Children in Camps: Thailand
a discussion on Collaborative Child Protection Efforts

Conference on Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children
Burke, VA
October 22 – 24, 2008

Kimberly Haynes, BID Coordinator
UNHCR Regional Office Thailand

&

Juventino Ben Mendoza, Program Director
COERR (Catholic Office for Emergency Relief & Refugees), Thailand
Overview

- Thailand Legal Framework
- Camp Profiles
- UASC Profiles
- Child Protection Partners
- Child Protection Mechanisms
- Resettlement
- Implementation of BID
- Continuing Challenges
- Promising Practices
- Lessons Learned
Thailand Legal Framework

- Thailand is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol.

- Thai Immigration Law states “any persons without proper travel documents and visa are considered as illegal immigrants, subject to arrest, prosecution, detention and deportation.

- To strike the balance between national security and humanitarian concerns, the Royal Thai Government policy was to provide temporary asylum in the establishment of border camps under executive decision of the National Security Council.

- In 1998 the Royal Thai Government and UNHCR engaged in meaningful dialogue on creating a functional working arrangements which has lead to the involvement of UNHCR within these camps and a final resolution to allow for resettlement as a durable solution in 2005.
117,982 Refugees living in 9 Camps

- Protracted situation (since 1984) and still far from being resolved
- Not allowed to leave camps or work outside
# COERR’s Program Overview

COERR’s Program is agenda-based, integrated multi-component/multi-donor-funded, humanitarian development focused:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Components</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Protection of EVI’s</td>
<td>- Community Services&lt;br&gt; - Relief Supplies for EVIs (<em>Caritas Denmark</em>)&lt;br&gt; - Self-Help Activities/Vocational Training (<em>Caritas Denmark</em>)&lt;br&gt; - Education supplies for the Mon Resettlement sites&lt;br&gt; - Monitoring of Separated Children (<em>UNHCR</em>)&lt;br&gt; - PROTECT Project (<em>UNICEF</em>)&lt;br&gt; - Preservation of Traditional Arts &amp; Crafts through the Elderly&lt;br&gt; - Assistance to Affected Thai Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sustainable Agriculture &amp; Environmental Protection</td>
<td>- Organic Agriculture Training &amp; Production&lt;br&gt; - Community-based Waste Management (<em>Mae La</em>)&lt;br&gt; - Tree Planting&lt;br&gt; - Road Repairs &amp; Maintenance (7 camps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Promoting</td>
<td>- Healing of Memory groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COERR’s 8 Guiding Principles

- Community-based
- Protection of beneficiaries
- Gender equality
- Environmental protection
- Non-discrimination
- Consultation with and participation of beneficiaries
- Capacity-building
- Coordination
COERR’s Service Capacity

- COERR is an official implementing partner (IP) of UNHCR, UNICEF, Caritas Denmark and the Caritas International network & a signatory to the IFRC, Caritas, UNHCR and CCSDPT Codes of Conduct.

- 30 years of Humanitarian Developmental service to Refugees and affected Host Communities

- COERR is the only Thai NGO with full coverage of all 9 refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border.

- COERR is an active member of CCSDPT.

- 59 Program Staff personnel (COERR employees) border wide
  - 277 Camp Staff (camp-based refugees)
    - 196 Community Social Workers (168 CSWs + 28 CP Advocates)
    - 81 are Agriculture Trainers, VT Trainers, Waste Management and Environmental Protection Workers
UNHCR asked COERR to field-check UNHCR's List of Separated Children (from UNHCR database).

Need to update UNHCR's data on SCs was recommended by COERR.

2003:
The first Data Collection Form (DCF) was used to systematize data collection and to record changes. DCFs were submitted to UNHCR Bangkok for updating in the UNHCR SC database.

Number of identified SCs increased by 862 SC.

2004:
Regular checking by COERR resulted in some SCs over 18 yrs being removed from SC List of UNHCR.

At end of 2004, COERR recommended expansion via integration of SC project for 2005 with COERR EVI Program, and UNHCR agreed.

COERR took charge of developing and updating the SC database, using MS-Access platform PROTECT Project started.

2005:
First phase of expansion of UASC Program resulted in a dramatic increase (+ 4,435 vs 2004) in number of identified SCs.

COERR took charge of developing and updating the SC database, using MS-Access platform PROTECT Project started.

2006:
New “short-form” DCF developed jointly between UNHCR, UNICEF & COERR for improving data collection and as a first step towards focusing on priority protection concerns (SA, PA, N, E).

