

The Plight

OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN BURMA

Woman and Child Rights Project (Southern Burma)

Issue No.4/2007, December 2007

REPORT:

CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN MON IDPs AREAS

I. The situation of children in Mon IDPs Areas

Decades of civil war between the Burmese military regime and ethnic minorities have greatly affected ethnic minorities in the rural areas of southern Burma – Karen State, Mon State and Tenasserim Division. Ethnic minorities face various kinds of human rights violations, including destruction of villages and forced displacement, sexual violence, arbitrary punishment, and forced labor. In response, many ethnic populations have fled southern Burma for areas near the Thai-Burma border, which are controlled

by the New Mon State Party (NMSP). Eighty percent of the people are of Mon ethnicity, but Karen, Tavoy, Pa-O, Burmese and others have also sought refuge. Prior to a ceasefire between the NMSP and the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), camps for Mon and other ethnic refugees were on Thai soil. In 1995, after the NMSP reached a ceasefire agreement with the SPDC, ethnic peoples lost their refugee status and had to return to Burma. Consequently, some people who had fled civil war in over the previous decades returned to their homes. Others, however, could not return home and remained in the ceasefire zone controlled by the NMSP, which the NMSP organized into four areas for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). They are the Halockhani area, located near the Thai-Burma border crossing at Three Pagoda Pass Township, Three Pagoda Pass areas,



REPORT:CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN MON IDPs AREAS

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Message From

Woman And Child Rights Project (Southern Part of Burma)

Woman and Child Right Project (WCRP) is an cooperative activity with Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) and it has main activity in collecting the information related to the human rights violations of women and children in southern part of Burma (Myanmar). It also aims to get world community's awareness for the protection of the rights of women and children.

The Burma's military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 to guarantee the rights to women in Burma. Similarly the regime also ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 to guarantee the rights to children in Burma. However, the regime has failed in their implementation of the conventional rights and the human rights violations against women and children systematically.

WCRP is dedicated to inform the world community what happens to general women and children in Burma and plans to educate them to know about their rights as the following objectives.

1. To monitor and protect the woman and child rights, by collecting information about their real situation by referencing the CEDAW and CRC, and distribute information to world community.
2. To strengthen women and children community, by providing on their rights accordingly to CEDAW and CRC ratified by regime and encourage them to participate in the struggle in the protection of their own rights.

the Tavoy area, located in Yeebyu Township and the Bee Ree area, located in Ye Township.

Although the NMSP has abided by its ceasefire for almost eleven years, the junta's military operations, development projects and economic policies continue to violate the human rights of people in Southern Burma. People continue to be displaced to border areas and some have migrated to Thailand and other neighboring countries. Estimating how many IDPs live in the NMSP ceasefire zone is difficult because people are spread throughout a region made up of mountains and thick jungle. According to statistics from an October 2007 report by the Mon Relief and Development Committee (MRDC), the population of IDPs living in official resettlement sites is 11,713, of whom 1,298 are children under five years old. According to August 2007 numbers, the Health Rehabilitation Project of Mon National Health Committee helps 15,333 IDPs in the greater NMSP ceasefire zone, 1,664 of who are children under five years old. The Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) reports that there are over 41,600 IDPs in Mon State ceasefire areas in 2007.¹

Children who migrate to neighboring counties with their parents have more opportunities – health care, food security and education – than children who live in IDPs areas in Burma. For the thousands of children that remain in the NMSP areas for IDPs, living conditions are harsh and the barriers to child development significant. Children face malnutrition, poor education, inadequate health care, shelter and clothing. Children have very little access to international assistance and parents struggling to generate income have little time to see to their care.

The living conditions of most children in the IDPs areas violate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC entered into force in 1990, and the Burmese regime acceded to it in 1991. All signatory states, including Burma, are required to enforce its mandates and must appear before the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child for an accounting of their practices. In spite of appearing before the CRC Committee, Burma continues to make little progress towards fulfilling the obligations of the treaty. The Convention acknowledges that children have a right to life, a name and identity, as well as the right to live within a family or cultural group. The CRC outlines a child's right to good quality health care and education, and specifies that children be allowed to learn the language and customs of their family and cultural grouping. These rights to apply all children, without exception, whether they live inside or outside the NMSP ceasefire zone.

