinces and between the three research sites. The policy practices seem to be decided after the different attitudes inside each ESA; making the situation confusing and unstable; at the same time as government changes keep putting a limit to the process of projects and planned activities.

Sufficient development has been achieved amongst some public schools, while others still refuse to enrol Burmese migrant students. To state that all children receive the rights they are entitled to is wrong. Nonetheless there are some areas where many of the rights are covered and children are protected, hence; no a straight answer, rather a multifaceted situation where all factors are of importance. One could opine that in certain areas the rights are partly protected and in other areas it is still a long way to go. Yet, there are noteworthy changes happening compared to previous years, with a growing awareness of the situation, hence; the children will be.

Remarks

In research site 1 the local ESA arrange language level retests since they are aware that many students do not speak Thai during their holidays. In site 2 there are some public schools that, in cooperation with a NGO, provide documents for the

Burmese students so in case they and their families have to for example move to another working site during the semester. Then the children can more easily continue their studies at another public school and not have to start all over again with language tests, etc.

Through the network meetings in all three provinces¹⁰ the NGOs, public schools and ESAs can deliberate various issues and challenges. This arrangement can expand the problem solutions and advance the opportunities to respond and ease the lives of the Burmese children.

From the findings during the research it can be found growing and expanding collaboration between the three institutions; NGOs, public schools and local authorities. The continuing network meetings might be seen as the most significant factor of working closely together to improve the educational opportunities for migrant children. Further the teaching training and curriculum development in research site 1 are valuable cooperation between ESA and NGOs.

However there are weaknesses in the progress and cultivation of the conditions for Burmese children to access education. The findings reveal that all the three provinces have defects when referring to the four A's framework.

¹⁰The network meetings in research site 3 were stopped without any explanations or a plan for when they would start up again at the time of fulfillment of this thesis

Chapter VI

CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary of Findings

This paper has touched upon a variety of topics and the study observes this to be necessary to answer the research questions. A child's education and future are incorporated into social, economic and political factors. By using these three factors this thesis has been able to analyse **how** children gain access to education, **why** they are refused educational opportunities, **where** it is possible to attend school, **when** the policy practices were set into play, **who** is responsible for providing and refusing migrant children schooling and **which** institutions are in **what** way part of providing Burmese migrant children with educational opportunities in Thailand.

To answer objective I, referring to the current situation for Burmese migrant children in Thailand, the author has stated that seeking a job and a stable income is a present reason for the migration from Burma to Thailand. Yet, networks and family are of substantial importance for migration amongst the Burmese in the three research sites and a result is the amount of young migrant children. Despite the numerous definitions and categories; a working migrant, stateless or illegal immigrant; they are all children that require care, security and human rights.

Migration is a multifaceted phenomenon and the issue of national security has been a frontrunner for many years. One could remark that the social aspects for the migrants themselves, in Thailand, have only become a part of the agenda the last years.

Some would claim it is rather from the typical D-jobs migrants usually have; fishing, plantation, construction, etc., that makes it difficult to integrate. That these types of labour naturally lead to separation from everyday life because they spend most of their time on a boat, moving from one construction site to another one or living on a rubber plantation.

But this study opines, after collecting data and carrying out analysis that a rather one-sided migration perspective has led to isolation and exclusion for many Burmese in Thai society. That perception of history between the two countries and lack of awareness has laid the path for exploitation and exclusion.

Migration, as expressed by Castles and Miller; "depends on constant interaction with the state and the various institutions and groups in the country of immigration" (Castles and Miller, 1998: 37), hence; there are only so much the Burmese themselves can do without receiving understanding and respect from the Thais.

To be capable to be empowered and advance as part of a society one needs safety, carers and nourishment. Children of Burmese migrants are vulnerable individuals in these circumstances and the outcomes can be severe. When human rights are diminished children are prevented from entitled tools to evolve as strong individuals and become responsible in self-development, in addition to participate and to have a countable involvement in society.

The paper has reflected upon the domestic issues that do occur amongst migrant households; a result of struggles and constant worries for the future. It seems like many Burmese are unhappy, and the children notice this, both mentally and physically. They feel uncomfortable at school since they "should" be working for the livelihood of the family. While at home they can be exposed to drugs and alcohol and physical abuse by and between parents.

Though the situation for migrants has been a considerable burden over the years, there have been improvements and prosperity. Thailand has ratified international and regional human rights' laws and cultivated their own regulations to incorporate the rights of migrants, hence; making the Thai government responsible to delegate, enforce and follow up projects, activities and regulations.

Inadequate access to social participation for Burmese families has been the growth for NGOs in Thailand. They have provided migrants with health services, security and someone fighting to cultivate their livelihoods. One could convey NGOs have put pressure on governments, but just as much offered their knowledge and experience in how to accommodate migrants while at the same time not perceive that they are depreciating their own culture and national security. Contemplating the migrant children in this development has crucial outcomes, not only for the current present, but the future as well. An essential factor has been the learning centers established by NGOs around the country.

Each province this research has visited has at least one learning center that is providing Burmese migrant children with educational opportunities; some provinces have 13 different learning centers under different NGOs. There are classes for the ages of 3 years old up to 17 years old. There are no learning centers that have been standardised from local governments; nonetheless the NGOs provide kindergarten, elementary school and what is called vocational or adult school for the older children. Even though each province has learning centers, there are some differences in the length of experience and development and main focus of the teachings.

Most of the children at the learning centers are born in Thailand and they feel Thailand their home country. The learning centers are still trying to find a middle path between the parents' wish of sustaining their Burmese heritage, the children's

sense of being Thai and the reality that most of the children might be living in Thailand their entire life.

Where some learning centers choose to teach Burmese, Thai and English language from early age, in addition to other topics, might create confusion and too big a work load for the children; something that none of the learning centers seems to take into account. One NGO teaches all their classes in Burmese, making it very difficult for the students to be able to attend public schools and also to integrate into society.

When older children attend the learning centers it is mostly common to take a language test in Thai and then put them in the proper grade. It is usual that older children attend classes with much younger children. While the ones that have been enrolled in learning centers since kindergarten, tend to stay in the “right” level for their age.

The second objective this thesis analysed were the different roles NGOs play in the Burmese migrant children’ lives. A noteworthy role the NGOs have is that most of the NGOs do not require any legal documents for the children to attend learning centers. The advantages the NGOs have are the multiple areas they cover, through their own visions for the work the organisation is doing, without being held up by regulations and restrictions.

Through all the three provinces the organisations see themselves as first and foremost caretakers. They provide safety for the children, away from exploitation and dangerous situations while the parents are working.

NGOs also put a lot of emphasis on teaching social and practical skills; discipline and structure, by giving the children responsibilities and chores; and teaching them about the importance of mutual respect, accepting differences and that action will have consequences. This part of the civil society presumes that this knowledge is just as important as academic teaching, especially considering most of the children's difficult and at times hard living situations and reoccurring alcohol abuse and violence at home.