2007:
Emphasis on training of PSWs & CSWs on identification, assistance, and documentation of priority protection concerns via “long form”.

Start of development of SCTS

2008:
Stronger identification of UASCs and their protection needs, with focus on four priorities.

Launch of SCTS, with direct access by UNHCR and COERR HQs and FOs by 2Q.
Profile of Unaccompanied & Separated Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camp</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAN MAE SURIN</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAN MAI NAI SOI</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAE RA MA LUANG</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAE LA OON</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>1,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAE LA</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>1,086</td>
<td>2,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUPO</td>
<td>497</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>1,075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMPIUM</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAN DON YANG</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAN THAM HIN</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GRAND TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,561</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,941</strong></td>
<td><strong>7,502</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*individual records maintained in COERR SCTS

Refugee children: 35% of camp population

UASC = 6% of camp population

Source: COERR SCTS as of Sept. 25, 2008
### Profile of Unaccompanied & Separated Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>1,463</td>
<td>1,643</td>
<td>3,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>1,577</td>
<td>1,762</td>
<td>3,339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>3,941</td>
<td>7,502</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COERR SCTS 25 Sept 08
### Profile of Unaccompanied & Separated Children

#### UASC stated reasons for coming to camp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned by Parents</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid Military Recruitment</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents Deceased</td>
<td>818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Came to camp to study</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family member arrested</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Died</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Died</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Divorced – one or both parents remarried</td>
<td>206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents in other camp</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent away by parent</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sent to camp to study</td>
<td>4,422</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated During flight</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### UASC Family Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents Deceased</td>
<td>818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Parents Alive</td>
<td>4,332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown Whereabouts of Parents</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives in other camps</td>
<td>436</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COERR SCTS 25 Sept 08
## Profile of Unaccompanied & Separated Children

### Care Situations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Care Group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCC <em>(in boarding houses)</em></td>
<td>1,155</td>
<td>1,456</td>
<td>2,611</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCF <em>(under foster care)</em></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCR <em>(living with relatives)</em></td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>2,320</td>
<td>4,580</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UM <em>(by themselves)</em></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>3,941</td>
<td>7,502</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COERR SCTS 25 Sept 08

### School Attendance September 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attending School</td>
<td>3,378</td>
<td>3,769</td>
<td>7,147</td>
<td>95.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Attending School</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>3,941</td>
<td>7,502</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COERR SCTS 25 Sept 08
Profile of Unaccompanied & Separated Children

Left Camp during Jan-Sep 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-14</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-18</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>244 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Protection Concerns
September 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protection Concern Cases</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marriage or pregnancy under age of 18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentally Ill</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No UN registration #</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left camp</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: COERR SCTS 25 Sept 08

* Most of them went back to Burma during summer school break
Child Protection Partners

- United National High Commission on Refugees
- United Nations Children's Fund
- Catholic Office of Emergency Relief and Refugees
- American Refugee Committee
- International Rescue Committee
- World Education
- ZOA Refugee Care
- Jesuit Refugee Services
- Right to Play
- Children on the Edge
- Karen Woman’s Organization (KWO)
- Kareni Woman’s Organization (KnWO)
- Karen Youth Organization (KYO)
- Child Protection Committees in each camp
Child Protection Mechanisms

- Registration & Identification
  - UNHCR
  - COERR
  - Various NGOs and CBOs
    - Camp Committees
    - KWO
    - KnWO
    - Right To Play
    - ARC
    - IRC
Child Protection Mechanisms

 Coordination

- Committee for Coordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand (CCSDPT)
- Protection Working Group (IOs + NGOs)
- Children Affected by Armed Conflict Working Group
- Child Protection Network

 Monitoring and Reporting

- COERR conducts monitoring & assistance to UASC
- Child Protection Referral System – Community-owned collaborative effort outlining Roles and Responsibilities regarding child protection cases
- Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms on Grave Violations Against Children in Armed Conflict
- UNHCR BID process
COERR PRIORITIZATION ON CASE MANAGEMENT & FREQUENCY OF MONITORING & HOME VISIT

Category

- Serious Cases
  - SA / PA / E / N
- Protection Concern No.
  - 7, 10, 11, 12

Monitoring/Home Visit

- Intensive at start and at least once a week thereafter
  - Specially at the early stage, ensure constant accompaniment. Follow up visits to be done more once a week. Use DCF for each visit.

SPC (Special protection concerns)

- Protection Concern No.:
  - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15

- Every 2 weeks to once a month
  - Several level of risk rated according to high, medium, low. Higher frequency of visit on high risk category as determined by PSW. Record each visit in DCF.