II. Food for children in IDP areas

Children in Mon IDPs areas face significant nutritional problems. International assistance is inadequate and the MRDC only provides supplies for three resettlement sites at Bee Ree camp, Tavoy camp and Halockhani camp. This leaves four thousand or more IDPs living in the greater NMSP area with little support. Although it provides some assistance to these IDPs, the MRDC has struggled to fund projects after international donor support decreased following the NMSP ceasefire. The MRDC can now only afford to supply food for five or six month; eight kilograms of rice per child and sixteen kilograms per adult each month. These supplies are insufficient for people to healthily subsist on, and since IDPs do not have the money to purchase outside sources of nourishment, many children suffer from malnutrition.

(Footnotes)

¹ October 2007 survey internal displacement in eastern Burma (TBBC)

Children must rely on their parents for everything they do not get from donors. Jobs are not available at the resettlement sites and most parents have to seek work outside the camps. Employment is very difficult to find, and as a result parents forage for food in nearby forests. Forests near resettlement sites also provide raw materials for home building and the sale of forest products. Unfortunately, resources from forests in the NMSP ceasefire areas are decreasing rapidly. From 1990 to 1995 forests in IDPs areas remained healthy because the IDPs population was smaller and the MRDC could supply people with sufficient food. As the IDPs population has grown in the last decade and MRDC resources have shrunk, IDPs have had to increase their reliance upon food foraged in the forest.



MRDC

Child lack of nutrition in Mon IDPs area

By 2007, the forests in the NMSP ceasefire areas show the marked effects of a decade of supporting the heavy reliance of IDPs.

Timber companies, not IDPs, should receive the bulk of blame for the destruction of forests in the NMSP ceasefire areas. Irrespective of how the forests got to their current state, they are now sufficiently depleted to make foraging for food be IDPs exceedingly difficult. In December 2007, the leader of the Halockhani camp said that twenty families faced starvation because they received insufficient support from the MRDC, could not find work and could no longer find food in the forest. The families had to go house and house to begging for rice. Based on interviews, the estimates of the Halockhani leader are low – eighty percent of people in the camp face similarly poor circumstances; most people can find little extra nourishment from the forest, and can eat only two meals a day, primarily of rice.

A teacher from Halockhani camp describes the situation:

“Most of my students’ foodstuff containers just have rice and their curry is only fish paste. They very rarely have meat curry. In this year, I have seen four of my students who don’t even have any curry in their foodstuff container. For their lunch they go to the garden near the school and pick some vegetables. But that garden uses pesticides and the children don’t clean the vegetables before they eat. They get sick from the vegetables and I have to send them to the hospital.”



Unsafe sheltering, Careless and dangerous food provision and dirty play surrounding can cause health of small children in IDPs communities.

Until it ended in 2005, a MSF nutrition program provided families with quarterly supplies of eggs, beans, oil, canned fish and coffee mate, as well as monitored child weight and nutrition. Since the program ended, many children in IDPs areas are underweight, malnourished and suffer from severe dehydration and have not been checked by doctors in over three years. In May 2007, doctors in Halockhani checked children and found, in just one area, that more than ten children suffered from malnutrition. “I see children crying that suddenly just give up,” said the head of the Holockhani hospital. “They are so hungry they do not have the energy to cry.”

The Senior Medic in Palaing-Japan hospital said that at least five children a month who come seeking treatment suffer from malnutrition. A medic from the Tavoy resettlement site said the number of children facing malnutrition at Tavoy is higher than other resettlement sites. Children in the Tavoy site face the worst circumstances.

