

Annual Report

2024



Good Shepherd Nong Khai, Thailand

Cover Photo: 'Khaoglong' taking part in the Community Watchdog Run in January 2024. Organised by the Child and Youth Development Programme team, it raised awareness about domestic violence, while raising money to help children affected.

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Community Leader – Sr Yanee Panurak



Every year is marked by successes and challenges and in this report we give voice to both, sharing with you, each programme or project’s finest moments and the challenges that required a response to mitigate any negative impact. None of what you see reported would have been possible without a network of individuals, community groups and organisations, working in partnership with us, to provide opportunities to our target populations to experience involvement, learning, practice and essentially, change in their lives. You will see this demonstrated in the work depicted in these pages. To all those who join us – on the ground providing the services or by offering financial support to our programmes, I thank you. Perhaps the greatest challenge for us as a community and organisation in the past 12 months, were the floods in September, which caused disruption and damage to the convent compound and three projects conducted in the grounds, as well as affecting many in our programmes, whose homes were flooded. The response was swift and is one I am personally very proud of, as staff and workers – even programme beneficiaries – came together, joining the sisters to provide support and resources to those affected. I am also grateful for the swift material and financial support provided by those locally, nationally and internationally, enabling us to provide food and basic supplies to hundreds affected and to repair damage to our water producing plant, our vegetable gardens and the Vocations House. In 2025, Good Shepherd Sisters will celebrate 60 years since coming to Thailand. Here in Nong Khai, it will be 45 years since the first community was founded, which included Sr Pranee Sitti as a junior sister, alongside three of our Irish missionaries – Sr Mary Hayden, Sr Margaret Brady and Sr Joan Gormley. Sr Pranee is still actively involved in the Outreach ministry and is President of our Foundation. From the start of the mission here - in fact from the start of the Good Shepherd Congregation in France in 1835 – lay people have worked tirelessly and generously alongside the sisters to enhance, promote and implement the vision for a better world based on Good Shepherd values. Our long term volunteer, Antonia Symonds, known to all our international friends and project supporters, just marked 25 years of tireless service to the Good Shepherd ministries in Nong Khai and we thank her for this commitment. We thank too our mission partners in the projects – dedicated and professional staff – who share our vision and work with us to empower others. We look forward to continue working together across our network, throughout 2025.

Sr Yanee Panurak
 Community Leader – Good Shepherd Sisters
 Nong Khai, Thailand

GOOD SHEPHERD CORE VALUES



HUMAN DIGNITY

We uphold the dignity of each person. As Saint Mary Euphrasia said, “A person is of more value than the whole world.”



JUSTICE

Our commitment to reconciliation demands that we promote justice and peace. We act to bring about change in whatever condemns others, especially women and children, to live marginalized lives



TRUST & RESPECT

We uphold and value each one’s views and capabilities with openness and sincerity.



PARTNERSHIP & COLLABORATION

We work together in partnership with families, communities, NGOs, Faith based organizations, Government, International organizations and Good Shepherd internationally for effective and efficient ministry.



TRANSPARENCY & ACCOUNTABILITY

With integrity and honesty, we are transparent and accountable to donors, partners and community and for all the resources entrusted to us.



EFFECTIVENESS

We strive for programmes based on best practice, supported by efficient administration

RESPONSE TO THE FLOODS

In September, the Mekong River, swollen from relentless torrential rain, prompted by another tropical storm - Yagi – rose a metre above the top of the retaining wall, that runs the length of the town. The volume of water was increased with run off from the northern provinces. Over 7,000 homes in Nong Khai province, from 150 villages, were flooded. The flood waters rose on the main street in Nong Khai town, which included the convent compound.



Mekong River overflowing the banks



Downtown Nong Khai



Rising waters in front of convent

The sisters and staff took immediate action, bricking up doorways into the convent itself but the Regina Centre buildings, the village style 'vocations house', as well as the grounds, were flooded.



Bricking up doorways



Saving items



Evacuating vocations house



A statue of Our Lady floats outside the Regina Centre

Attention was soon turned to those who were affected and staff and residents in the Garden of Friendship (8 kms inland from the flooded areas), as well as those from Hands of Hope, began making hundreds of food packs daily, to distribute. Additionally, packs of basic necessities were also prepared for distribution.



The elderly were evacuated and many families took their belongings and moved to roads on higher ground, where canvas awnings had been erected. Boat became the only means of transport in some areas and to deliver relief packages and food, the sisters and staff used these to reach the people. Donations received, were gratefully accepted and packages of basic necessities were prepared and distributed.



PROJECT PERSONNEL 2024



Sr Pranee Sitti
Foundation
President/
Director
Village Outreach

Village Outreach Programme

Patcharporn Sitti
Social Worker
Programme
Co-ordinator



Kunnika Chinwirutsirisuk
Social Worker



Attaphon Pansri
Community
Development



Warodom Pimpipa
Agricultural
Co-ordinator



Khemchira Suksuworachot
Registered
nurse



Perm Sak Tipayasoot
Hospital liaison
Village home care



Waraporn Khunyai
Assistant
nurse



Deth Phetdala
Assistant
nurse



Tawarit Panurak
Driver



Warodom Pimpipa
Agricultural
Co-ordinator

Child and Youth Development Programme



Sr Jintana Phimsan
Director



Areewan Somgnan
Field worker



Waraporn Khansara
Administrator



Wiriya Buransan
Seminar
co-ordinator



Sittichai Sootsukhon
Administrator

Sufficiency Learning Centre

Support Personnel



Sr Sutisa Utalun
Former Director
to April 2024



Sr Siriporn Suwannachirub
Director



Chamaitip Janthed
Administration



Panuwat Saipheth
Operations
Manager



Antonia Symonds
Project Officer GSNK
Hands of Hope Project Manager



Kuthaya Tangrakool
Accountant

VILLAGE OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Visitation – home care, milk and special needs
Hospital liaison – transportation, advocacy and follow up
Education - workshops, seminars, training – Garden of Friendship and community based
Networking GO & NGO+ private sector
Residential care – Garden of Friendship: Critical care unit, TB unit, Life Centre, family homes + volunteer house
Income generation/ employment
 Rice, chickens, fruit, and vegetable production in Garden of Friendship + Farm Shop.

+

HANDS OF HOPE

Employment through the marketing of hand made cards and paper decorations + raising fish for local sale

CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Visitation – assessment of situation/ counselling
Direct sponsorship – individual support from children K-University
Education workshops, seminars, training - community based.
Networking GO & NGO+ private sector
Savings groups – village savings groups/ death fund

+

Women’s Sewing group in village

SUFFICIENCY LEARNING CENTRE

On grounds of **Village Vocational Training Centre**
 Operating self-sufficient farm model
 Training to community groups
 Facility use extended to GO, NGOs and community groups

VILLAGE OUTREACH PROGRAMME

“What are we doing in this world, and why are we here, if not to help our neighbours?” – St Mary Euphrasia

When speaking about the Outreach Programme, many people have a vision of the Garden of Friendship. It is true that the Garden is the ‘heart’ of the programme and is where the Outreach Team is located when not out in the field itself. However as the name ‘Outreach’ suggests, the programme reaches out to three provinces, with the target population living in almost 200 villages.