It is certainly a common theme that each province has NGOs being the voice for Burmese children and their families; a link between authorities, community and locals. NGOs regard more than just teaching a standardised curriculum to the children when educating them. They try to solve domestic issues that for many children seems to be reoccurring problems and halting the child's development and learning process; and life aspects as behaviour, understanding and practical skills. Often the migrant children have to move around with their family, not staying too long in one area and this of course makes the NGOs' work more complex.

It is vital to anticipate that the role the learning centers have. The extended caring for the students, more consideration of their difficult living situation in being Burmese, migrants and often very poor, in addition to domestic issues; are all factors that compiles in the efforts of the NGOs.

Yet, one could argue that this is exactly the role NGOs should have; being independent, not having to follow a standardised plan and acting as a protector and care taker of children in weak positions. Notwithstanding, the research recognises the remarkable job NGOs are doing, all things considered, incorporating so many different working fields in such a complex and intricate environment.

For the last objective the study used the Four A's to examine possible collaboration between public schools, local authorities and NGOs. Through research and analysis there have been revealed that for example NGOs provide transportation to and from public school, they offer additional language classes in the afternoon in both Thai and Burmese; and they try to support the parents at school meetings. There are personnel from NGOs that each week visits the different public schools to help both the children and the teachers with difficulties they might have.

Preliminary the thesis stated the Four A's as a guideline to reveal the educational opportunities provided for Burmese children in the three provinces. After analysing the findings the study concludes that for the overall picture the Four A's are only partly covered for; since the collaboration between the institutions have been perceived by the study to be rather weak. So a lot of the coverage of the Four A's is mostly a result of the participation of NGOs.

In research site 1 it was settled that the teacher training, curriculum development and network meetings are major strengths for the current, and not at least future, educational opportunities and cooperation to improve the lives of Burmese children and students. Through these three activities one can say that there are at least some form of coverage for availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. Yet it should be remembered that the Burmese children are still denied full access to health and other social services, discrimination and exclusion are still issues of significance; and most of the opportunities are provided for by the NGOs alone.

Though the network meetings are present in research site 2 as well, it is not as good a cover for the Four A's as in research site 1. The quality and quantity of the network meetings are satisfactory and still in development. But the curriculum has

yet to reach a sufficient level where the standards meet those of the public schools; and there are fewer schools admitting Burmese students than in research site 1.

In research site 3 it seems to be a bigger deficiency in covering the Four A's than the two other provinces. The learning center visited gives the impression of standing all alone in providing the Burmese children with educational opportunities. They supply their teachings with materials from gifts and donations, they have fund raising to provide medical care and been told to stay rather quiet with their work to not face any difficulties with authorities. While interviewing a headmaster of a public school it was no recognition of Burmese children in need education and no form of information from the local government.

Also the interviews conducted with the Deputy Mayor resembles, not only failing awareness, but a lack of willingness to realise the situation and adapt and adjust the conditions for the Burmese children. The network meetings that were established for a couple of years have now been deduced without further notice of restarting the activity.

To sum up the general cover of the Four A's in the three provinces visited the study conclude that there are too many faults and shortcomings present in the educational opportunities provided Burmese children. Both research site 2 and research site 3 lack proficient teaching materials and properly educated teachers. In general the reasons for these factors, in addition to continuous discrimination and weak coverage of all the Four A's comes from little cooperation and inadequate communication and information flow.

The NGOs notice they are more accepted and recognised today, from both authorities and public schools, and the learning centers that are cooperating with public schools see a growing interest and improved relationship. Even though certain

learning centers are of the opinion that some public schools accept the children because they have to, and then let them go after a while; blaming their language skills or class behaviour.

Network meetings in each province imply to be a success and constantly in development, one can wonder why this initiative cannot be expanded to incorporate issues with army and police, and also to better implement policies and create more awareness of the importance of providing all children with education.

6.2 Discussion

Theories and conceptual frameworks were discussed in chapter two and put into place. Throughout conducting research for this paper, data have been presented that are both supporting and differing from previous studies and theories.

The initiative for the growing focus on education amongst state governments is the EFA movement put forth by UNESCO. Thailand has taken responsibility to create factors for improving the education services in their country. The Thai state has delegated certain education decisions to different ESAs, relieving the work load for the Ministry of Education and should make the tasks lucid and more treatable.

The study has however, discovered a rather shallow and floating movement that seem to not be fully spread out in the provinces; and the core of the agreement is not met. It conveys the impression like the ratification of the movement was more of an act to achieve goodwill from the international arena, than to actually adapt the education

system and advance the education services to the people. None of the interviewees had heard about the project based on the EFA movement put forth by ASEAN; and they had also no personal experience of projects or activities being arranged due to the goal of education for all by 2015.

It can be argued that to sign the EFA movement is a step in the right direction, yet this study understands that a full commitment need to be in place since it is only 3 years left before the goal should be met. With a signature comes responsibility and a duty to implement the vision in policies and decision-making; the study does not recognise this in the provinces visited.

Castles and Miller's explanation of reasons to migrate do to some extent support the reality of the Burmese migrants in Thailand today. The "push-pull theories" understand seeking a better life somewhere else, in addition to available opportunities in another area or another country as pressing reasons to move. Yet the theorists also believe that decisions to migrate are collective agreements made by families, networks or communities.

The data collected from the different provinces show that these assumptions do fit with the reality of many Burmese migrants. The long tradition of seeking work in Thailand, since it has been a lack of opportunities in Burma, has led to a flow of individuals moving into Thai provinces. As they start settling down in Thailand, their family members have been coming after to join them. In addition there are Thai employers that travel to Burma and offer people work and a place to live. Some do then agree with their family to go and work, and send money home each month.

Secondary sources notice the importance of teacher participation in improving the educational opportunities for migrant children¹. Engaged and devoted teachers play a significant role in the quality and range of the teachings. In addition it is proven that teachers act as role models for the children; manifesting that it is possible to succeed in life without any strong prerequisite to do so.

In the three provinces visited there were both Burmese teachers working at the learning centers and support personnel to give information to the families and children. By being from the same country and possessing similar experiences it creates a feeling of safety for the families to ask questions; additionally they might regard the answers as more reliable when coming from peers.

Yet, this is not a common situation in public schools. In all of the three provinces it is only one school that has hired a Burmese teacher. This teacher is both responsible for the Burmese language classes that all students and staff participate in, once a week. Additionally the teacher is the support network for the Burmese students, contact person for the families. The teacher also gives information to the school administration about the general situation for migrant families and the needs they have. The teacher is paid by a nearby NGO and the arrangement is the result of the good collaboration between the public school and the NGO. This agreement benefits the school by lessen their expenses and at the same time creating an employee that possess vital knowledge and insight into the Burmese students' situation.

On the other side, not having such a support system in the public schools has shown to create lack of confidence and an impression of being an outsider amongst the Burmese students. A critical result can be student drop-outs and children not being interested in studying since they do not feel comfortable; it is no one to turn to that fully

¹See Chapter 2.5 about Mexican teachers in the US

understands when they have struggles and the eager to expand their knowledge disappears.