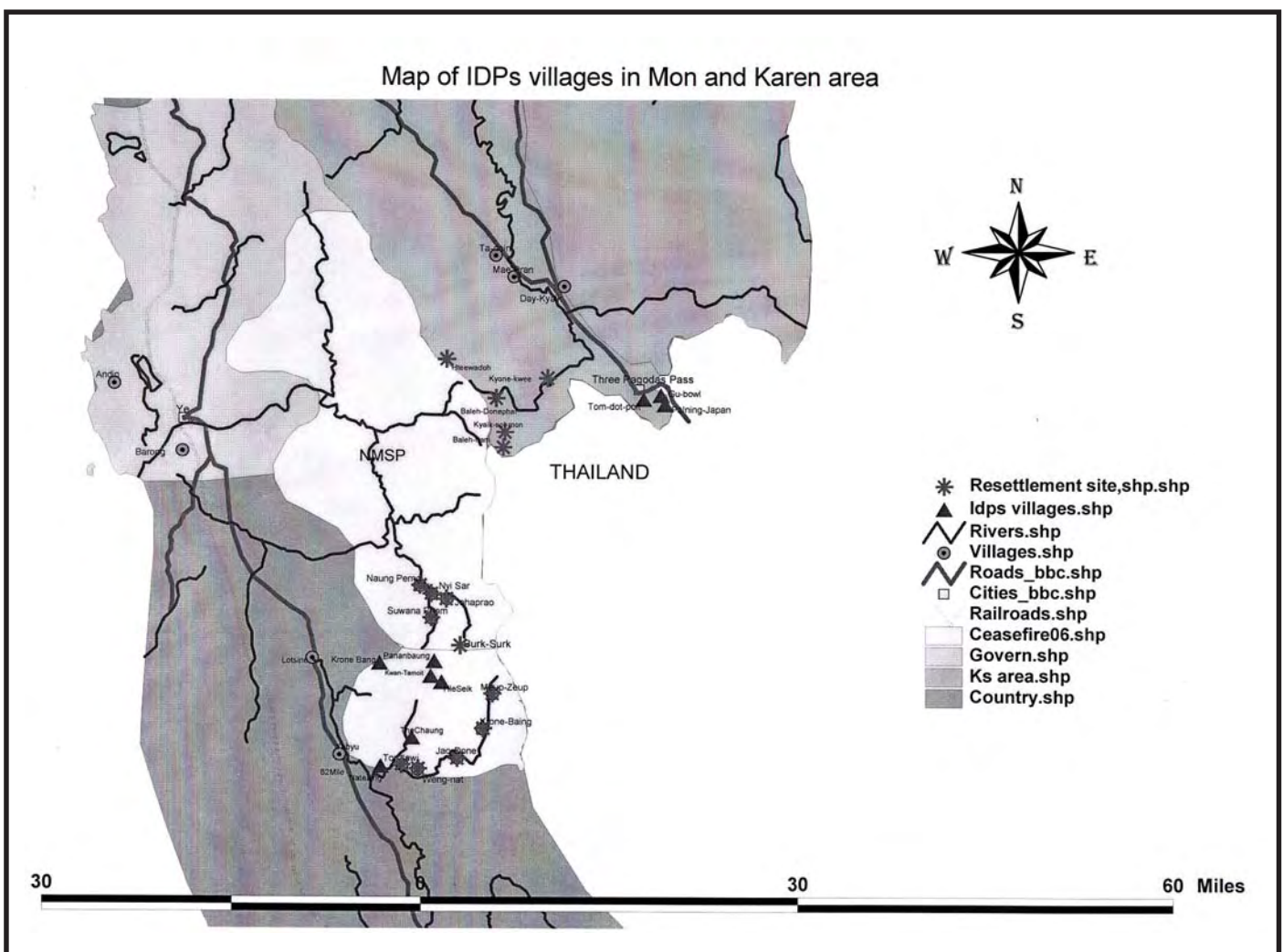
Transportation is not available in the rainy season and it is difficult to travel even in the dry season, limiting access to work and health care. Security is also a serious concern because of the threat of violence from timber companies and the SPDC, the medic said.

Nutrition is very important for children. Children suffering from malnutrition develop slowly, and are more susceptible to disease and sickness. Mothers with poor diets can only produce breast-milk of low nutritional value, and medics report seeing malnutrition begin at birth, with some babies dying before they are weaned. According to a medic from the Halockhani camp, doctors in IDPs resettlement do not have any formal nutrition programs. "All we can do is try to treat the children very carefully," the doctor said.

III. Health care for children

In IDP areas, children suffer from several health problems, including malaria, measles, diarrhea, anemia and other diseases. Many children under five years old suffered from anemia in October 2007 – Halockhani alone was home to more than two hundred cases. Malaria is also serious problem in IDPs areas, especially in April, May and June, when malaria patients fill up clinics and hospitals in resettlement sites and IDPs villages.