Great strides have been made this past year, to strengthen the network of people living with HIV in four hospitals in the neighbouring Bueng Kan province, which are used as a base for co-ordinating the efforts of trained volunteers.

Working with two funding partners – the Hilton Fund for Sisters and the Msgr Charlebois Trust, initiatives for occupational activities leading to livelihood security, have been established. “Home Jai” (Heart Home) Sriwilai” group in Sriwilai District, which grew from humble beginnings, has been officially registered as a public benefit organization and successfully wrote a project proposal to secure government funding. The funding supported knowledge-sharing and vocational training in stove-making for members within Sriwilai District and neighboring areas. This was a huge success in meeting the goal of Good Shepherd to move project participants from dependency.

The Outreach Team interacts with 12 hospitals in three provinces, where a respectful working relationship is maintained for the benefit of project participants. This involves advocacy, coordinating the care provided and assisting in the transfer of treatment for people other provinces. The Nong Khai Hospital (mainly) will arrange with Outreach staff, for patients without caregivers to be admitted to the Garden of Friendship upon discharge.

544 Adults with HIV/AIDS currently in programme (4 deaths)

8 Children infected with HIV – 1 new

43 General medical adult clients (home care) 8 new and 4 deaths

31 current children affected by HIV/AIDS – living with PLWHA

80 Infants/ special needs children receiving milk formula/food/ hospital appointments - 7 new/9 exited



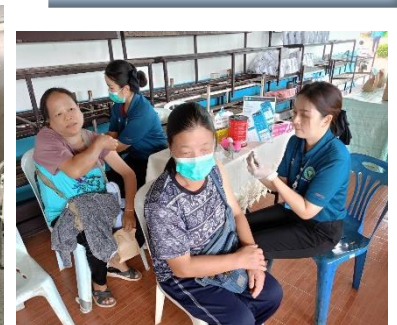
Physiotherapy



Child Development Clinic



Admission



Community vaccinations

Networking with other NGOs and Government Departments, is also beneficial for those in the Programme’s care. These include:

- Sa Khrai Subdistrict Administrative Organization – Cooperation in providing a venue for training and meetings with groups of parents.
- Social Development and Human Security Office – Social welfare for vulnerable individuals.
- Phochai Subdistrict Health Promotion Hospital – Providing cervical cancer screening for patients in the Garden of Friendship
- Disease Prevention and Control Office – Supporting funding for training youth and public health volunteers on HIV/AIDS awareness.
- Nong Khai Shelter for the Homeless – Coordinating the transfer of homeless HIV-infected individuals and providing funding support for vocational promotion for people living with HIV.
- Nong Khai Provincial Cultural Office – Collaborating with various foundations to ensure ethical organizational practices and conducting training to develop personnel for the promotion of morality
- Sarnelli House Foundation – Coordinating the transfer of patients.

“Without
labour,
nothing
prosper.”
- Sophocles



Yai Nuey painstakingly makes baskets all day, to sell to the fish sellers in the local market. Living alone, she helps herself through the income she receives. She is visited by Wanna, one of the Outreach PLWHA Network volunteers in Bueng Kan province.

Village visitation incorporates:

- ❖ Distribution of milk powder for children 0-3 years and monitoring their growth and development
- ❖ Monitoring the progress of special needs children, providing assistance to attend specialist appointments, advocacy and referrals and the provision of nutritional supplements.
- ❖ Home care for the disabled and elderly - nutrition, sanitary items, rehabilitation and visits to hospital. Also training of family members in patient care.



Ekiew with his mother in Hing Ngam village



Daet shows Ruangkhao's family how to use the oxygen machine



Permsak and Daet conducting a health check on Somporn, at home in Sak Ngio

715 adults and children, participated in community training workshops

Community Outreach Training

- ❖ Training on HIV prevention and transmission, was given to 309 students in four schools. Counselling was also provided. The aim was to enhance their understanding of HIV/AIDS, prevention methods, and how to accept individuals living with HIV/AIDS in their communities.
- ❖ The program included activities focused on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and analyzing the risks associated with unprotected sexual activity.



- ❖ Training on HIV/AIDS awareness and reducing stigma in the community for community health volunteers, was given to 89 participants in two districts.



“It takes courage to grow up
and become who you really
are.”
– e.e. cummings



Outreach Team member, Pacharaporn (Kate) measures the height of Nasareen in the village of Nong Du, as part of the Milk Programme, recording data to monitor her progress.

- ❖ **The Reading Programme** for early childhood continues. There are 8 sites now holding books available for the children to borrow and 75 people were newly trained in how to read to children and engage them in the storytelling process.
- ❖ 42 parents and guardians from the Milk Programme were provided a workshop on "Online Media Literacy and Strengthening Family Bonds through Creative Activities with Picture Books "
- ❖ There are 19 Family Support Volunteers who serve the Ban Fang District where two safe houses are located.
- ❖ "Youth Volunteer Life Skills Enhancement Activity ('Elder Reads to Younger)" was organized, with youth volunteers participating in a story reading training workshop to conduct picture book reading activities for children in the village during the weekends.



Outreach staff member Attaphon, engages children in a picture book, while training staff at a local school to do the same



Trained youth leaders read books to children in Khok Chang Sub-district Early Childhood Development Centre

Professional development of Mission Partners

The professional development of the Outreach Team members is on-going and as well as attending in person conferences/workshops, online courses and information sharing is also available. The staff have updated their areas of expertise in the following areas:

Nursing staff:

- AIDS prevention and control - hepatitis B and C
- Capacity Building for HIV Prevention and Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Safe School Workshops :
 1. "Preventing the Violation of the Physical Rights of School-aged Children"
 2. "Preparedness for Unexpected Incidents"
 3. Positive Parenting
- Safe Community Workshop: "Community Surveillance and Reducing Violence Against Children"

Social workers and community development staff:

- Mechanisms for Child Development Through Social Work Processes and Psychological Counselling
- Neuroscience and Early Childhood Development: "How a Child's Developing Brain is Harmed by the Environment"
- Criminal Justice System in Conducting Human Trafficking Cases)
- Exchanging Knowledge on Human Development issues to promote lifelong development "Psychological Resilience in a Changing World"
- Juvenile Offenses and Legal Approaches to Enforcement
- Caring for Children with Mental Health Issues Due to Abuse and Case Studies

Garden of Friendship

Donors assisted throughout the year with grants and donations to fund the patient care provided by the staff and their assistants, as well as to improve the living environment - the facilities and equipment used in such care.