There has been argued that it is present a lack of engagement from Thai teachers in learning centers and an issue of hierarchy between the Burmese and Thai teachers. The local ESA informant in research site 1 explains that this might be the cause for the slow progress and advancement amongst the Burmese students wanting to transfer to public schools and continue studying.

Certain countries in Europe and in the US could be good models to follow; where children are not obliged to show any documentation in school and teachers cannot ask for background information. The Mexican teachers in the US become a symbol of possibilities and hope for the young immigrants².

Different actors have different reasons and causes for the current situation for Burmese children in the education system in Thailand and it is easy to make assumptions based on personal involvement or negative experiences. Yet, as this research has portrayed, the level of commitment amongst the ones involved does reflect the advancement and quality of the educational opportunities for Burmese children; it is also reflected in the level of safety and support the migrant families encounter.

National researches have been conducted on the educational opportunities for migrant children and the different institutions' participation, responsibilities and challenges³. The outcome of this study does display some similarities concerning the NGO's involvement and the important work they are doing. However; this study seems

²See Chapter 2.5.1 and 2.5.2

³See Chapter 2.5.1 and 2.5.2

to be a bit more critical to the lack of collaboration between NGOs than previous studies have focused on.

The study conducted by the Ministry of Education highlights important points of success but also factors of improvements are emphasised⁴. What is peculiar is the strong awareness of the current situation and yet, work being executed to advance and develop the education system does not follow this path. The three provinces visited have all seen their improvements in the collaboration with local authorities and attitude changes amongst the community. However, this is not the case when analysing policy implementation and regulations; and the cooperation with public schools and certain authority institutions are neither adequate nor reliable.

Relevant information that could have been useful tools to enhance the system has not been spread out to the participating institutions, resulting in an educational stagnation for what concerns both the quality and quantity of the schools and learning centers. The fact that knowledge and awareness necessarily to change the opportunities and future hopes for Burmese migrant children are present amongst government personnel can be perceived as somewhat surprising, but maybe even a disappointment.

In Norway it is a duty to study; a responsibility is put upon you as a participator in society. On the one side the authorities tell you that your actions do matter, on the other side individuals can grow their self-esteem. Through responsibility self-development is established; creating a solid foundation to plan a better future and a feeling of collectiveness⁵.

⁴ See Chapter 2.5.1 and 2.5.2

⁵ See Chapter 2.5.1 and 2.5.2

This study regards that if Thailand demands this type of responsibility from the country's youth it might set the standard for a different path in the future. To set demands and needs side by side can be a healthy balance of duties and wants for the coming generations.

The following table shows the current findings in each province, in accordance with the Four A's stating three levels; standstill, increasing and advancing being the most prosperous development. The statements are built on what this thesis considers the most important activities finding place in each area. For example by providing teacher training, curriculum development and network meetings are pleasing movements and not at least carry with them long term benefits for both children and the communities as a whole. But lack of progress and little, if none, expanding cooperation and communication between the institutions will halt the current educational opportunities and consequently have strong impacts also on the future situation for Burmese families.

Table 4; Establishing the Four A's

	<u>Availability</u>	<u>Accessibility</u>	<u>Acceptability</u>	<u>Adaptability</u>
Research site 1	<i>Advancing</i>	<i>Advancing</i>	<i>Increasing</i>	<i>Advancing</i>
Research site 2	<i>Increasing</i>	<i>Advancing</i>	<i>Increasing</i>	<i>Advancing</i>
Research site 3	<i>Increasing</i>	<i>Standstill</i>	<i>Standstill</i>	<i>Standstill</i>

If the authorities put their political will into action and show their awareness of the Burmese migrant children's situation; and manifest, the previously mentioned importance of all people's participation in society, it can change the social atmosphere from "survival of the fittest" to "individual strength for the collective's best". Every person counts and should grow his or hers identity, while at the same time be fully aware of the societal consequences their actions have.

When discussing human rights, development of a society or degree of political will, there can easy be a sense of utopianism in the arguments presented. To say that everyone should work for the benefits of the country or that a politician should to all times consider what is best for every group of people in different provinces, are of course floating and to some extent unrealistic measurements.

To support the vision of EFA to give all children basic education this study regards that one does not have to aim for perfection and then expect perfection. There should be high goals and a constant strive to improve the conditions in a society, a community and not at least at a governmental level. Only that way will a project evolve, a policy be implemented or attitudes improve.

Several of the secondary researchers mentioned earlier⁶ display the important role NGOs play. This study has been focusing a lot on the significant part of the educational opportunities different NGOs have been participating in; also other factors like the Burmese migrant children's working lives, home situation, etc.

Studies from other provinces in Thailand have already established what the NGOs do and the situation is somewhat the same in the three provinces this study has visited. The NGOs have been growing in size and numbers over the years, the

⁶See Chapter 2.5.1 and 2.5.2

experiences are expanding and they have truly improved the living conditions for many Burmese migrants in Thailand.

One point was not mentioned in most of the secondary research studies, yet it is of relevant importance. The Ministry of Education's report discussed the issue with too many NGOs in one area, all with different angels on the work executed, and this created a rather chaotic and clouded situation.

This study's informants, especially in research site 1, mentioned this matter as a factor that might have made the collaboration with local authorities more intricate and challenging. Since there at certain times have been so many NGOs and learning centers developing, the local government had occasionally problems seeing the seriousness and determination in the work of these newly established institutions.

Additionally, as commented earlier, it is also a lack of communication between the NGOs in each province. The network meetings have been an improving factor, but there still seem to be issues of cooperation will inside the civil society. Even though it is a common goal of providing educational opportunities for Burmese migrant children, the tools used on the way to reach the goal appear more important.

6.3 Challenges

There are vast gaps and differences between the provinces in policy implementations and activities; from a growing collaboration between ESA and learning centers in one province, to total lack of communication between NGOs and public schools in another province. The learning centers work hard to find qualified teachers, especially in view of financial demands; simultaneously there are not many educated teachers available that are interested and qualified to teach migrant children.

Reoccurring challenges for children when starting a public school appear when the Burmese keep to themselves or others from their community, and the students attempt adapting to and being a part of the school environment. It is clear that the NGOs and their learning centers provide more than just academic schooling for the Burmese children. But there are differences not only between provinces, also between the different NGOs. Some NGOs are afraid of reprimands or alike from the Thai community, they develop their organisation at a slow rate because of authorities' wishes. The results are seen in the quality and quantity of the learning centers; it affects the opportunities given. The more advanced NGOs with knowledge and experience are also the once that have an expanded workload; the children become the underdogs.

Considering many of the NGOs are in contact on almost monthly basis, one can question why the NGOs do not learn more from each other. From interviews done there are critiques made between NGOs, a very strong belief that what they are doing is the correct way, instead of finding a common path to work closer together.

A factor that demonstrates lack of progress and absence of law implementation is in the process of receiving some sort of ID-card for the Burmese children. It has improved in one province, while in the two other provinces it is still at standstill. It is activity but it is a stagnant distribution. If people were to question why not more has been done the authorities can suggest they are in the process but the provinces are substantial and disorganised.