Measles has become a problem for children in IDPs areas since the departure of the MSF ended vaccination services. "In 2008, we are wondering if we will get vaccinations for Measles and Polio," said the head of the Halockhani hospital. ***"We MHEC doctors noticed that there are many children suffering from measles disease in IDPs areas. We feel unsatisfied for this because we the doctors want to treat this disease very much and we don't have any vaccination program to stop this disease," said a medic at the same hospital.***



Map of IDPs village in Mon and Karen Areas (Map by MRDC)

The resurgence of measles points to the primary obstacle to child health in IDPs areas: lack of funding. A variety of NGOs, including the TBBC, Burma Relief Committee, and MSF Belgium, support nine hospitals in the NMSP IDPs areas. But these hospitals treat forty thousand people a year, a number dwarfs the total number of IDPs people thought to live in the entire NMSP ceasefire zone. The extra patients come from within Burma, mostly Mon state, but the hospitals also serves people recently deported from Thailand.

The hospitals are chronically understaffed, and the chairman of MHEC in Sangkhlaburi estimates that they will need eighty more medics in 2008. The funding shortage also encourages medics to leave after they complete their mandatory five year residency following medical training; paid just five hundred baht a month, over seventy-five have quit in the last few years.

Medical personnel also struggle because they have only general medical training and are not children's health specialists. "We are not perfect," the head of the Holockhani hospital said. "We are still learning from experience." Funding does not, however, exist to put medics through follow-up training so that they can learn more about treating children. Even the NMSP party medical school faces budgetary constraints, and the number of students admitted each year is down to twenty or thirty, from fifty or sixty a few years ago. "In my opinion, it should be possible for us to have a special hospital for the children," the head of the Holockhani hospital said. But a budget, skilled people and a building are required.

Budgetary constraints have also made the cost of children's medicine prohibitive. Liquid medicines and dosages appropriate for small children are more expensive than adult medicines; too expensive for NMSP IDPs hospitals. Medics describe cutting up pills so they are the right size for small children, but often find that the children will not take the medicine because it is too bitter. One doctor described having children get better in just a few days after using his one bottle of children's medicine, only to have recovery take much longer when he had to switch to modified adult medicines.

Physically accessing medical care also presents a problem. Some IDPs must travel great distances to find care, an almost insurmountable obstacle in places where the roads are poor in the dry season and impassible in the rainy season. For other IDPs, there are no motor-vehicle accessible roads linking them with NMSP hospitals. The head of the Holockhani hospital estimated that more than a hundred villages like at least an hour's walk from medical care. For parents who are very poor and must work all the time, transportation difficulties are often enough to dissuade them from seeking medical care for their children.



WCRP

Children at the Halockhani camp's nursery school

Many parents also know little about modern medicine, and do not know when health problems are serious enough to demand treatment for their children. This hesitancy to seek medical care is worsened by general feelings of mistrust felt by parents towards the clinics. Clinics in the NMSP IDPs zones use the French medical method, which minimizes the use of injections. For parents who believe they should receive an injection that quickly resolves their health problems, the ostensibly slower French process seems suspicious. "This method takes time," the head of the Holockhani hospital said, "but it's better for new medics who have less experience."

Minors' Labour

Comprehensive report on the worst forms of child labour in Burma (Myanmar)

Executive Summary

Burma has been ruled by successive military regimes since 1962. A pro-democracy uprising occurred in 1988, but Burma's military (official pronunciation: *tatmadaw*) in cracked down heavily on the demonstrators and reestablished firm control, under new leadership. The new regime, State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), ratified "The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)" on July 16, 1991. The Convention means that the regime guarantees all rights of children described in CRC and it is likely that they promised the international community that the treaty would be respected.

In reality however, millions of children in Burma are in situations of deep poverty because of the regime's mismanagement