57 patients accommodated in the Care Facility, Life Centre and TB Unit. (3 deaths)

Donations for equipment and infrastructure, included:

- ✓ Solar panels installed on the roof of the Life Centre, in November and it is hoped that these will cut the current high monthly electricity bills.
- ✓ Renovating the outside kitchen area and creating access to a store room for produce and ingredients
- ✓ Installing a covered roof where the patients congregate to protect from sun and rain
- ✓ Extending and covering the area where laundry is managed
- ✓ Purchase of a new washing machine and dryer



Solar panels installed on Life Centre



Gop and Kaew preparing meals in the new kitchen



Nurse assistant Porn, welcomes Ueng to the Garden, after Perm Sak has brought her from the hospital.

Admission to the Garden of Friendship usually occurs through referrals from hospitals or social welfare agencies but can be initiated by concerned relatives or neighbours in the villages that the Team visits.

Assessment is made by the nursing staff and social workers, who will liaise with hospital personnel and/or, try and contact family. This is essential for building up a medical and social history and to determine the best outcome for each patient.

With up to 40 residents at any one time, living together in the Garden Community, it is necessary to have an active programme for participation and guided interaction with others. To this end, all members of staff along with Sr Pranee, meet with the residents individually and as a group, to talk, discuss and plan together – especially when events for the community are approaching. At other times, residents will participate in art therapy, games, health education, daily exercise, singing and craft. The social workers and nursing staff will also meet with residents to discuss long term goals and plans for transfer out of the centre, if and when appropriate.



Daily exercise with nurse Khem



Sr Pranee addressing the community

At end of 2024, 39 adults and children were in residence

Critical Care Unit
 Admissions 8 M 6 F
 Transferred Life Centre 3 M
 Transferred out 2 F 1 M
 Deaths (in hospital) 1M 1 F
Current 3M 3F (1 boy stays with his mother)

Life Centre
 Admissions 10 M 18 F
 Transferred out 5 M 9 F
Current 5 M 9 F

TB UNIT
 Admissions 6M 6F
 Transferred out 1M 1F
 Transfer Critical Care 3M 2F
 Deaths in hospital 1F
Current 2M

Sr Mary's Cottage SMC
 Admissions 3M
Current 3 M

Family homes and units 5 M
 11 F 4 children
 Transferred out 3M
Current 5 M 8 F 4 children

New initiatives were embarked upon in the last twelve months, for the residents to develop according to their individual potential. Activities were assigned based on ability and interest and skills were developed, fostering a sense of pride. The activities included making doormats, growing organic bean sprouts, and crafting with wire. There was an income-generating component also, with the participants knowing they were helping both themselves and the community in the Garden.

A number of residents, who have regained their physical abilities and are making plans to transition to independent living, contribute to the daily tasks of caring for their community members. Cleaning, washing and folding clothes, assisting the cooks, watering gardens and for a few – helping staff to bathe the more dependent patients – are among the many responsibilities they take on.



Group involvement in separating the coloured pieces for mat making



Jiem holding the finished mats, which are sold locally



Beansprouts being grown in the Garden grounds, being picked by patients with decreased mobility

Agriculture

Certification as an Organic farm was finally given by the authorities, in November. The process had been a lengthy one, so official approval was welcomed.

2024 saw an intense training course conducted for the garden workers. It was a 'back to basics' approach and an experienced organic farming educator, was hired for the year, to both train, implement and mentor the workers. The growing medium for the eight covered plots with three ground planting beds each and the four covered plots with three above ground planting beds, was all replaced. This in itself was a long and labour intensive process during which, the gardens were not yielding produce. However, harvesting of the newly grown vegetables began in the later months of the year with successful yields.

The workers studied the theoretical and practical aspects of organic farming, while creating an environment that was clean and orderly for optimal productivity.

In the shorter growing time, 1 034 kgs of vegetables were harvested including: 11 varieties of lettuce, long beans, kale and cabbage. The beds are ready now for continual planting in the next twelve months. Additionally papaya and bananas were grown outside the houses, with 90 kgs of papaya picked.

Chickens

Two of the chicken compounds have been overhauled this year. New stock of 300 chickens arrived in July and are producing well, adding to the egg laying of the existing compound. A total of 76,713 eggs were collected. The third compound, which is actually the original chicken house, has been renovated but is awaiting to be stocked until the cold weather has past.



Plans for 2025 include:

- Enhancing **staff capacity** through training programmes to support patients with increasingly diverse and complex social needs.
- Creating designated spaces in the Garden of Friendship for activities that promote development and **career opportunities** in alignment with patients' needs.
- Identify appropriate **therapeutic activities** tailored to the potential and abilities of each patient.
- Dividing **Home Care** visits into two zones: Urban /Sa Khrai District). Patient care assistants from the Garden, will work alongside nursing staff during home visits, to develop their counseling skills and enhance their understanding of caring for disabled and bedridden patients.
- **Training** three patient care assistants in the Garden in both theoretical and practical aspects of nursing.
- Conducting **educational outreach activities** in four schools, on sexual health and reproductive health.
- Promoting **career opportunities** for the HIV-positive network in three additional hospitals, and conduct home visits for patients jointly with leaders from each hospital in Bueng Kan Province.
- Developing **leadership capacity** of volunteers, in collaboration with the Mercy Network, Bangkok.



1. Soil preparation – the best growing medium



2. Adding the soil and aerating the beds

Production of the perfect organic lettuce



3. Transferring the plants grown from seed to the beds



4. Two months and there are lettuces ready to harvest

CHILD AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

"Education is the foundation upon which we build our future." - Christine Gregoire

365 students
214F/151M
from **122** schools
in **155** villages

261 Kindergarten
to High school

70 Students in
vocational training

34 Students in
university

7 graduated with
Vocational Cert.
5 graduated with
Bachelor Degrees
(4F 1 M)

To enable the 'foundation'- ie. access to education- to be made laid for the students in the Child and Youth Development Programme, sponsors are required who meet the expenses of a child journeying from Kindergarten to Vocational Training or University.

In the 2024 school year, that runs from May 2024 – March 2025, private sponsors and those from organisations in France, Germany, Norway and Australia, provided the means by which 365 students could attend school and further their education. This was a 6.5% increase on the previous year. When sponsors are able to visit, there is further incentive for the students.

In March 2024, five students graduated with Bachelor Degrees in Accountancy, Political Science, Veterinary Technology and Business Administration, from four Universities.