The findings can imply that it is almost an undefined perception if the destination is to integrate the children to Thai society or that the learning centers incline towards assimilation; a decisive perspective on the future that should be established for the benefit of the children, but also for the society as a whole. At the same time a problem of NGOs not willing to cooperate with other NGOs is present; that in the long run will affect the children; an act that would strengthen the power of the work the NGOs are doing; their missions might be taken even more into consideration by local authorities.

The complete lack of initiative from UNESCO and ASEAN projects is a factor this study believes is the NGOs responsibility; being the voice of non-governmental engagement and international activities in the provinces. The only information about ASEAN's project "Reaching the Unreached" and UNESCO's "Education for All" activities are rumours and some knowledge of the successful improvements in education for migrant children from Mae Sot province. An official from one of the provinces visited the area a while back, said he was very impressed but nothing has been done in his own district to follow their activities.

Even though one official has visited Mae Sot and seen the development there, one can wonder why the current provinces, through both the local government and not at least the NGOs, have tried to learn from successful projects. Instead there are excuses and envy, from all parties, that the Mae Sot project is a special one and

that without UN departments like UNICEF and UNESCO stationed in their province, they are helpless.

In one case where a public school has admitted Burmese students for many years has resulted in decreasing numbers of Thai students. This is a factor the study has not touched too much upon. Yet it is valuable to remark. Not to analyse the reasons why there are few Thai children in those public schools. Rather state the impact it has on the Burmese students to integrate.

When transferring to a public school a migrant prevail interest gaining knowledge in Thailand, develop ones skills and future dreams, amongst Thais. Even so, when it turns out to be mostly Burmese in the classes; the process of integration and being a part of Thai society are diminished.

A lack of continuity and equal rights are repeating issues for all provinces, and the children become the victims. The laws are there but it seems like new excuses have risen for the governmental institutions to hide behind. Where before they could blame ignorance and simply state that migrant students do not have proper documentation; today there are funding, tools and lack of knowledge that are the presented reasons. Regardless of the fact that there have been improvements in both relationships and collaboration between NGOs, public schools and local authorities; the respect for equal rights and understanding the importance of education for all, from local authorities is inadequate.

Information implies future plans with many excuses to postpone, and the reoccurring change of officials at local level results in lack of continuity in the process of improving the conditions for migrant children. It is no transparency in the work of the local ESAs for the NGOs to follow; an aspect that could provide ESA help from experienced NGOs in the complex matter of giving migrant children

education. Due to pressure from family to work and no long-term plans, in addition to lack of willingness from authorities to provide the children with equal rights result in children quitting school even though they are doing well in tests.

When interviewing officials it is almost a sense of ignorance that might come from pre-judged attitudes or information shortage from higher authorities. It is an unfitting focus on having the right contacts and that the local governments are not given funding to develop projects for migrant children; and other excuses for not taking responsibility; to blame “someone else” is common.

In two of the provinces answers given by local authorities seemed angled by lack of initiative; not much had been done and no activities were in the making either; hints of no political will to improve the current situation and develop projects to revise migrant children's educational opportunities.

There also appears that an attitude problem is the foundation of a province's activity and support to the NGOs. Questions may be asked if the ministry in Bangkok has not and is not doing a good enough job implementing policy; “demanding” the ESAs to follow regulations and initiative from the highest authority is only on paper and not put into action.

When the NGOs in all three provinces established and developed their work with migrant children, there were incidents of severe harassment and difficulties created by police and army. Armed military and big trucks would unannounced walk through the doors of the learning center, scaring the children and the staff. This has improved over the years, and in one province NGOs have established some sort of relationship with local security officials, it is still a constant uncertainty of new problems occurring; creating fear and insecurity amongst the staff and children at the learning centers.

These two following figures show the strengths and the weaknesses in the education sector that involves migrant children. The first figure highlights the three strongest factors of collaboration; the ones this study believes can be good foundations for future development and improvements. The other figure demonstrates the existing weaknesses that prevent the Burmese migrant children’s full access to education and equal rights.

Figure 2; Prospering Trend of Collaboration

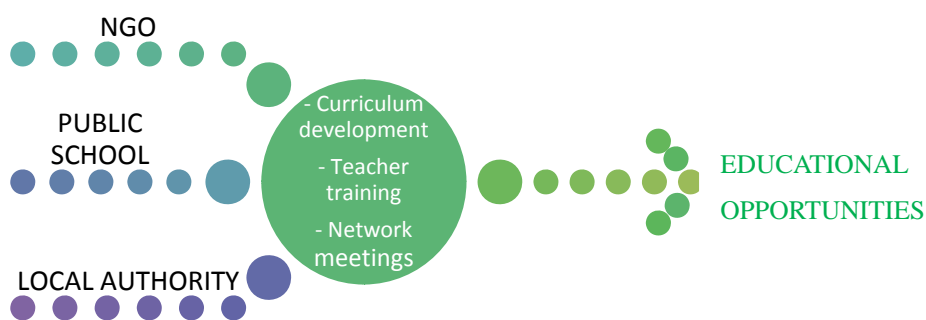
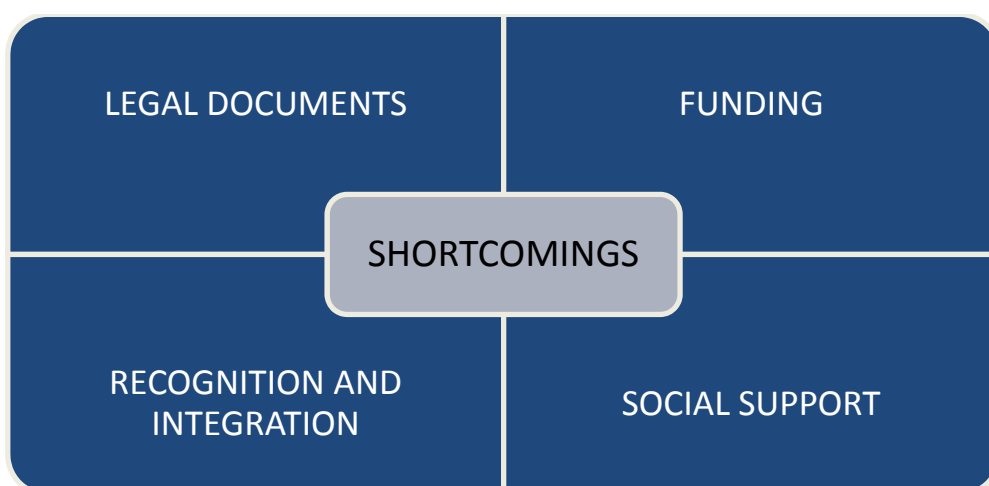


Figure 3; Deficiencies in the Educational Services



This study cannot see that there have been so many improvements that they overshadow the reoccurring issues; one could put the blame on possible lack of respect or consideration for laws and regulations. Too many factors involved that have too many weaknesses have, in this research, shown to be a downfall for certain children's self-development in certain areas of Thailand.