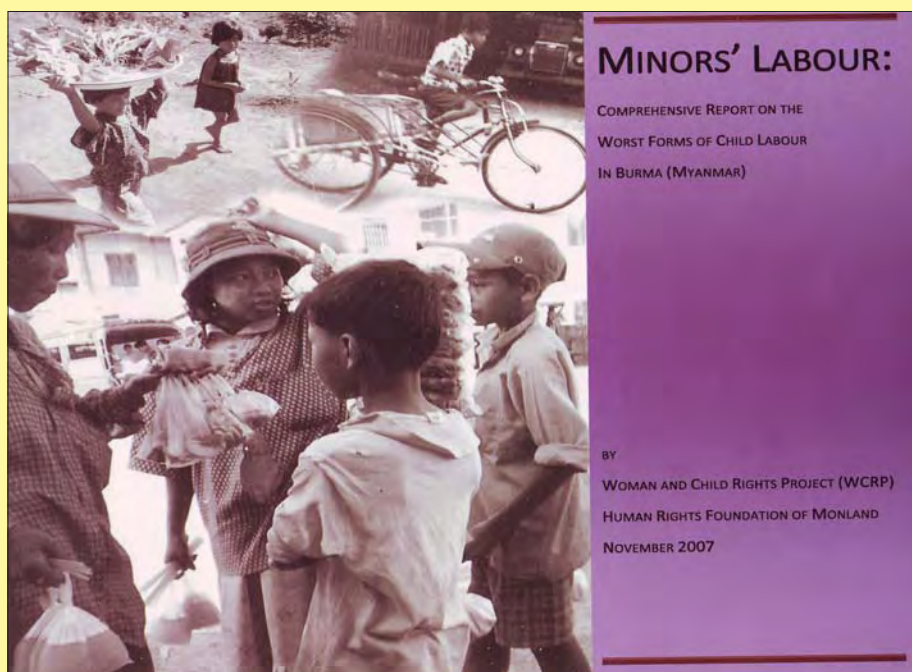
of the State economy and the extension of its armed force, the *tatmadaw*. Poverty in families and in the communities has seriously affected the childhood, education, physical growth and psychological status of children. Parents have used their children or they let them work for other employers, allowing the to be engaged in the worst forms of labour, such as farming (agriculture), factories, construction and other workplaces.

Even though the SLORC or SPDC (the current regime, State Peace and Development Council) have said that they have enforced 'child protection laws', there has been no proof that the regime is actively involved in taking steps that would uproot the worst forms of child labour

systematically. Thus far, the SPDC's media and communities groups, such as the SPDC organized NGOs like **The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA)** and **Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAF)**, have merely paid lip service to addressing the problem.

The general population has little if any knowledge of the fact that 'the use of children' in the worst forms of labour for several hours is a 'crime'. The regime has never involved itself in the protection of these children by disseminating information from CRC to the general public. Hence, the villagers, the town residents and migrant workers in Thailand do not understand that there is a violation of the child rights if they use their children or hire children in their jobs. In conjunction with this problem, there is no political will by SPDC to combat the use of child labour, partly due to the fact that the SPDC has engaged in the practice itself. For example, the regime has recruited child soldiers into its army, the *tatmadaw*, systematically. According to the reports and estimations of international organizations, there are about 70,000 child soldiers in the Burmese Army.

According to our documentation on the use of child labour from 44 cases, children are often used in the very worst forms of labour when compared with their ages and physical structures. They have to work in: rice-fields, rubber plantations and orchards, char-coal burning factories, brick-making factories, tea and coffee shops, various types of stores, brothels and



other work places. In the worst cases, boys are still recruited into the armed forces by not only the Burmese Army, but also by a small number of ethnic armed groups, while some girls have to work in the sex trade to seek income for their families.

Use of child labour is normally related to economic exploitation. Since the employers have to pay less to children and their labour contribution is not much different to adults, many children are hired. The children are hired in farms and plantations in the rural areas, while many children in cities and towns suffer from low wages, employment in factories, stores and tea and coffee shops.

Working hours for these children are extreme. They have to work the same amount of hours as adults. Many of them have to work about 10 hours a day. These children have to wake up early in the morning like adults in order to reach their work places on time. In work places, the child labourers have to carry heavy loads. Therefore, both the nature of work and the working hours can be considered as 'worst forms of labour' used by employers, parents and State authorities.

This report comprises 44 cases on the use of child labour in its worst forms. 31 cases concern hard day labour work such as construction, collection of firewood and plastic wastes, in rubber products industries and making charcoal; 5 cases are working in stores, restaurant and entertainment places; 5 cases are in agriculture jobs; 1 case refers to a sex worker and 2 cases concern recruitment into the armed forces.

This report also aims at providing the International Community with understanding of the real plight of children in various parts of Burma, despite the fact that the SPDC ratified the CRC. On the other hand, WCRP also wants the ruling SPDC to guarantee the rights of the child as previously promised and to give a commitment to the International Community especially to the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Recommendations

To The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC):

1. To create a special child rights protection body with strong legislative power and ensure access to information on the use of child labour in all levels of families, communities, industries and the armed forces.
2. To take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency.
3. To design and implement programmes of action to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, in consultation with families, community leaders, INGOs, UN Agencies, employers and other concerned groups and allow independent monitoring body to monitor the implementation of such programmes.
4. To take account on the counseling and rehabilitation of the boys and girls who suffer from the worst forms of labour and support for the special needs of the girls and other children at special risk.