*Kitsana
Sangkit*
Mary's Friends



*Pookky
Chantarin*
ACASEA



*Dounghathai
Wiwatpaiboon*
EFK



*Ploykwan
Wichai*
ACASEA



*Kunithida
Deesrem*
EFK

Visitation of the students at home is necessary to firstly assess their need for support and suitability to follow the programme's guidelines and to monitor continually, a child's family circumstances which are subject to change.

There are children whose parents have separated or moved away to find work, leaving the child with grandparents or other relatives. When a family member experiences ill health, disability or death, the child's world can change suddenly. Remarriage and the presence of a step-father, especially when female students reach their teenage years, can be a cause for concern and visitation is important.

Equally, contact with educational institutions, it is important to meet with educators and administrators in regard to each child's progress and family problems the teachers may be aware of. The Programme has contact persons in each school, vocational training centre and University, with whom they are in regular communication.

A twelve person committee assists the CYD Team in the running of their Programme. Their presence in the villages, provides a contact point with the children and their families. They will be alerted to sensitive and sometimes crisis situations concerning the children and will contact CYD staff. They accompany the staff on home and school visits and help prepare for parent meetings and student events.

They are responsible for the running of the Savings Groups with 340 current members and the Community Support Group (Death Fund) with 1,030 members, in four areas of the Bang Fang District. Both groups which have operated for the past 20 years, provide security to families to make loans and also pay for funeral expenses when a family member dies.



Committee member meet with sisters



A meeting with Community Savings Group members



340 members of
village savings

1,030 members of
village funeral fund



CYD staff member, Warapon (Party), visits a primary school student and his family at home in Don Sawan village



Sr Jintana (CYD Director) and Party, visit 'Bam', at her school

Networking is vital for the students to receive the best direction in determining their future. The CYD Staff foster working relationships with many government bodies and NGOs, accessing up to date policy information and being informed of opportunities for the advancement of the students. Taking on the role for liaising with agencies on behalf of parents, also guarantees a voice in decision-making regarding their children. At risk children can be accompanied and their situation monitored, with the capacity for intervention when needed.

In 2024, the CYD Team worked with:

1. Provincial government agencies:
 - Nong Khai Provincial Office,
 - The Nong Khai Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office
 - The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
2. Local government agencies, local administrative organizations and departments
3. Government agencies in the area of public and private education, kindergarten - secondary education and vocational institutions
4. NGOs
 - Nong Khai Welcome Home organization
 - Sarnelli House
 - Nong Khai Human Rights Promotion Center
 - SOS Children's Village Nongkhai
5. Inter faith collaboration
 - Catholic Church Organization in Udon Thani Diocese
 - Buddhist and Islamic representatives
6. Civil society organizations, committees and community volunteer's.



Training workshops

1. Topic: 'Child Safeguarding' Camp conducted for 66 students from the CYD Programme and Sarnelli House.
2. Topic: 'Teacher Guardians' – Child Protection, conducted with 60 teachers from 30 schools.



Student training



Teacher Training

2. "Children's rights - the value and dignity of oneself and others" - 85 parents and 185 children/youth.
3. "Environmental protection (Correct waste classification)" - 30 parents and 80 students



Computer Course

A 15 session, weekend Computer Training course is being offered to ten older students at a time, enabling three groups a year to receive tuition. The goal is to provide specialised tuition in using computer programmes for older students contemplating further study or work opportunities.

A teacher, Ms.Thipwanee Boonprung, has been hired to lead the children in their studies, overseen by the CYD staff. One group has successfully completed the course and the second group will begin in January 2025. Thanks to the Msgr Charelbois Trust for the donation enabling the implementation of this project.



Early childhood Reading Project

The Little Heroes and Sheroes group, which encourages students to commit to volunteering in their school and local communities has a membership of 50 from 20 schools. A sub- group of 25 students have learnt how to read stories to younger children and engage them in related activities. The Youth Leaders have been practicing these skills, to enable them to volunteer their time to early childhood centres in their community, developing young children's interest in books and learning. This group plans to meet twice a month for 5 months in 2025 to hone their skills.

Paithong uses his new skills to read to children in a local kindergarten.



"I have a passion for teaching kids to become readers, to become comfortable with a book, not daunted. Books shouldn't be daunting, they should be funny, exciting and wonderful; and learning to be a reader gives a terrific advantage."—Roald Dahl

Volunteering goes beyond the reading of stories to children. Opportunities to volunteer in local communities is encouraged and very much demonstrated when, following the floods, 30 students and 20 parents came to help with the cleanup operations in the Good Shepherd compound where the CYD office, the computer room and Gratitude Hall – the base for workshops – are situated.

With the Little Hero/Shero group established in the schools and having trained teachers in the same schools to act as mentors to the students, the members are encouraged to be the first point of call for peers in trouble, offering encouragement and advice. The ‘guardian’ teachers oversee their interactions, discuss options and can refer to the right channels if further action is required. The heroes/heroines are often the first to volunteer for school events.

Village Women’s group The CYD staff also monitor an initiative begun three years ago. With start up funds provided by a donor, the group of 15 women now run a sustainable business making cloth mats, mops and nets for local sale.



Community Watchdog Mini-Marathons

One of the priorities of the Good Shepherd Congregation, is Child Protection and Safeguarding. The CYD Programme staff have worked with communities, establishing Watchdog Centres in 15 villages over 9 districts and have trained 150 volunteers to address issues of domestic violence.

To highlight this, in January 2024, approximately 1,228 people participated in the campaign: ‘Stop Violence with Love’, with over 400 running, held at the Sufficiency Learning Centre. The Governor of Nong Khai interacted with the participants and also visited the village of Rong mek where the Sufficiency Learning Centre and Garden of Friendship are located, where he tied a white ribbon as a symbol of peace.

On December 27, there were again, approximately 1,119 people who joined a second campaign against violence. More organisations were involved with interfaith representatives also, joining the campaign. Bishop Leuchai from the Udon Thani Diocese was in attendance.



Plans for 2025

- Increasing the number of individually sponsored students.
- Hold the Anti-Violence Campaign twice, in April and November 2025 – invite additional schools to join.
- Three computer classes will be offered to 30 new students over the course of the year.
- Students interested in learning English, will hopefully have the opportunity to do so in weekend classes.
- Training of 60 new ‘Guardian Teachers from 30 schools, who will help increase the number of heroes/heroines in their schools, to reach out to their peers - especially those who are vulnerable.

SUFFICIENCY LEARNING CENTRE

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” – Benjamin Franklin



Those visiting the Sufficiency Learning Centre (SLC) are very much aware that while it invites groups to use the training facilities – seminar halls, dining rooms and accommodation – it is also a working farm. No longer does it teach farmers a diverse range of agricultural pursuits through training courses but it serves as a model farm for those who may wish to apply such methods of diversity and sufficiency, to their own situation.