A channel needs to be created; to open up the communication between the different institutions, information needs to be shared and attention needs to be paid to everyone involved to be able to protect and care for the Burmese migrant children; it is their right to go to school and it is the responsibility of both governments, local authorities, schools and NGOs.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Planning

6.4.1 Capacity Building

In view of the data collected the study would first recommend to prosper capacity building. Primarily the NGOs must improve their education supply; instead of providing varied and good teachings, in a healthy environment, there have been too much focus on giving most Burmese children some sort of education.

It lacks a center of attention on the quality of learning centers and after being established for several years, it is time to rather widen and improve the tools already existing. Future plans cannot only be to expand the support but actually cultivate the opportunities given.

By establishing an increased collaboration between the existing NGOs, the study esteems the quality of learning centers will improve. To better develop and advance their methods to provide education, NGOs should have communication and collaboration. First as a means to efficiently use the budget provided, to decline the sense of not having enough funding. Second, sharing knowledge and experience can diminish some obstacles that learning centers might undergo by advising and helping each other.

Lastly, the already existing network meetings seem to be an important tool to enhance the capacity building amongst the involved institutions; but advancement is needed. Progression in NGO collaboration has been mentioned; also the study has the impression that more actors should be involved to take full advantage of the good platform network meetings can be.

To invite police or other security departments can be a factor to create better understanding and mutual respect; possibly decrease or even diminish some harassment and bullying that are present amongst officers towards the Burmese in the provinces. ESA should create communication with other departments especially with the ones having to do with security. It should be made a standard plan where personal interests and opinions are not taken into account and cannot affect the developed projects. Rather ESA should continue law implementation and corresponding activities.

Public schools should take initiative to learn from other public schools; be curious and more involved during network meetings to create understanding. Further this will show that public schools take responsibility to adjust to the need of the children in the province; instead of waiting for funding or someone to tell them what to do.

6.4.2 Awareness

Creating awareness is the second suggestion this study presents for future planning and development. One can identify from the data that in the political scene migration and education is not a pressing theme; people do not realise how closely they are connected to migrant labour work or the importance of given respect to Burmese since they are a part of the Thai society.

The study suggests incorporating migration as a subject in public schools. Academics like Professor Supang Chantavanich⁷ has discussed and presented this already. The study would highlight this as of substantial relevance to develop understanding, respect and awareness; both to grasp the struggling situation Burmese live under and to perceive their participation in Thai society. Additionally the research esteems that negative attitudes and misapprehension towards migrants will decrease by advanced activities, as one NGO already has established. By bringing the society together in a common goal of taking care of their community it can be created a sense of belonging and unity.

Local governments and provincial institutions should put this on their agenda; an arrangement that will help everyone; the Thais, the Burmese and the maintenance of the community conjointly. It is neither costly nor time consuming, hence; a manageable task for a government to revise their participation in improving Burmese migrants' lives.

⁷Chantavanich, Supang's Culture of Peace and Migration: Integrating Migration Education Into Secondary Social Science School Curriculum in Thailand is an analytical paper on how migration is being taught in schools, migrant issues are presented; in addition to how to erase myths and increase the knowledge by teaching the young generations about internal, regional and international migration. Download at; http://portal.unesco.org/shs/en/files/4570/10812641551Migration_in_Thailand.pdf/Migration+in+Thailand.pdf

Another tool to foster awareness is to hire Burmese teachers in public schools. Data collected from research site 2 demonstrates that by having native speakers in the class rooms will support both the Thai teachers; as well as being a role model for the Burmese students. The study assumes it will create apprehension since the Burmese teachers will show that even though they are Burmese they work in “common” occupations; someone all the students will have to respect and listen to in the classrooms (Thais and Burmese), and they can provide first-hand knowledge and information that no school book will cover.

6.4.3 Progress

The third and last suggestion for future planning is a refined focus on the importance of progress. The study apprehends that all the projects and activities that are established and executed, in addition to the suggestions presented here, cannot be fully utilised without progression.

The study discovered that NGOs have trouble with continued activities as a result of being too dependent upon personal relations rather than written agreements and collaborations followed up by the department.

Policy implementation and law enforcement should not be affected by changes in governments and other official institutions. Rather be followed by a “set” plan, hence; MOE has a substantial responsibility to follow up with the provinces and arrange clear guidelines to be followed. The research presumes that through establishing these aspects it will both be uncomplicated to adapt and adjust education to incorporate Burmese children; conjointly more manageable for MOE to control.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

After analysing and comparing collected data with available information I esteem that my assumption has been verified. NGOs do fill an educational gap for migrant children caused by lack of engagement from the authorities. The Thai government has not only agreed on international regulations, but has over the years established and developed their own regulations to incorporate all people.

However; the education system does not appear to be following the changes and adjusted to the new policies. Policy implementation and law enforcement are more absent than present in the three provinces. Even though the will to change and improve the children's opportunities are growing amongst public schools and local authorities, there are still too little being done.

Nonetheless the responsibility for this inadequacy does not only rely on what the local and national governments are carrying out. There are also faults amongst public schools, as well as NGOs, hence; there are several factors that acquire enhancement for the future administration of the Thai education system and quality of accommodation for migrants. I conclude that it is a development finding place but neither the pace of the process, nor the magnitude of educational opportunities provided to the Burmese migrant children in Thailand are today sufficient.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

An excerpt of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Found at; <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

Article 7.

- All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 26.

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

APPENDIX B

An excerpt of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Found at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm>

Article 7

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.

2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

APPENDIX C

EDUCATION FOR ALL GOALS

Found at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/efa-goals/>

Six internationally agreed education goals aim to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015.

Goal 1

Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

Goal 2

Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Goal 3

Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes

Goal 4

Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

Goal 5

Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Goal 6

Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

APPENDIX D

REACHING THE UNREACHED IN EDUCATION IN ASIA-PACIFIC TO MEET THE EFA GOALS BY 2015: A COMMITMENT TO ACTION

Executive Summary. Found at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001894/189423e.pdf>

Reaching the unreached and marginalized in education is imperative for countries intent on meeting the goals of Education for All (EFA) by 2015. Countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with financial and technical support and coordination by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics – Assessment, Information Systems, Monitoring and Statistics (UIS-AIMS) Unit, in collaboration with the UNESCO Education Sector, UNICEF and the Regional Thematic Working Group (TWG) on EFA, carried out the Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) of EFA and Mid-Term Policy Review from 2006 to 2009. The assessment showed that although significant gains have been made in the Asia-Pacific region towards the goals, targets will be missed if countries fail to tackle barriers to education and address persistent inequalities that continue to obstruct the disadvantaged populations' ability to access and participate in education and obtain the knowledge, skills and opportunities to realize their potential and participate actively in political and social life. The challenge is meeting the needs of the unreached population who has no access to education, are in school but not learning, or are in danger of dropping out for various reasons.