To The International Community:

1. To ensure that the SPDC in Burma is committed to implement the Articles in CRC which were ratified over a decade ago and pressure the SPDC to cooperate with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee of Experts on ILO's Convention No. 182: Worst Forms of Child Labour and other International NGOs in order to eliminate child labour in Burma.
2. To ensure the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child has a mandate in Burma to access the situation of children in order to obtain information how children are involved in the worst forms of child labour including the plight of children in the armed forces.
3. To ensure that the worst forms of child labour including the recruitment of child soldiers in Burma is a matter of international import and pressure the ruling regime to design and implement programmes that combat child labour countrywide.
4. To cooperate with the SPDC and other competent authorities in providing rehabilitation and social integration of the children who are relieved from work places involving special risks, such as those in the armed forces, trafficking and prostitution.

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News:

Women's Groups Say on Violence Against Women in Thailand-Burma Border Area

On December 21st, a 22 year old married woman from the Tavoy district in the New Mon State Party ceasefire zone was killed by anonymous assailant. Residents believed that

On December 22nd, a 13 year old girl, from Palaing-Japan (Japan Yetwin in *Burmese*) village, Three Pagoda Township, was tricked into staying with him in the bushes until the evening. When her parents could not find her anywhere in the village at 8pm, they became worried. One of her uncle saw that she was kept in the bushes and he sent back her home. A Mon women's organization from the village sued Nai Naing, saying that he wanted to rape her or planned to sell her to someone else. "If he was honest, why did he have to keep her in a dark place?" they asked.



Stop Violence Against Women Day in Thai-Burma Border

it might have been a gang rape, after which the perpetrators killed the woman to cover up their crime.

Villagers found the woman's body, her neck tied with her bodice, buried under sand near a foot path. She is believed to have been killed as she traveled to a near by village to sell vegetables. The identity of her murderer(s) remains unknown, and the area is frequented by strangers traveling through or working at nearby logging sites. A woman from the Mon Relief and Development Committee said that when she heard about the case she was "in shock, because I usually traveled into that area and she did not feel safe. It is very horrific story for the people who live at that area."

WCRP

A woman activist from Thai-Burma border said that violence against women happens in many places and is not limited to just Mon communities. In Mon communities, many people lack knowledge and do not protect women from facing violence. Violence is a familiar reality for many women, who face domestic violence and think it is a family problem and no concerned with the community.

On November 25th, some Mon women's groups cooperated to celebrate an International Stop Violence Against Women Day. The celebration aimed at protecting women from violence and to raising the awareness of Mon community leaders, teachers, health workers, parents and authority.

The Mon women's groups working on the Violence Against Women (VAW) program in Sangkhlaburi called for men to cooperate in stopping violence against women. The groups also said women have to help protect women from abuse and encourage the cooperation of local people.

IV. Nursery Schools for Children (for Mental Development)

There are currently only four nursery schools in Mon IDPs areas. After the Mon Women's Organization (MWO) opened a nursery in the Halockhani camp, nurseries were opened in Gook-cha near Palaing-Japan village and Naung Pern village and Jo Haprao villages, both in the Bee Ree resettlement site. In 2008, there are plans for another nursery school in Baleh-Donephai village, Halockhani resettlement site. Childcare workers provided by MWO care for children age three to five years old. Presently, ten child care workers in four nursery schools provide child care service for one hundred and ten children. This is less than one percent of the estimated one thousand children under five living in the NMSP ceasefire zone.

The existing nursery schools have been lucky, and NGOs have provided them with equipment as well as helped them pay for food costs, teacher salaries and other expenses. The Palaing-Japan nursery school and three nursery schools run by MWO are provided for by an NGO from Europe. The Pattarrat Foundation, a Thai NGO, also provides some assistance to the Gook-cha nursery school. The TBBC also provides equipment to the children such as blankets, mosquito nets and mats.