General SC

- without Urgent Protection Concern

- General Protection

- Once a month
  - Routine monitoring and discussion with clients using DCF. Observe child behavior & check living conditions. Provide Hygiene Pack.
Linkages available thru COERR’s Integrated Program

- Networking & Referrals to UNHCR, NGOs, CBOs
- Counseling
- HoM Support Groups
- Relief Supplies & Emergency assistance
- Monitoring
- Activities
- VT& Skills development
Community Services for EVIs (including UASC): Self-Help / Vocational Training

Key objective: Enable EVIs to acquire, develop and utilize skills that can alleviate their vulnerable conditions and make them productive and caring members of their community.

Activities include:

- Candle-making
- Organic Agriculture
- Soap-making
- Soya milk-making
- Sewing Center (in Karenni camps)
- Other initiatives proposed by participants
Monitor / Home Visits

- Observe care situation
- Analyze needs
- Provide emergency assistance if needed
- Follow-up

Case Management

- Continuous training & capacity building of PSWs, CSWs, CBOs to enhance child protection environment in camps
- Support for CPCs

Record

- DCF → SCTS
- Reports
- Other forms

Systematic identification & tracking of UASC + CNSP

Counseling
BID Referrals
Case conferences
HoM Groups
Art therapy
Relief supplies
Self-Help Activities

Protection Continuum
Historical BID Process

Prior to 2005 the community services worker in Bangkok conducted BIDs in all 3 field offices while on mission.

With the additional US funding for resettlement, BID clerks were hired within all field offices.

In April 2007 UNHCR Regional Office Thailand recruited and identified an ICMC contractor to be the BID Supervisor for Thailand’s operation.

In the beginning of 2007 UNHCR released the provisional Guidelines for Determining the Best Interests of the Child, and Thailand was selected as one of the pilot countries for implementation.

In May 2007 discussions between UNHCR, PRM & OPE to strategize in addressing the issue of a significant back log which had developed (400 BIDs).

At the end of 2007 a systematic approach for the comprehensive implementation of BID was working and the initial phases for integrating the BID into a larger child protection frame work within all child protection activities began to emerge.
UNHCR Thailand BID Staffing

- 1 BID Supervisor
  - ICMC Contractor

- 1 BID Coordinator
  - International UN Volunteer

- 15 BID Clerks
  - Locally recruited Thai and Burmese passport holders

- 2 Part Time BID Coordinators
  - International UN Volunteer, Associate Resettlement Officers

All positions are currently funded by a special contribution from the US Government
Summary of Thailand Resettlement

Total UNHCR Thailand resettlement activities since January 1, 2005.

- 81,932 refugees have been referred for resettlement.
- A total of 42,153 have been accepted
- A total of 35,984 have departed Thailand

* These numbers are as of September 23, 2008.
Thailand BID Operation Overview

Average BID takes 1-3 months

- **Receive Referrals or Identify Cases**
  - UNHCR Registration, Resettlement, Community Services
  - Selection Missions
  - Implementing Partners
  - Community CBO’s, NGO’s etc.

- **Gather Existing Information**
  - UNHCR ProGress Data (household registration)
  - Selection mission referrals
  - Camp Documentation (birth, death, marriage etc.)
  - COERR UASC Database

- **Conduct Interviews**
  - All immediate family members are interviewed (those within the household)
  - Additional collateral individuals (teachers, section leaders, NGO’s, etc.)
  - Average of three trips to camp in order to conduct all necessary interviews
**BID Process**

- **Write assessment**
  - All the data collected from corresponding interviews and documentation is written into the BID Assessment Report

- **BID Assessment Reviewed by Field Office**
  - Field Office BID Coordinator/Focal Points reviews the cases for missing information, clarifications.

- **Field Office submits BID Assessment to UNHCR BID Supervisor**
  - Field office provides all corresponding documentation (custody & foster care agreements, adoption and divorce documents etc.).

- **BID Panel reviews assessment and makes a final determination**
  - Multidisciplinary team (consisting of UNHCR, UNICEF, JRS, IRC, OCHA, RTP, BRC, COERR) meet weekly to review 10-15 cases, discuss and make final determination.

