

Dear Members and Supporters,

As we're now well into another new year, we felt it would be timely to provide you with a brief update of recent developments at **The Mandalay Projects Ltd** ("TMPL").

We have been busy on a number of different fronts over the past few months, and 2010 was perhaps our year of greatest progress to date.

Project work & site visits

We organised three different project site visits to Burma during the year, ensuring continuity in our project work. The most recent of these, in November, was undertaken by TMPL Director David Gibson, who visited four orphanages in the Irrawaddy Delta region.

As is reported in more detail on our new website (more of which later), we have made excellent progress with our vocational training initiatives at the *Mingalar Parahita Orphanage* near Twante.



Some of the residents of the Mingalar Parahita Orphanage at Twante

Our horticulture and tailoring workshop projects have not only created job opportunities for the older residents, but are also providing food and clothes for the orphans. Significantly, these projects are also now generating a small amount of sustainable

income for the orphanage through sales of produce in the local markets.



Student at work in the TMPL tailoring workshop

One of the resident orphans working on the gardening project suffered from leprosy and, although he is now cured, he remains something of an outcast in the local community. He has now been given a modest job and a degree of dignity, thanks to the TMPL project.

We will be adding to our vocational training projects at this site, with a desk-top publishing initiative coming soon. This is something of an iconic project for us — who would have thought that, in the middle of the Burmese countryside, we'd be helping an orphanage to develop a DTP centre?

There is demand from the surrounding community for services such as copying, printing, photo editing, etc., and we will work with the orphanage management to enable them to meet that demand.

One of our supporters has generously donated a digital camera and other equipment, which will get this project off to a great start.

The other orphanages we are working with are situated further into the Delta, and one of them is accessible only by boat.

At the *Pana Wady Girls' Orphanage*, we are working with a very charismatic lady who looks after the children. This lady is quite inspirational to work with — she has a regular job as a teacher at a local school, but finds time in her day to supervise the residents of the orphanage, taking care of their safety, health and hygiene, ensuring they do their homework every night, and organising games for them.



A few of the girls at the Pana Wady Orphanage

We have already started work on a number of strategic projects at this site, including the establishment of a tailoring workshop. The founder of the orphanage, who is now elderly and frail, has always hoped that her girls would one day be able to undertake some form of vocational training, to help them become more independent and to set up a new life beyond the orphanage. Her wish fits perfectly with the strategic aims of TMPL, and we are delighted to be able to support her.

We have also commenced work on the construction of a secure wall around the perimeter of the orphanage site. There is

currently no such wall or fence in place, so this TMPL initiative should significantly improve the safety and security of the children.

The *Kani Boys' Orphanage* provides a safe and clean home for around 120 boys of all ages. We have forged a good working relationship with the local supervisory board and management team, and will provide strategic support for a number of important initiatives at this site. First of these will be a mechanical workshop, which we are establishing with support from another international NGO. Once this workshop is up and running, we intend to broaden its remit to provide training to local villagers, as well as to the senior residents of the orphanage itself. This is an important aspect of our work; we recognise that the orphanages we support do not exist in isolation - they are part of a broader community, and we must ensure that we take this into account in our project planning.



Dinner time at the Kani Boys' Orphanage.

As always on these site visits, the local logistical support from our in-country team members has been invaluable. Without the voluntary assistance of these local Burmese supporters, our work would be much more challenging, if not impossible, and we are hugely grateful to them for everything they do. One of them has a travel agency business

in Yangon, and if any of you are ever thinking of a trip to Burma, we would readily recommend Min Min at Frangipani Travel as your guide and tour organiser.

Fund-raising and communication

Having obtained a fund-raising licence in Western Australia, we chose Perth as the location of our inaugural Information Evening in Australia. Some 40 invited guests attended this event in early November, and although fund-raising was not the primary aim, we were delighted that many of the guests chose to make donations to TMPL, either on the evening itself or subsequently. Our thanks again go to all who attended and/or made donations. We will be organising further information and fund-raising events and will keep members posted on this.

An increasing number of our supporters are organising their own fund-raising events and donating the proceeds to TMPL. The most significant of these is the Quiz Night organised by Fiona and Mark Barton and the rest of the Singapore-based supporters of TMPL. This event always generates a lot of interest, and the November event again raised a substantial sum which has been donated to TMPL. Our thanks go to the organising team, and also to all those who generously donated prizes for the raffle and items for the auction.

Administration

Reflecting the continuing development of TMPL as a formal charitable organisation, we held our inaugural Annual General Meeting in Perth in November and have also filed our first set of audited accounts.

A major administrative target for the latter part of 2010 was a complete overhaul of our website. This has now been completed, although there are still a few bits and pieces to be tidied up. Please take a look at the new

site at www.themandalayprojects.net - we will shortly be adding a PayPal facility which will greatly help our fund-raising efforts.

There is a "News" tab on the new site and from time to time we aim to upload items of interest to our members and supporters.

TMPL also has a Facebook page, which is our more informal communication channel, carrying photos from projects and site visits, occasional comments from the TMPL management team and, of course, posts from our members and from the public.

Please visit our page at <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=6514612309>.

We are hoping for a rapid increase in the number of "friends of TMPL" registered on Facebook, so when we contact you in this regard we'd be grateful if you would sign up!

We hope that 2011 is a great year for you and your families and, as always, we send you our thanks for all your support.

Best wishes from the TMPL team,

David Gibson
Co-founder & CEO

The Mandalay Projects Limited
February 2011



Videos on iPod - always hugely popular on our site visits!