There were 3,857 participants in events, workshops and seminars throughout the year with 762 from the Government or Public Sector, 951 from the Private Sector and 2,144 through Good Shepherd driven initiatives and the CYD Programme. 846 of the total number stayed overnight from two to seven days.

Topics for workshops included:

- Community based tourism
- Sufficiency Economy
- Psychological Counselling
- Drug prevention
- Elder’s Health
- Vocational training for PLWHA
- Youth Vocations promotion
- Therapeutic benefits of Thai massage
- Watchdog communities
- Uniting religious leaders
- Prevention of human trafficking
- Domestic violence awareness and prevention
- Child protection



Workshop conducted in outside





Facilities are well maintained and food services offer a varied menu using produce from the SLC itself, when possible— eggs, vegetables, mushrooms and fish. Morning and afternoon snacks are also provided according to the wishes of those hiring the facilities. Both dormitory style accommodation and private rooms are available.



As a **model working farm**, the workers manage a range of agricultural activities, while attending to groups visiting and using the facilities. Each worker multi tasks in the following areas:

❖ **Animal husbandry.** At the end of 2012, there were

- 14 cows (10 females, 4 males). 2 new births in 2024 (1 male, 1 female)
- 8 buffaloes (6 females, 2 males). 2 new births in 2024 (1 male, 1 female)
- 4 sheep were returned to a previous owner in Udon Thani in April
- 11 ducks (9 females, 2 males)
- 13 chickens and 19 chicks)

❖ **Vegetable cultivation**

- Two greenhouses: Spring onions, coriander, eggplant, dill, morning glory, kale, salad vegetables, celery, chili peppers, cucumbers, yard-long beans, mustard greens, Chinese cabbage, basil, sweet basil, hairy basil, tomatoes, mint.
- 1 rai (0.4 acres) of local vegetable plots and fruit trees - papaya and banana. Most of the vegetables are used for the food service in SLC, to reduce expenses. The surplus is sold to the local community.

❖ **Rice and grass planting**

- From planting 3 rai, 34 sacks of rice were harvested. The rice was used for seed (2 sacks), food for service users (16 sacks), and food for workers (16 sacks).
- Grass cultivation for animals: 4 rai of land at the front of the SLC, was used to plant grass.

❖ **Mushroom Cultivation**

Due to the need to renovate the mushroom houses – planned for 2025 – cultivation was not pursued. In early 2024 production of 4,500 oyster mushroom bags was attempted but due to the conditions of the damaged mushroom houses, the yield was not good.



Staff enhancement

The two staff members of the SLC, joined the sisters and staff of the other project areas formerly on two occasions during the year:

1. Good Shepherd Child Protection and Vulnerable Persons Policy review – as applied to each work place.
2. Partnership for Mission – historical context in Good Shepherd Congregation – meaning for today and personal commitment.



Cows returning to their stalls where they are housed at night

In 2024, SLC staff were involved in a multi-year project for the Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking in Nong Khai Province. Meetings of the sub-committee took place with the Provincial Social Development and Human Security Office of Nong Khai.

Campaigns were run targeting youth, parents and community leaders, in the districts of Sri Chiang Mai, Pho Tak and Sangkhom, to raise awareness about the current situation regarding human trafficking and the laws in place to safeguard those at risk.

Basic knowledges about the dangers of human trafficking - particularly online - and how to report suspect activity within families and communities. Also, knowledge about referring those affected to receive assistance from government agencies in accordance with international standards.

A total of 720 participants, took part in the campaigns.





HANDS OF HOPE

“You can’t use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.” - Maya Angelou

For twenty years, this has been the reality for those working in Hands of Hope where often it is said – the creative juices flow freely. Someone has an idea, produces a sample and after group critique and some modifications, a new product is made available to customers. The customers’ critique is demonstrated in the orders received - or not.



Pik

Samorn

Pit

Nuphit

Gay

Got

Sanit

As Hands of Hope approaches its 20th ‘birthday’ in February 2025, the future is in the hands of its customer base. If orders continue to be received, then production will be on-going. Although just a small group of producers now - following the sudden death of Sirisopha (Gay 2), in June, the core group is down to seven - they are a cohesive unit and have managed to produce an amazing number of products over the year. The group uses a team approach to the work, utilizing their special talents to complement one another. Creativity flourishes and although annual design workshops ceased a few years ago, new designs continue to emerge. This year, Boxed Angels were extremely well received with 22 different designs and a new Christmas angel appeared ready for the annual fair in Bangkok at year’s end. A new Nativity Set was also launched and new customised orders were produced.



Gay 2



Orders were shipped around the world to Germany, France, Australia, New Zealand, America, England, Northern Ireland and Ireland, with local destinations of Bangkok, Phuket and Chiang Mai. There were 22 private customers, 9 shop destinations and 4 organisations. There has been a notable improvement in sales since the shutdowns and restrictions of the Covid years.