- **UNHCR BID Supervisor records decisions, edits, and forwards decisions to all appropriate individuals**
Best Interests Determinations for Thailand

Total BIDs 2005 - 2008

- 1,159 BIDs Completed
  - 1,522 Children

Children

- 707 Females – 796 Males
- 238 (0-6 years of age)
- 534 (7-13 years of age)
- 723 (14-17 years of age)

* These numbers are as of September 23, 2008. There are variations in the figures due to data collection challenges.
Best Interests Determinations for Thailand - 2008

- 428 BIDs completed
- 562 Children
- 273 Females – 289 Males
  - 85 (0-6 year of age)
  - 213 (7-13 years of age)
  - 264 (14-18 years of age)

* These numbers are as of September 23, 2008.
Status of Children at the time of BID

* These numbers are as of September 23, 2008. There are variations in figures due to data collection challenges.
Care Arrangements of the Children at the time of BID

- 21% Aunt/Uncle
- 18% Parents
- 17% Grandparents
- 14% Foster Parents
- 12% Brother/Sister
- 6% Cousin
- 4% Married Minor
- 2% Unaccompanied Minor
- 2% Boarding House
- 4% Missing Data
Identified Purposes at time of BID

- Protection Concerns – 19 BIDs
- Protection Concerns leading to Temporary care – 4 BIDs
  - 7 BIDs being conducted on Trafficked minors
- Protection Concerns leading to Resettlement – 30 BIDs
- Resettlement – 1,168 BIDs
  - 907 United States (77.65%)
  - 121 Australia (10.35%)
  - 49 Canada (4.19%)
  - 24 Norway (2.05%)
(14 Finland, 32 Unidentified Country, 7 Great Britain, 5 Sweden, 4 New Zealand, 3 Netherlands, 1 Denmark, 1 South Korea)
Overview of BID Decisions

* These numbers are as of September 23, 2008.
Other BID Statistics

- **1.85%** of all the cases submitted for resettlement in 2007 had required a BID.
- **2.30%** of all cases submitted for resettlement in 2008 have required a BID.
- **65.62%** of the approved recommendations have the children included in the durable solution plans of the family.
- **29.34%** of the approved recommendations have the children remaining in Thailand.
Continuing Challenges

- Struggles with negative perceptions & perspectives of what the Best Interest Determination process is.
- Need for continuous training on a variety of basic skills and awareness (purpose, goals, objectives, roles, responsibilities, interviewing, writing skills, child welfare).
- Continuous need to balance efficiency & comprehensiveness.
- Limited child welfare expertise, experience and background throughout UNHCR.
- An incomplete comprehensive process for data collection and tracking an assortment of BID elements.
- Difficulty in untying the BID process from the larger resettlement process in order to thoroughly integrate the BID into a larger child protection framework.
Continuing Challenges

- Funding
- Need for continuous training, guidance for CSWs, CPAs, CBOs to build community-based child protection capacity.
- Sustaining and strengthening a collaborative approach to child protection.
- Difficulty with tracing relatives in Myanmar & Thailand.
Lessons Learned

- Refugee communities have the desire and resolve to take care of themselves but are under-resourced, restricted and need external support.
- Community participation is the crucial element for any child protection framework.
- Community-directed trainings on Child Protection are essential.
- Coordination and development of a collaborative approach to Child Protection must be nurtured.
- Referral Systems for Child Protection must be flexible and not be a “one size fits all” approach.
- CPCs need regular guidance and support to build their role in the community.
- Promotion of Child Rights must also be accompanied by training on Child Responsibility.
- Collaboration and coordinated efforts are necessary to have a systematic approach to various child protection issues in order to create stronger continuity.
Promising Practices

As every society has high standards of child welfare protection in which mechanisms and programs are built into their systems in order to protect the most vulnerable. UNHCR is working hard to strengthen its capacity to identify, assess, refer and assist all vulnerable children who are of concern to UNHCR.

- Specialized BID staffing with Child Welfare expertise
- Creation of BID Standard Operating Procedures to balance the quality with the necessary efficiency
- Established a joint process and understanding for prioritization of a large BID caseload
- Development of a multidisciplinary BID panel team consisting of 9 different agencies
- Training provided to all relevant stakeholders in the BID process (UNHCR, NGO’s, CBOs, Camp Committees and leadership etc.)
- Comprehensive integration approach of the BID into other relevant child protection protocols (Child Protection Referral System, SGBV Referral System)
Conference on Protection of Unaccompanied and Separated Children
Burke, VA
October 22 – 24, 2008

Juventino Ben Mendoza, Program Director
Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees
Bangkok, Thailand 10200
(66) 2 681.3900 ext.1612
Ben@COERR.org

Kimberly Haynes, BID Coordinator
UNHCR Regional Office Thailand
Bangkok Thailand 10200
(66) 2 288-2089
Haynes@UNHCR.org