Across the region, the unreached population includes: learners from remote, rural and isolated areas; learners from linguistic and ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples, and minority religious groups; girls and women, especially from rural and ethnic minorities; underperforming boys including those that are at risk or have dropped out; children from migrant families, refugees and stateless children; learners with disabilities and special needs; children in difficult circumstances; learners from very poor families; child labourers, street children, trafficked children and abused children; children affected or infected by HIV and AIDS; and orphans and abandoned children. Many learners suffer from multiple disadvantages associated with being members of particular communities that result in them being socially stigmatized as well as suffering from the specific conditions listed above. Although data collection in the region has improved over the years with much data disaggregated by sex and geographical region, data for most of the groups mentioned above remains rare.

To ensure that policy recommendations made as part of the Asia-Pacific EFA MDA and Mid-Term Policy Review are converted into plans and concrete activities, the 10th Regional Meeting of National EFA Coordinators held on 4-7 May 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand focused on “strategic planning towards reaching the unreached in education and meeting the EFA goals by 2015.” Participants at the meeting produced a set of regional policy recommendations, and regional and sub-regional strategies, for reaching the unreached in education to ensure that countries meet the EFA goals with no one left behind by 2015. The consultative process of

preparing the sub-regional and regional strategies facilitated partnership and collaboration among all concerned – countries and EFA partners – to work even more closely in the future towards meeting the EFA goals, with a special focus on those unreached groups that still cannot exercise their right to education.

The regional policy recommendations and regional strategies focused on six cross-cutting themes – inclusive education and gender and social equality, literacy and non-formal education (NFE), quality of education, monitoring and evaluation, financing and governance, and partnerships and coordination – which were linked to seven strategic objectives focused on reaching the unreached in education.

Sub-regional strategies were developed for East and South-East Asia, South Asia, Central Asia and the Pacific. Although each sub-region has its own challenges and priority areas, a number of strategies to address the needs of the unreached in education recommended during the meeting had common approaches across the Asia-Pacific. These include:

1. Strengthening existing data collection processes to provide information on unreached groups to support evidence-based decision-making processes
2. Policy-making, intervention and initiatives to explicitly target the unreached groups, including out-of-school children and youth, those at risk of dropping out of school, geographically isolated groups, ethnic and linguistic minorities, etc.
3. Initiatives to promote and support education for girls and women
4. Comprehensive policies on literacy, which also address learning assessment, mother tonguebased multilingual literacy programmes and the need to create literate environments
5. Equivalency programmes which create synergies between non-formal and formal education Systems
6. Standards and norms for teacher and facilitator competencies, which address inclusion and learner-centred teaching-learning processes and environments
7. Life-skills and sustainable education from a lifelong perspective, that is relevant for learners and delivered using alternative and flexible approaches
8. Capacity-building of decision-makers in evidence-based policy making and planning, management and budgeting for inclusion

EFA partners, development financing and technical agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), advocacy organizations, etc., have responded to the recommended policies, strategies and actions proposed by country representatives for the region and each sub-region, and signified areas in which they can provide support for meeting EFA by 2015. It is hoped that EFA partners promptly follow up on these commitments and to ensure that their activities align with those of all the countries in Asia-Pacific. Countries and EFA partners need to work closely together to ensure that the EFA goals are reached by 2015 and no one is left behind.

APPENDIX E

An excerpt of current laws in the Thai Constitution. Found at; <http://www.right-to-education.org/country-node/399/country-constitutional>

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand 2007

EDUCATION;

Chapter II – Part 8

Section 49; A person shall enjoy an equal right to receive education for the duration of not less than twelve years which shall be provided by State thoroughly, up to the quality, and without charge.

The indigent, disabled or handicapped, or destitute person shall enjoy an equal right under paragraph one and shall be supported by State to receive equal education with other persons.

The education and training provided by professional or private organisation, alternative education of the public, self-directed learning and lifelong learning shall get appropriate protection and promotion from State.

Section 50; A person shall enjoy an academic freedom.

Education and training, learning and teaching, research and disseminating of research according to academic principles shall be protected; provided that it is not contrary to his civic duties or good morals.

Section 52; Children and youth shall enjoy the right to survive and to receive physical, mental and intellectual development potentially in suitable environment with due regard to their participation.

Children, youth, women and family members shall have the right to be protected by State against violence and unfair treatment and shall have the right to medical treatment or rehabilitation upon the occurrence thereof.

An interference and imposition of rights of children, youth and family members shall not be made except by virtue of the law specially enacted for the maintenance of family institution or utmost benefit of such person.

Children and youth with no guardian shall have the right to receive appropriate care and education from the State.

Chapter V – Part 4 – Section 80

The State shall act in compliance with the social, public health, education and culture policies as follows:

(1) protecting and developing child and youth, promoting childhood nourishment and education, promoting the equality between women and men, creating, reinforcing and developing family integrity and the strength of communities, as well as providing aids and welfare to the elderly, the indigent, the disabled or handicapped and the destitute person for their better quality of life and ability to become self-reliance;

(3) developing quality and standard in providing education at all levels and forms to be in line with economic and social changes, preparing the national education plan and the law for national education development, providing development of quality of teachers and educational personnel to meet the current changing in the present day world, and instilling awareness of being Thais, disciplines, common interests and a democratic regime of government with the King as Head of the State to learners;

(4) promoting and supporting the delegation of powers to the local governments, communities, religious organisations and private sector with a view to provide and participate in educational management for the development of educational quality standard equally and to be in line with the fundamental State policy;

(5) encouraging and supporting the making of researches in various disciplines of arts and sciences and disseminating all research results funded by the State;

(6) encouraging and instilling the right awareness of national unity and learning, and instilling and making known of arts, tradition and culture of the nation as well as good value and local wisdom.

EQUALITY – Chapter I

Section 4; the human dignity, right, liberty and equality of the people shall be protected.

Section 5; The Thai people, irrespective of their origins, sexes or religions, shall enjoy equal protection under this Constitution.

Section 6; The Constitution is the supreme law of State. The provisions of any law, rule or regulation, which are contrary to or inconsistent with this Constitution, shall be unenforceable.

Chapter II – Section 30

All persons are equal before the law and shall enjoy equal protection under the law.

Men and women shall enjoy equal rights.

Unjust discrimination against a person on the grounds of the difference in origin, race, language, sex, age, disability, physical or health condition, personal status, economic or social standing, religious belief, education or constitutionally political view, shall not be permitted.

Measures determined by the State in order to eliminate obstacle to or to promote persons' ability to exercise their rights and liberties as other persons shall not be deemed as unjust discrimination under paragraph three.

HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS – Chapter V – Section 82

The State shall promote friendly relations with other countries and adopt the principle of non-discrimination and shall comply with human rights conventions in which Thailand is a party thereto as well as international obligations concluded with other countries and international organisations.