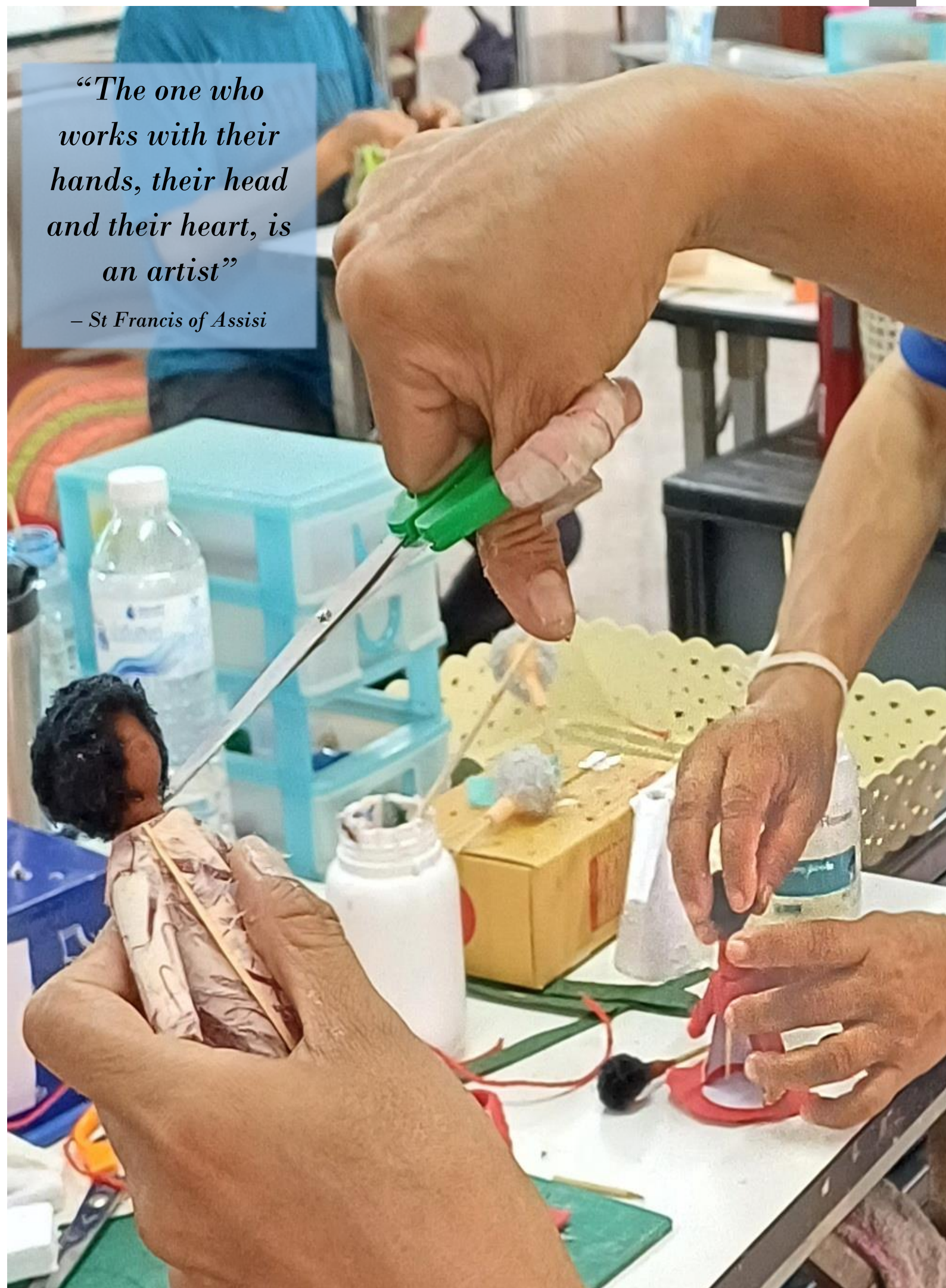
One of our highlights every year, is welcoming visitors and 2024 saw people arriving from Ireland, Italy, Denmark, Australia, Germany, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Holland, Belgium and France, with additional visitors from Bangkok and other parts of Thailand. It is always a joy to interact with those coming through the doors and visits mostly result in sales, when the products are seen in the on-site ‘shop’.



The Bangkok Fair mentioned previously, is run by the British Charities group in Bangkok, who support Good Shepherd projects from the proceeds each year. Hands of Hope was a beneficiary this past year with a donation to extend the fishing pier and purchase a third solar powered aerator for the fish pond. The daily workings of the aerators has led to more oxygenation of the pond water and fish deaths have not occurred since the massive death toll in 2022, prior to the first two machines.

“The one who works with their hands, their head and their heart, is an artist”

– St Francis of Assisi



For four years, tilapia – a fresh water fish common throughout the world but particularly in warmer climates – have been raised and much has been learned from the experience.

In 2024, there were five new intakes of fingerlings, 329 kgs of fish were sold fresh and a further 249 kgs were caught for drying.

Drying the fish was made a lot easier, when in July, the project was gifted a dehydrator. Insects were no longer a problem and fish could be dried through the raining season.

As the dehydrator has two drying units, in the latter half of the year, the producers began experimenting with fruit, turning bananas and papaya from our gardens, into nutritious snacks.



Tending the nets which constitute the fish ‘cages’ is an ongoing activity and the group comes together to attend to this, especially before a new intake of fingerlings. There are currently a total of 22 cages holding fish from fingerling size (10 -15g) to those ready for selling at 500 - 600g. Fish for drying get harvested at approximately 350 g. The cost of fish pellets rose in the past year and so thrice daily feeding is supplemented with duck weed and sweet potato leaves.

Two problems impacted the fish project. The first was a huge tree growing on the banks of the pond uprooted during a storm and falling into the pond, yet narrowly missing the pier. The branches below water level could not be removed but those above were cut back with assistance given from the staff and workers in the Garden of Friendship. As the pond waters receded after the wet season, further branches could be cut.

The second problem was the rapid growth of water hyacinth that unattended, would have taken over the pond’s surface. Water hyacinth is used in the cages to improve water quality for the fish but stray plants had quickly multiplied around the pond’s perimeter. A concerted effort was made to manually remove it using the project’s boat with many trips to gather it, take it to shore and carry it to the composting pile. Again, a team effort.





*“The strength of the team is
each individual member.
The strength of each
member is the team.”*
– Phil Jackson

Monthly project news is communicated through a blog posting on the final day of the month at www.handsofhopenongkhai.wordpress.com

Orders can be placed by visiting the website www.handsofhopewholesale.com

Contact can be made with the project to negotiate special orders, arrange a visit or just to keep in touch by email - contact@handsofhopenongkhai.com

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

DRINKING WATER PRODUCTION

In the past twelve months, two new initiatives have been implemented in the Good Shepherd convent grounds.

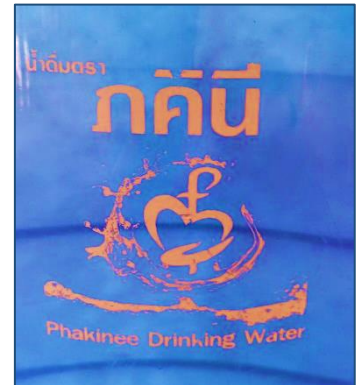
Since the closure of the Regina Women's Centre, the buildings have been repurposed with one building used by the CYD Programme and renamed the 'Gratitude Hall', where groups of students attend weekend workshops and meetings.

Part of the main production room was sectioned off this year, to create a clean storage area to be used for the new Water Bottling Project that was implemented at the end of 2023 using the Regina Centre's out buildings and garage, refurbished for this purpose.

The project has been highly successful with orders received and distributed schools, companies, homes and organisations around Nong Khai.

Sr Yanee oversees the daily running and functioning of the equipment which had been donated previously. The refurbishing of the rooms, purchase of equipment and start up salary for one worker, had been provided by additional donors, including the purchase of a second hand vehicle for deliveries.

The water production, using an onsite well and purification unit, has been certified by the government for distribution.



KITCHEN GARDEN

Prior to 2024, a covered vegetable garden area in the land behind the convent had been established but had not been restored after storm damage and had been dormant for a year.

A donation was received from the States, to revive the garden and work began. Beds were already established and a water system previously installed, which needed only minor repairs. Plastic roofing had to be completely replaced.





Soil was prepared using a similar method to that used in the Garden of Friendship, for this garden was to be organic in nature also.

Two gardeners - a couple from Laos - with knowledge and experience in growing vegetables, were employed. They cut the grass that was growing wild in and around the beds, dried it in the sun and added it to the compost that was being prepared.