Activity:

Hold Universal Children Day Ceremony

The Halockhani refugee camp held a Universal Children Day Ceremony September 20th, sponsored by the Woman and Child Rights Project (WCRP) and arranged by community organizations and individuals. The WCRP received cooperation from the All Mon Youth Organization, in Halockhani camp. More than 450 people including students, parents, camp leaders, medical workers and villagers joined the celebration.

Mi Jarai Non, the coordinator of the Woman and Child Rights Project, gave a speech explaining

the aim of the Universal Children's Day celebration. The goal is to help children understand their rights, she said, as well as make parents, teachers, medical workers and camp leaders encourage and accept children's cooperation among themselves and to remind all of them that they should take action against any violation of children's rights, including child abuse. She explained that everyone under eighteen is a child under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) even though in Burma a child is defined as someone under

sixteen years old. She went on to say that children's rights include the right to good quality education, the right to learn and use the language and customs of their own families,

the right to protection from work that is dangerous or might harm their health and their education, the right to good quality health care, and the right not to be abducted or sold. These rights apply to all children without exception, she said.

The WCRP especially wanted the children to understand their rights, and the group also went to the Mon National School to explain to students in their classes. At the



Universal Children Day in Halockhani camp

WCRP

school, 335 students were separated into four groups so that they could learn about their rights. Four main speakers explained children's rights to the children and teachers. After the WCRP team explained about children's rights the team let them play many games reflecting the rights of the child. The team also encouraged them to draw their goals for life, their family and the surroundings they want to live in. Finally, the celebration concluded by giving prizes to all of the attending children and providing food to all participants.

Nursery schools in IDPs areas are helpful for parents, most of who do not have time to care for their children because they have to work to earn money for the survival of their families. But for many parents who see educated people struggling to find work, nursery schooling and schooling in general seems like a poor investment. "You don't need to know how to find education," goes a Mon saying, "you only need to know how to find the money."

When other obstacles present themselves, skepticism about nursery schooling easily translates into keeping children out of school. In spite of NGO support, budgetary constraints mean such obstacles are plentiful. An MWO staff member who was in charge of a childcare nursery school believes one of the reasons a significant number of children have not joined the nursery school is because their parents do not want, or cannot afford, to pay the food fee. The existing nursery schools must charge a monthly fee of twenty baht to pay for feeding the children while they are at school.

Another obstacle to child development is that the existing nursery schools have few staff with child care and child development training because formal teachers resigned and new teachers have yet to be recruited. Finally, there are currently no nursery

News from other Sources :

Knife attack on mother and daughter in border area

Kaowao: October 31, 2007

Three Pagodas Pass — Yesterday in a border town under New Mon State Party (NMSP) control, a young man attacked a mother and daughter. Both women were seriously injured.

At 10 a.m. the unknown man brutally slashed the victims with a large knife as they rested from their work gathering vegetables. The attack took place between the villages of Three Pagodas Pass and Palaing-japan.

The victims in the attack both reside in the Japanese Well village; 50 year-old Mi Tin Hla was transported to the Kanchanaburi General Hospital in Thailand while her daughter, 15 year-old Mi Nu Win was being treated at the NMSP hospital within the Japanese Well village.

"Mi Tin Hla's right hand was wounded seriously and a physician from the Thai-border hospital Chang Loak recommended she be transported immediately to the hospital in Kanchanaburi. She also received injuries

around her neck, back and waist," said a Japanese Well villager, Ye Thwin.

The alleged attacker, who is believed to be about 17-18 years old, spoke Thai and Mon and wore Army clothes and dog-tags. The younger victim, Mi Nu Win, released a statement saying the man had been in the victims' general store in the days prior to the attack. According to Mi Nu Win, when she and her mother rested beside the road he approached them demanding they give him their knives. When they obliged he began to strike out and slash them.

"He asked for the knife in Thai language first and when Mum didn't understand him he asked in Mon if he could borrow the knife. As soon as she gave it to him he tried to kill me first but Mum came to protect me, and yelled for me to run away," said Mi Nu Win.

A captain from the NMSP told Kaowao they are still investigating the case and cannot as yet determine the nationality of the man, or the motive for the attack.

Burmese Women Workers Divided Between Two Hells: BWU

Banyol Kin, IMNA, Wed 19 Dec 2007

The lives of Burmese migrant women workers are divided between two hells. Wherever they go, they have problems, said a Burmese woman at a press conference in Bangkok today.

