

June '08

THE NEW LIFE DEVELOPMENT TEAM

FIRST PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

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2008, THE YEAR OF NEW BEGINNINGS....

BIG MOVE!

The negotiations to rent the local hotel **SAINAMMIN** were finalized in April! The day the contract was signed, the Team started working hard on cleaning and renovating the run-down buildings, swimming pool and the grounds. The property is familiar to us from the many kids, youth and other community events and training seminars we have held there.

Training of Leaders

In the midst of the Big Move, we also conducted our first intensive training for the workers there. In attendance were Lahu, Karen, H'Mong, T'Hin, Akha and Thai workers. The topic was "In His Image" i.e. developing Christlike character as leaders.

Healing for families...



KIDS!

For several years now, the Team has been actively involved in developing kids' work in the communities. We have been running Life Skills learning activities at schools and at other community venues. Having now linked up with Kids' Quest (USA), we have access to excellent resources, which provide well-planned, inter-active and fun concert-style programs for kids' events in the community!

We also continue to run and develop the local **soccer** teams comprised of elementary school kids.

Our native English speakers in the team serve at various schools by teaching **conversational English**.

To facilitate the healing of the family structures in the communities, we target our **sponsorship support** at the families as a whole! With this holistic approach, the purpose is to help the community to identify their felt needs and to discover solutions that are attainable and sustainable for them. Many of

these kids have lost at least one of their parents to AIDS and are living with their elderly grandparents.

Depending on the case at hand, the needs are often at a very basic level such as adequate sustenance and shelter, school uniforms, etc. Together with the local community leaders and teachers, we look for ways to bring lasting change to the lives of these families.

Elderly

Home visitations are an important part of our work. In some cases, it has literally become life-saving mission!



Building renovation crews move into these situations!

Projects for building toilets and bathing facilities, kitchens, even complete small houses, as well as renovating existing buildings continue to keep the builders busy!

TEENS!

Fuelled by the excitement of the recent success at the Battle of the Bands, the teens have been busy cleaning up the rooms at Sainammin allocated for their music practice. With more musically gifted people joining our team, we now have the resources to really connect with these kids in what they do. Life-skills development through mentoring is also part of this.



"**To Be Number One**" is the theme developed by the Royal Princess. The local hospital is now developing a program to address the serious teen problems of substance abuse and related activities, which generate the spread of HIV, teen pregnancies, criminal activity and even suicide. We have been asked to "help" the hospital in developing and facilitating this program! Our team has also been invited to have representation in the Planning Committee of the district!

Youth Camps are an important way for the teens to connect. This past season, teens from the various areas where we work, participated in camps organized at different locations.

Some also joined in the school trip to Laos, where they connected with their Lao peers!



PETCHABUN AND NAN

In Phetchabun and Nan the kids are doing well. Many of the kids have grown up to become responsible young people being readied to enter the Thai society as young people who will make a difference to the future of this great nation. This year a few of the young people finished their studies and for this we congratulate them for a job well done. Also a special THANK YOU to all who have tirelessly supported the kids and young people. You have played a part to prepare these quality disadvantaged young people to face their future opportunities in the world.



A Cultural Exchange



In April, a group of Hangdong high school students, teachers, government officials and some of our team members traveled by bus for 20 hours crossing the border to Laos. This school excursion was a joint venture between our team and the Hangdong City, which also covered more than half of the cost involved! This has

resulted in a deepened relationship between us and the City of Hangdong!

In May, a group of teachers and government officials paid a return visit to Hangdong schools and government offices. The visit culminated in a Northern Kantoke dinner hosted at the Hangdong government offices with the head of the city honoring the occasion with his attendance.

MORE FOR THE FAMILIES...

Swimming!!!!

At Sainammin, we have just completed the fixing of the pool! The plan is to open this facility for Hangdong families to use. A small fee will be charged from those who can afford it. This will be used to cover maintenance of the pool.

Family Restaurant

The restaurant at Sainammin, known in the past for its questionable services, has now been cleaned up to become a family restaurant. This will provide a platform to provide training to the local young people, including employment opportunities.

Guesthouse-style accommodation

The 30-room hotel of ill-repute has been transformed into cosy guesthouse, which is beginning to win back customers. We are glad to report that within the first month of us

taking over the place, the housekeeper found new life in Christ!

AIDS community

In addition to the work we do with the families, many impacted by AIDS, we also connect with the leader of AIDS sufferers and with the community she leads. Our champion, the locally elected administrative officer **Phi Lek**, provides us with information on the needs and endorses our work within the community. Each month we also participate and provide training at the support group meetings.

Thank you for your continued partnership with us in changing lives, changing entire communities! May God richly bless you!

The New Life Development Team

SAINAMMIN HOTEL, HANGDONG



Restaurant

Repairs and maintenance by our team



Swimming pool for the community and the disadvantaged to enjoy.