

# Monthly e-Letter

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Thailand Burma Border Consortium  
ไทยแลนด์-เบร์มา-บอร์เดอร์-คอนซอร์ติียม

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## Letter from Jack Dunford, Executive Director of TBBC,

I am amazed at how much can happen within a few months and how rapidly the challenges facing us can change.

We were completely taken by surprise by the global food crisis earlier this year. It caused the most serious funding situation in the history of TBBC, with the health and well being of 140,000 refugees at stake. In March, we were concerned that we might have to make serious cuts in the refugee food rations as early as August.

Today, just four months since the crisis was recognised, we should be able to avoid any cuts at least for the remainder of the year - thanks mainly to tremendous support from governments around the world and smaller donations from private donors, but also because rice prices have fallen somewhat and foreign exchange rates have started to move in our favour for the first time in three years.

When prospects were looking grim we launched a Staff, Family and Friends appeal to try to help solve the problem. The result was that we reached our target of baht 1.6 million (USD 50,000) in just over a month. This is enough to feed over 1000 refugees for 6 months. This has been tremendously encouraging for us and the refugees we work with. The appeal will remain open since the challenge of feeding the refugees will continue into 2009 when we will have to face a whole year of high food prices.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you who supported the refugees of Burma during this critical period, giving us space to plan something better for the future.

Thank you, Jack Dunford

## World Refugee day in Tham Hin camp

On 23 June, residents of Tham Hin Camp, took part in activities to mark World Refugee Day. The students were given a day off from school and performed dances and songs in traditional Karen clothes. 'The World Refugee Day Song' was sung all over the camp.

"World Refugee Day reminds people of our existence", stated the camp leader of Tham Hin. "Everyone really wants' to go home".

Children also contributed with colourful drawings, illustrating their life as refugees.

See some of the children's [drawings from Tham Hin](#)



### Extract from Karen Refugee song (translated to English)

Once we were a tribe everyone called Karen  
Lived in Karen state where our ancestors lived  
More lovely, our Karen state, our state Kawthulay  
How beautiful it was, always made us happy  
Wonderful heritage...

Under the suppression, we became refugees  
Abandoned the homeland, left for refugee camp  
We are called refugees, because of torturing  
Scattered now to many places, it's a big  
dissappointment  
Karen, don't be disappointed, today is a happy  
day

## Population in camps along the border (based on TBBCs feeding figure)

As of 30 June 2008

The total feeding population in May for all camps in Thailand was **138,970**. For more detailed information, please visit TBBC's updated [population map](#)

## Resettlement

As of 30 June 2008 – Source IOM

**2632** individuals from camps border wide left for resettlement during June. Since January 2008 up to date, **9998** individuals have left for resettlement to the following countries, according to IOM statistics: USA (8290); Australia (1008) ; Finland (242) Canada (290); Netherlands (90) ; U.K (29); Norway(29); New Zealand (17).

## New staff

We are pleased to welcome two new staff joining our team!

### Programme Coordinator - Angelina Sakic

Angelina will have a border wide role in strengthening TBBC's partnership and community based approach to the planning and development of TBBC's programs.

She has a background in management training and many years of management experience from the field, including Afghanistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina .

Before joining TBBC, Angelina was working with Emergency and Development Programs for Tsunami and Conflict Affected Population in North-East Sri Lanka.

Angelina wants to explore how we can best meet the needs of the single individual refugee person. This is also her primary source of motivation: to see the person behind the refugee, with all her hopes, dreams and expectations.

### Agriculture Manager - Dave Brown

Dave will be working with the TBBC team and community partners border wide to strengthen self-reliance of refugee communities and IDP's in food security via the implementation of agricultural activities.

Dave brings experience in agriculture and rural development with undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications in this area. He has previously worked on projects in Australia, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands as well as having worked in Thailand (Tak Province).

He believes that achieving greater self-reliance for communities ultimately depends on active participation at all levels . In agricultural terms this means 'many dirty hands make light work'!!!

## Related articles

The Irrawaddy: [Refugees Observe International Refugee Day](#)

Asia news: [Burmese in Thailand](#)

IRIN: [Refugee policy gets mixed reviews](#)

CNN: [Karen refugees a 'forgotten story'](#)

## Support the refugees from Burma

From basic food rations, shelter and household necessities to giving refugees skills to earn an income, - your gift can make a real difference.

Find out more about how you can contribute by visiting [TBBC's gift catalogue](#)



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