It was decided to grow six types of vegetables popular among locals, for the intention was to sell that which was surplus to use in the convent.

Vegetables that yielded fast results were favoured, such as morning glory and Chinese morning glory, with a growing period of only 25-30 days before it can be harvested.

Other vegetables planted - long beans, parsley and celery - take 40-45 days from seed planting to harvesting.

Expanding growing area

Apart from growing vegetables in the greenhouse, land outside was not being utilised, so this was ploughed and enriched, to increase the area for planting 'yard long' beans.

September floods 14th – 17th September

When the Mekong River rose rapidly above the retaining walls, water swept through the streets to the convent compound, flooding the grounds including the vegetable garden. Vegetables that had been planted were under water for so many days, that most died.

It was soul destroying for the two workers who had lovingly tended the gardens, as they saw the results of their labour destroyed.



The debris had to be removed and the soil prepared once again before new planting could begin.

With an immediate response, the workers took on the task of restoring the gardens to their former glory and within two months, vegetables were once again, being harvested in large quantities.

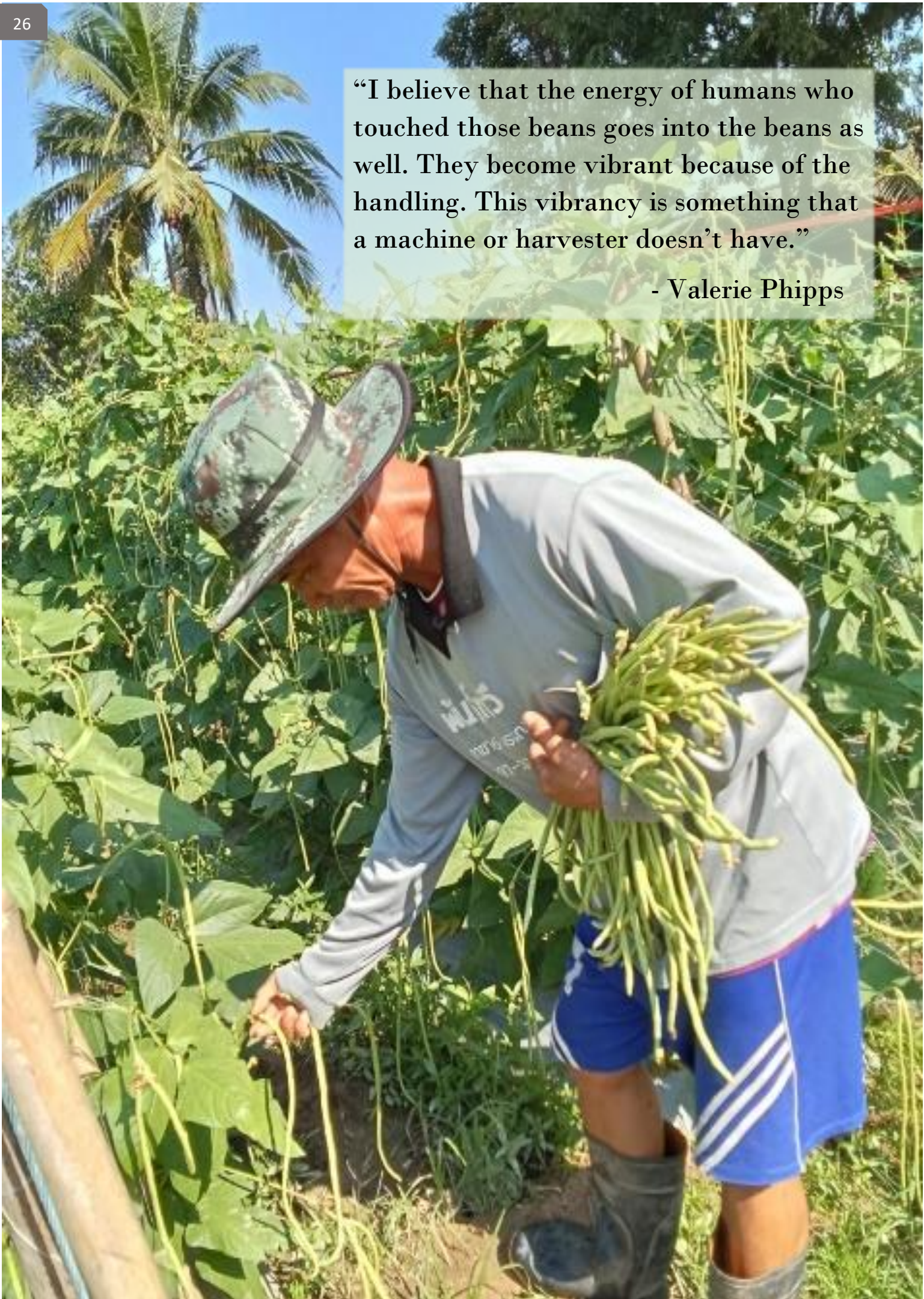


Sales in the local evening market and at the parish church



“I believe that the energy of humans who touched those beans goes into the beans as well. They become vibrant because of the handling. This vibrancy is something that a machine or harvester doesn’t have.”

- Valerie Phipps

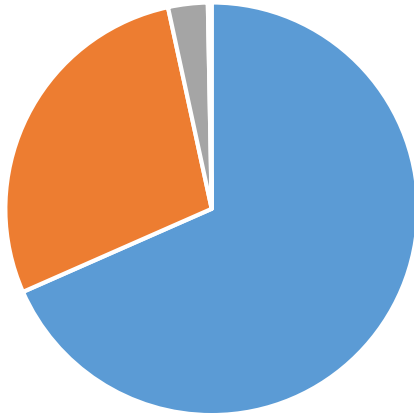


The following pages provide an overview of income sources across the project areas and a collective view of expenditure.

For full financial reporting, refer to our Annual Audit 2024

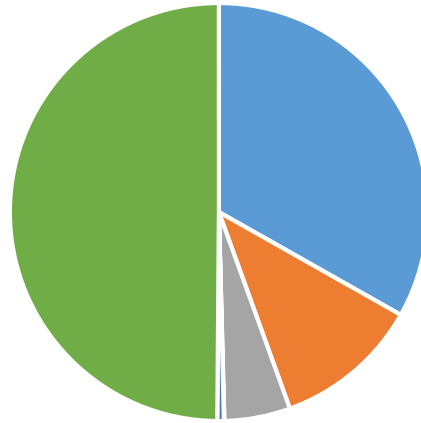
SOURCES OF INCOME ACROSS THE PROJECTS %

Village Outreach Programme



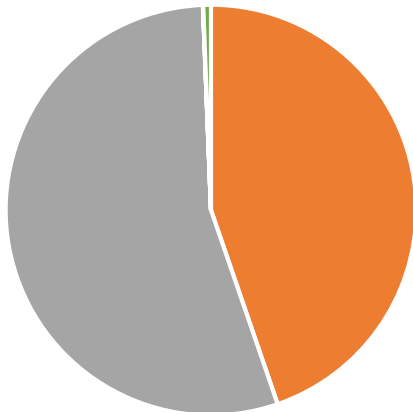
■ Grants 68.4% ■ Donations 28.2%
■ Self generated 3.1% ■ Interest 0.3%