Releasing a report called "Caught between two hells" compiled by interviewing 149 Burmese migrant women workers in Thailand describes their life and is written in English. It aims to create awareness about what Burmese women workers are facing.

"We want to see some international law put in place to protect women effectively where they live. The country that they live in needs to be responsible for these laws" said Ms. Thwel Zin Toe, spokesperson.

Many women said they are facing sexual abuse in the work field especially when they work as maids. They

were also raped by brokers and Thai officials when they came to Thailand while some were raped by Burmese soldiers in Burma.

"Burmese women are unsafe in Burma under military rule and when they come to the neighbouring country they also face sexual violence from employers and the authorities. Even if they are raped, they cannot go to the courts so it is a terrible situation for them," said Daw Khin Ohmar, executive member of BWU.

The situation of Burmese migrant women workers are getting worse by the year so we want to urge Asian countries to involve themselves to better the life of women, she added.

"Given the political situation in Burma right now more and more women will go to neighbouring countries (like Thailand, China, and India) so we are highlighting the situation of Burmese migrant women worker " said Ms. Thwel Zin Toe.

Invitation for Feedback to Our Publication "The Plight" of Women and Children in Southern Burma

Dear Readers,

With objectives to monitor the situation of women and children in southern part of Burma and to empower them with the rights described in CEDAW and CRC, which are both ratified by the current military regime in Burma, our "Woman and Child Rights Project (Southern Burma)" came into existence since 2000.

Under this project, "The Plight" Newsletter is produced quarterly and this newsletter especially describe the general situation of women and children in Burma and how their human rights are violated by the ruling regime and its army.

In a plan to evaluate our publication, we wish to get the FEEDBACK of our readers. Hence, you can kindly send your feedback. If you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter or if you wish to send your feedback, please feel free to contact the following mailing and e-mail address.

Woman and Child Rights Project
P. O. Box 2237, General Post Office
Bangkok, Thailand 10501
E-mail: wcrpcontact@yahoo.com
Website: www.rehmonnya.org

With regards,
Project Coordinator
Woman and Child Rights Project - Southern Burma

schools in the Tavoy resettlement site, even though the people have requested one. MWO does not have sufficient budget to provide the nursery school.

V. Conclusion

Many children in IDPs Mon areas suffer in living conditions in direction violation of the CRC. They face dehydration and malnutrition. They have poor access to health care, and the medical services that are available to them are often inadequate and ill prepared to deal with children. There are few nursery programs, which leaves young children alone and unsupervised while their parents are working long hours. To solve these problems, concerned community based organizations (CBOs), and the children, need increased funds for nutrition programs, measles and polio vaccination programs, and special children's health care and other development programs. Increased funding is also needed so that the number of nursery services can be increased and existing services can lower or remove the food fee. Finally, parents with little knowledge of basic health care need health education, while medical personnel need refresher courses and specialist training so they are better prepared to meet the unique needs of small children.



children are playing in the bad environment
around their surrounding

WCRP

In this "The Plight Newsletter":



WCRP

Universal Children Day held in Halockhani refugee camp

On Page 9



WCRP

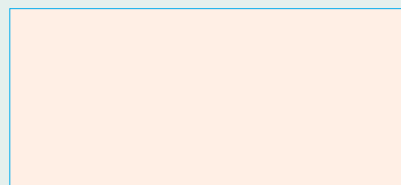
Mon Woman and Child rights Project held International Stop Violence against Women Day which is cooperative with the women group in the local communities and funded by Women League of Burma

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Acronyms

- CEDAW**- Covention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
- CRC** - Convention on the Rights of the Child
- IDPs** - Internally Displaced Persons
- MHEC**- Mon National Health Committee
- MRDC**- Mon Relief and Development Committee
- MSF** - Medencins Sans Frontieres (French)
- MWO**- Mon Women's Organization
- NGOs** - Non Government Organization
- NMSP**- New Mon State Party
- SLORC** -State Law and Order Restoration Council
- SPDC** - State Peace and Development Council
- TBBC**- Thailand Burma Border Consortium
- WCRP**- Woman and Child Rights Project

Woman and Child Rights Project (WCRP)
P. O. Box 2237
General Post Office
Bangkok 10501, Thailand
E-mail: wcrpcontact@yahoo.com
Website:www.rehmonnya.org



Address Correction Required

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