APPENDIX F

Executive Summary of Children are Puppets and Parents move the Strings. Found at:
http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/IMPACT%20Qualitative%20Research%20Report%20-%20FINAL_0.pdf

Thailand is home to an estimated 1.8 to 2.5 million migrants and displaced persons, of which the majority is of Burmese origin. Many Burmese migrants and displaced persons live and work in the northwestern province of Tak, a popular gateway from Burma to Thailand. The undocumented status of many Burmese migrants and displaced persons living in Tak province leaves them vulnerable to exploitation and marginalization. Children of undocumented Burmese migrants and displaced persons are particularly vulnerable to labor and sexual exploitation, as well as physical, sexual and emotional violence.

In order to address the risks faced by Burmese children living in Tak province, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) received funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Displaced Orphans and Children Fund (DCOF) and World Learning to implement a comprehensive child protection project titled “Improving Mechanisms and Partnership for Action for Children in Thailand” (IMPACT). The project is designed to intervene at multiple levels of a child’s environment – from the family to the legal and policy environment – in order to maximize protection outcomes. The IMPACT project includes a family-based intervention that aims to improve family functioning, positive parenting skills, and child psychosocial well-being. In order to address the knowledge gap around family-based interventions in humanitarian settings, the impact of the intervention will be evaluated using a randomized controlled trial to assess changes in child and family indicators of well-being.

The purpose of this study is to use qualitative research with Burmese migrant and displaced children and families to understand culture and gender-specific definitions and indicators of child and family well-being, as well as identify protective processes and risk factors. Study findings would then be used to select and adapt a family-based intervention to ensure maximum cultural relevance and enhance family recruitment and retention. Findings would also be used to select, adapt or create culturally-tailored measures for the impact evaluation of the intervention. The study was conducted in four communities in Tak province during February and March 2011. In total, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with 10 community leaders, 55 adult caregivers, 48 key informants and 68 children. Study findings revealed that Burmese parents and caregivers prioritized values such as politeness, respect for elders, and social functioning in children.

The prioritization of the overall good of the family above the child’s needs and desires was also seen as an important value. In general, respondents did not emphasize characteristics related to mental and emotional health as core indicators of child wellbeing, but more readily identified internalizing emotional or mental symptoms (e.g. depression) as well as externalizing behaviors (e.g. aggression) when asked to describe children experiencing problems.

Study findings clearly point to family-level variables, most notably parenting practices and behaviors, as the most crucial protective processes or risk factors for child well-being.

Respondents acknowledged that the use of physical punishment was at times necessary but that excessively severe or impulsive use of physical or verbal discipline can be detrimental to child well-being. Findings also revealed that Burmese migrant and displaced families face multiple risks of economic insecurity, stress, alcohol use and conflict, and that changes in family structures and dynamics in the transition from Burma to Thailand have resulted in increased vulnerability for children and families.

Findings from this study identify a strong need to intervene at the family-level by strengthening key protective processes such as positive, non-violent forms of discipline and behavior management, positive parental role modeling, parent-child communication, and peaceful conflict resolution, while simultaneously reducing risk factors such as harsh physical and verbal forms of punishment, parental stress, alcohol use, and family conflict. Study findings were instrumental to the selection and adaptation of a culturally grounded family intervention that takes into account the context of poverty and insecurity in which many Burmese families live. Following an extensive literature review of evidence-based family strengthening interventions, the IRC selected the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) for adaptation and use with the Burmese migrant and displaced population in Thailand. SFP is a 14-week family skills training program initially developed in the United States and has since been adapted and disseminated internationally to more than 17 countries, including Thailand (Kumpfer et al., 2008). SFP involves the whole family in a multi-component and interactive behavior change intervention delivered through separate parent and children skills training sessions followed by a combined family session. SFP was selected because of its focus on concrete behavioral skills in the areas identified by the study findings: these include stress management; setting appropriate developmental expectations; positive parent-child communication skills; problem solving; resisting use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco; understanding the negative consequences of physical punishment; and alternative methods of positive discipline and behavior management (UNODC, 2010). SFP is also well-suited for the Burmese migrant and displacement context given its emphasis on structured family time during the weekly family meals and the combined family sessions where caregivers and children can enjoy positive, bonding interactions.

Findings from the qualitative study were used to make cultural adaptations to SFP in order to maximize relevance and applicability. Most notably, cultural and religious concepts identified through the study were incorporated, in addition to surface adaptations such as changes to names, examples, songs and games. The concept of metta or “loving-kindness”, for instance, was a recurrent theme in study findings, particularly in relation to positive discipline. Punishment with metta was described as mindful and considered, leading to positive behavior and learning outcomes for children. In contrast, respondents described punishment without metta as overly harsh and impulsive, resulting in the development of psychological and behavioral problems in children. This concept of metta was incorporated into program content on the negative effects of physical punishment and used to differentiate punishment with the intention to hurt from punishment as a predictable and consistent consequence of misbehavior. In addition, some content such as stress management was expanded in recognition of the extreme stressors faced by migrant and displaced families living without legal documentation in Thailand. The program was also shortened from 14 weeks to 12 weeks given the transience and competing work demands of many Burmese families, and renamed the Happy Families Program or Chan MyaePyawShwin Thaw MiThar Su A Si A Sin in Burmese.

Findings from the qualitative study were also applied to the selection, adaptation and development of measures for use in the impact evaluation of the family intervention. The following constructs were prioritized for measurement: parenting practices and behaviors, including the use of various discipline methods, communication styles and expression of parental warmth; family functioning including communication and conflict resolution; and, child well-being and resilience including internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Parental alcohol use was also prioritized given its prominence in study findings. Qualitative data was used not only in the selection of relevant measures, but also to guide translation and adaptation of measures through the addition of culturally -appropriate examples and items.

This study demonstrates the importance that Burmese migrant and displaced communities place on parenting practices and behaviors in determining positive outcomes for children and families. The protective capacity of the family, however, has been severely undermined by the many challenges and stressors faced by Burmese migrant and displaced families in Thailand. Child protection programming aimed at improving child well-being should therefore ensure that interventions are designed to strengthen the family's capacity to protect and care for their children. Qualitative research can be instrumental to informing the design, implementation and evaluation of such family -based interventions by maximizing cultural relevance and grounding.

APPENDIX G

PREPARED QUESTIONS FOR FOCUSED INTERVIEWS

Questions for the school manager

2. What activities are these organizations undertaking?

The organization

- How was the organization developed?
- What is the main vision and intention of establishing the organization?
 - Positive and negative experiences during the development of the learning center?
 - What were the biggest challenges?
 - What are the biggest challenges?
 - What educational opportunities are given?
 - What is being taught at the school?
 - How is the curriculum developed?
 - Who develops the curriculum?
- What is the curriculum?
- Why?
 - What is the intention with the curriculum?
 - What language is being taught?
- Why?
 - What opportunities can the children gain from this type of education?
 - What are the school's goals for the children?
- Assimilation?
- Preparation to go back to Myanmar?
- Creating a new hybrid/group in society?
 - How does the school receive school material?
 - Where does the school find local staff?
- Difficult to hire people?
- Do they talk Burmese?

- How is the school funded?
- Future visions, goals, plans?
- For the school itself?
- For the children?