Child & Youth Development Programme



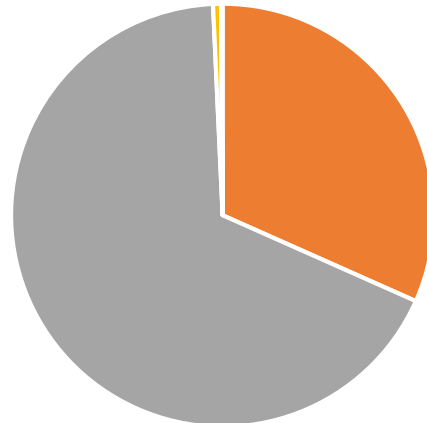
■ Grants 33.2% ■ Donations 11.3%
■ Self generated 5.1% ■ Interest 0.04%
■ Members 0.5% ■ Sponsorship 49.9%

Sufficiency Learning Centre



■ Donations 44.7% ■ Self generated 54.6%
■ Interest 0.008%

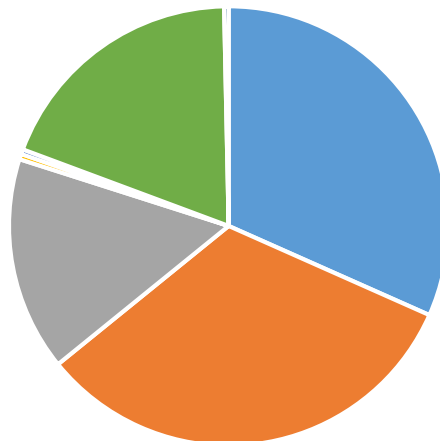
Hands of Hope



■ Donations 31.45% ■ Self generated 67.18%
■ Interest 0.6% ■ Members 0.12%

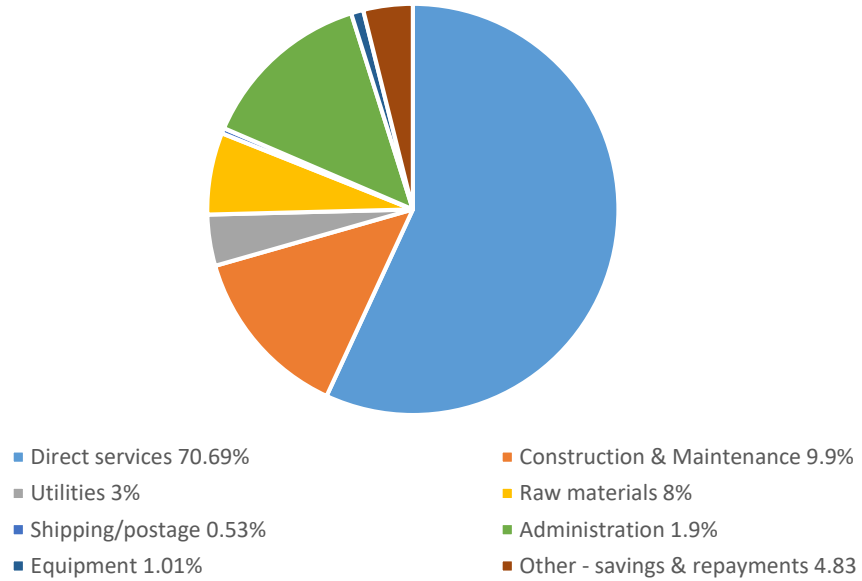
TOTAL INCOME ALL PROJECTS

Total income 2024 including balance from 2023: 28 104 596.86 THB



■ Grants 31.65% ■ Donations 32.51% ■ Self-generated 15.76% ■ Interest 0.4%
■ Members 0.35% ■ Sponsorship 19% ■ Repayments 0.33%

COMBINED PROJECT EXPENDITURE

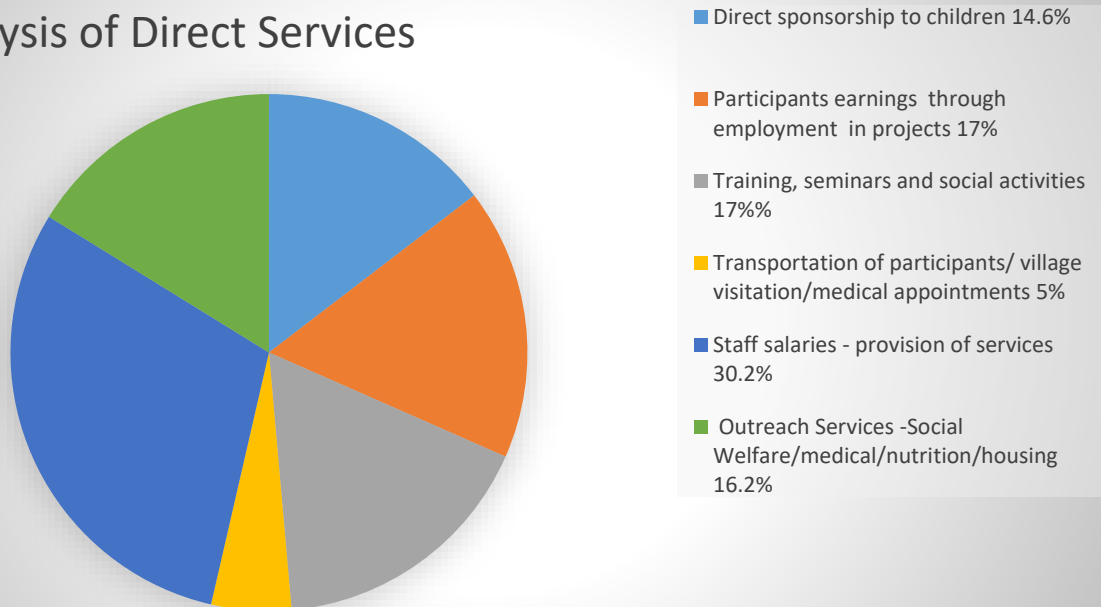


Notes on Expenditure

Direct services account for 70.7 % of the expense budget.
 An additional 19.4% of the budget is used in the execution of the projects ie. Raw materials, postage of produced items, equipment, building and maintenance.
 9.9% for Administration (incl. audit), utilities + other.

Total expenditure 2024: 25 804 352.36 THB

Analysis of Direct Services



*With gratitude to all who
 have partnered with us
 in 2024*