

# CARA

Children At Risk In Asia



CARA is a UK-based charity no. 1165824 that supports children in Asia by providing financial and in-kind support directly to local organisations in the field.

We are:

- Non-political
- Non-religious
- Strongly committed to the best interests of the child and the UNCRC.

## Newsletter

Subject to any Covid restrictions in place at the time and weather we invite our local supporters to join us on 29<sup>th</sup> August

Gentle Jazz have kindly agreed to play for us again

Come and enjoy Pimms,



cakes and teas.



If you would like to support our cause you can donate using this link [www.carauk.org/donate](http://www.carauk.org/donate)

Remember you can donate for free when shopping online by going to

[www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)

## CARA's Garden Party is back on 29 August

2:00 to 5:00 pm



Regular Donations are very valuable  
If you would like to make regular donations you can set up a direct debit made payable to CARA's bank account at HSBC; account no 22075849; sort code 40-08-39.

### Other CARA events this summer

**Saturday 31 July:** Market stall Berkhamsted high street selling craft goods from Myanmar

# Covid spreading rapidly in Thailand

## Poor families hardest hit

A third wave of covid has been ripping through Thailand since April this year. With the military government having missed the window of opportunity to get a vaccine program rolling the infection and death rates are now soaring. It will be many more months before enough good vaccines are distributed and until then the only weapon against covid is lockdowns and restrictions. The effect of this on the poorest families, especially migrant families who cannot access any government welfare, is devastating.

Sangkhlaburi is already in lockdown with many families living in poverty having sold anything of value and cashed in any savings during the first two waves of covid. The World Bank this year set the poverty line in Thailand at 165 baht per person per day. One Sky's research in Sangkhlaburi revealed that many migrant families are living on less than 30 baht per person per day.

The crisis is still unfolding with the rapid rise in the number of cases expected to overwhelm the health care system which is not as developed as in the UK. With full hospitals in Bangkok, patients with covid are being transported back to their home towns all over Thailand in special buses and ambulances to take up beds in the provinces. With those beds also running short, this strategy will not work long term. People are dying in Bangkok because they cannot find hospital beds and last week several cases were reported of dead bodies left in street for hours before appropriate service could come to collect them.

One Sky has asked for our help for a three-month welfare program to ensure children in the poorest families in Sangkhlaburi are fed and are living in safe housing as the rainy season continues

*A big thankyou to all our supporters who have made it possible to support these children in need.*



## A difficult year for children's education



In previous years CARA has given priority to enabling children to continue with their education but since the beginning of 2021 we have diverted funds to the welfare programme as ensuring children have enough to eat must come before education. This has been particularly important during school closures due to Covid as the children often depend on the school lunch as their main meal of the day. Schools have closed during periods of peak Covid infections but your support continues to enable children to attend school when open.

In normal times the One Sky team can catch up with many students during one visit to each school. With all children now at home the team face both a logistical challenge and a challenge to their own safety as they plan how to make sure all the children are provided with welfare packages.



## Children supported for 2020/21 school year

- 186 children were supported with monthly education scholarships.
- The 2021/22 school year should have started on May 16<sup>th</sup> but schools remain closed for the foreseeable future.
- One Sky is providing survival packs to the students and their families.

One Sky team were given two doses of sinovac in recognition of their role as frontline workers. They are among only 6% of the Thai population to have two doses of vaccine.

Sadly, the Chinese made sinovac is proving less effective against the Delta variant and one of our colleagues, a 30-year-old nurse at the local hospital, passed away last week despite having two doses.

## More families need support during the pandemic

As a result of the Covid pandemic One Sky has seen a massive increase in referrals and families needing support. While One Sky's primary objective is development work, strengthening families and communities and working towards greater independence, the economic situation forced them to increase the relief element of their work. One sky has requested that CARA allocates some of its funds to the welfare work which the trustees have gladly agreed to. Over 100 families are receiving monthly food drops benefitting over 300 children.



## Thai/Myanmar border is closed

Myanmar is suffering from the combined impact of civil war and the pandemic. The Thai army has closed the border separating families and preventing follow-up with children needing medical support and child protection monitoring who have been moved across the border. One Sky has been involved in supporting the children of some of these people by tracing other family members they can stay with. To learn more about the situation in Myanmar visit <https://www.irrawaddy.com/>

## Alternative Care Thailand (ACT)

One Sky cofounder Andy has moved to Chiang Mai to play a more significant role in ACT's three-year plan to catalyze reform of the care system in Thailand. ACT is a coalition of like-minded organisations that want to see changes in the way children are cared for and supported in Thailand. Thailand still relies heavily on institutional types of care for many thousands of children. Such care is no longer used in many parts of the world with greater investment in supporting families and providing family based alternative care when needed. For example, while having similar population sizes, the UK has around 55,000 children in foster care whereas Thailand has less than 300.

ACT's three-year plan has now received funding from three organizations and will build on UNICEF funded research carried out by One Sky in 2020 that included interviews with almost 1000 children living in children's homes, temples and school dormitories to understand why so many children in Thailand are in this position. ACT is collecting evidence and building the knowledge base needed to support the Thai government with reform of the care system for children in Thailand.