The migrant children

- Where and how do the school find the children?
- What are the children's living situations?
- What are their parents' situations?
- Do the children have to pay any fees?
- Do the children go to class with Thai students?
- Why?
 - How is that working out?
- Why not?
 - Is it a lot of issues concerning the children experiencing social discrimination, harassment, etc.?
- How do the school deal with it?
 - How do the school deal with negative attitudes, incidents, behaviour, etc. that the children might experience outside the school?
 - What are the biggest challenges in providing migrant children with education?
 - How long can the children stay at the school?
 - Have any of the children gotten the opportunity to continuing studying?

3. What are the coordination mechanisms at local, district/regional and national level?

Public schools

- Is it any cooperation with public schools in the area?
- How?
- Why not, what kinds of difficulties do occur?
 - Are they accepting children from the organization into public schools?
- How is the process?
- Many children going on to public schools?
- What are the reasons given not to accept them?
 - What are the biggest challenges when “talking” to public schools?

- Not taken seriously?
- Getting rejected?

ESA support

- Is it any Governmental cooperation through ESA or other?
 - ▲ Funding?
 - ▲ Workshops?
 - ▲ Other types of support?
 - ▲ How?
 - Any difficulties or restrains in receiving support?
 - What type of difficulties are experienced?
 - Reasons given not to support?
 - Issues?
 - Has the school heard about Education For All?
 - How is this implemented?
 - Has the school heard about “Reaching the Unreached”?
 - Have there been any new ESA projects, plans or funding over the last 5-6 years?
 - What type of projects?
 - What are the biggest challenges communicating with ESA?
 - Not taken seriously?
 - Sensitive topic?
 - Not willing to cooperate?
- 4. What role do these organizations expect to play in the future? Are there arrangements for international agencies to progressively hand over their activities to local counterparts?**
- Which aspects should improve to increase migrant children's access to education?
 - How should this be executed?
 - How should this be implemented?
- Through the participation of NGOs?
 - By public schools?
 - By local authorities?
 - Enhance the collaboration between the three?

2. What activities are these organizations undertaking?

Questions for teachers

- How did you get the job?
 - Why did you want to work at this school?
 - Do you have a teaching background?
 - How is your experience moving to Thailand? (If the respondent is Burmese)
 - Do you speak Burmese? (If the respondent is Thai)
 - What do your friends and family say about your work here? (If the respondent is Thai)
 - What do you teach the children?
 - How do you think the curriculum can help the children?
-
- Is it a lot of issues concerning the children?
- What types of issues?
- Domestic issues
 - Attitudes from the Thai community
 - Personal struggles being in a foreign country
- How do you as a teacher deal with it?
- Do you experience negative attitude outside the school, being a teacher for migrant children?
 - Do you sometimes discuss with the children the negative attitudes they might experience outside the school?
 - Do the children talk to their parents about possible negative experiences in the Thai community?

APPENDIX H

Questions for headmaster

★ What activities are these organizations undertaking?

- Has the school heard about EFA?
- Have there been any projects or activities being implemented at the school?
- What is the information given from ESA?
 - Have there been any policy changes or supplements to existing regulations, concerning enrolling migrant children in public schools?
 - - What are the requirements to be admitted to the public school?
 - Are there migrant parents showing up at the school, wanting to enrol their child/children?
 - Are there any migrant children (Burmese, etc.) attending the public school?
 - - How was the procedure?
 - If there are any negative incidents; how do the school manage the situations?
 - - Are there any negative attitudes from Thai parents, when learning that the public school have migrant students?
- What are the coordination mechanisms at local, district/regional and national level?
- How is the collaboration with ESA in this aspect?
- Information meetings?
- Information sheets?
 - Is there any cooperation with NGOs in the area?
- Give advice, knowledge, etc. about children in the area, school material, school plans?
- Workshops, etc.?
 - Have NGOs in the area contacted the public school, wanting them to admit migrant children from their learning center?
 - How is the procedure?

4. **What role do these organizations expect to play in the future? Are there arrangements for international agencies to progressively hand over their activities to local counterparts?**

- Why is it not any migrant children at the school?
 - Which aspects should improve to increase migrant children's access to education?
 - How should this be executed?
 - How should this be implemented?
- By public schools?
- Through the participation of NGOs?
- By local authorities?
- Enhance the collaboration between the three?

Teachers

– **What activities are these organizations undertaking?**

- How is the achievement of the student?
- How is it being a teacher for migrant students?
 - Any reoccurring challenges?
 - Receiving any information before the student enrol?
 - Offered language training, or alike?
- How is the interaction with Thai students?
- If there are any negative incidents; how do the school manage the situations?
- Are there any negative attitudes from Thai parents, when learning that the public school have migrant students?
- Why is it not any migrant children at the school?

APPENDIX I

Questions to ESA

▲ What organizations are involved in the education?

- What are the procedures of policy implementations in ESA concerning migrant children?

• What activities are these organizations undertaking?

- What measures are being taken to meet the needs of migrant children and education?
 - Funding from the government?
 - Conferences?
 - Workshops?
 - Other type of support in implementing policy and regulations?
- How is ESA working for Education For All?
 - Special projects from the governments?
 - Special funding or other type of support?
- How is the ASEAN “Reaching the Unreached” project been presented to the ESAs?
 - Any collaboration with other countries?
- Any funding or support from SEAMEO?

5. What are the coordination mechanisms at local, district/regional and national level?

- How is the ESA working to meet the EFA goals?
 - Projects to public schools?
 - Funding to public schools to help adjust and give sufficient opportunities for migrant children?
 - Support from other public schools?

- Is there any cooperation with non-governmental organizations in the area, as a part of reaching the EFA goals?
 - Funding?
 - Meetings to discuss issues and challenges?
 - Other support?
- Is it any cooperation between public schools and non-governmental organizations to reach EFA?
 - Is the ESA supporting these activities?
 - Funding?
 - Conferences?
 - Other support?

5. **What role do these organizations expect to play in the future? Are there arrangements for international agencies to progressively hand over their activities to local counterparts?**

- Which aspects should improve to increase migrant children's access to education?
 - How should this be executed?
 - How should this be implemented?
- By local authorities?
 - By public schools?
 - Through the participation of NGOs?
 - Enhance the collaboration between the three?
 - What are the ESA's prospects for the future?
 - Future plans for migrant children and education in the area?
 - Projects being developed?
 - Recommendations being brought in from the Ministry, etc.?

Biography

Kristine Misvær Stenbeck was born September 11th 1985 in Oslo, Norway. She completed her Bachelor in Development studies by the University of Oslo in May 2010. During the studies she travelled to Hoi An, Vietnam, for one semester with Kulturstudier.

Throughout the four years as a student in Norway she also worked at a caring home for people with Alzheimer's. Between completing her Bachelor and starting her Masters at Chulalongkorn University, she volunteered at Yaowawit school in Phang Nga province; an orphanage for poor children.

She published an article for Thai World Affairs Center in 2012.