



burma children medical fund

BCMF | Operating to give Burma's kids a future

# Burma Children Medical Fund (BCMF)

## July 2011

## Activity Report



Saw Pwel Gay



Snow



Sai Aung Kam Htun



Ma Ni Mar Aung

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**“...Given the country’s per capita income is \$1,100 according to 2009 estimates, and that the average Burmese household is estimated to spend over 70% of the household budget on food alone, (constituting one of the world’s worst food insecurity situations), official health services are an unaffordable luxury for most Burmese...”<sup>1</sup>**

## July 2011 Cases: An Overview

In July 2011, BCMF accepted 8 new patients onto the program. This included referrals to the Burma Children Medical Fund (**BCMF**) and [Burma Adult Medical Fund](#) (**BAMF**). The conditions our new cases presented with varied greatly and included:

- [Congenital heart disease](#)/Rheumatic heart disease
- Hypospadias (malformation of urethra)
- Old burn injury
- a renal (kidney) condition
- Unknown rectal bleed in a 2-year-old (requiring further investigation)
- A work-place injury sustained from being stabbed (resulting in a colostomy)
- A 13-year-old boy with a physical disability (requiring wheelchair/physio)

Also in July, BCMF facilitated the [movement of 36 patients](#) from the Mae Tao Clinic (in Mae Sot) to Chiang Mai (360kms). Some were scheduled for surgery and others were returning to Chiang Mai for post-surgery follow-up appointments.

A notable case this month was 4-year-old **Saw Pwel Gay** (see photo) who was carried to the Mae Tao Clinic by his family. Saw Pwel Gay was badly burnt when he knocked over a pot of rice which was cooking on the stove. He lives in a very remote and mountainous area of Karen State, Burma. The only medical assistance available at the time was home remedies and traditional medicine. A team of visiting backpack medics came across Saw Pwel Gay and encouraged his parents to travel to the Mae Tao Clinic for treatment. His full story is at the end of this report.



Saw Pwel Gay came to Mae Tao Clinic suffering from burns to his legs

*Saw Pwel Gay was transferred to McKean Rehabilitation Centre on 21 July and is being kept company by 3 other BCMF/BAMF patients undergoing treatment for orthopaedic problems.*

**In July 2011, BCMF had four patients at McKean Rehabilitation Center.**

- **Saw Pwel Gay (4 years old; burns)**
- **Nai Na (33 years old; orthopaedic)**
- **Win Ko Oo (19 years old; orthopaedic)**
- **Htet Lay Aung (16 years old; orthopaedic)**

<sup>1</sup> [Diagnosis Critical: health and human rights in eastern Burma](#), October 2010



In mid-July 2011, the Mae Tao Clinic's medical in-patient department referred 41-year-old **Ma Ni Mar Aung** to the [Burma Adult Medical Fund](#) (BAMF). Ma Ni Mar Aung was suffering from heart failure caused by rheumatic heart disease. She first experienced difficulty breathing after her first pregnancy 18 years ago. She wasn't diagnosed with a heart problem until October 2010 at a hospital in Burma. Her family are farmers and they grow and harvest one crop of rice a year. This is then sold to produce an income for the family which has to last them a year. However, Ma Ni Mar Aung's deteriorating condition has meant that a substantial portion of their annual income was spent on medicines to ease her symptoms.

*Ma Ni Mar Aung was transferred to Chiang Mai in August 2011.*

*She will have the damaged valves in her heart replaced.*

*Full story: [www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/ma-ni-mar/](http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/ma-ni-mar/)*

### **THAN ZIN MOE'S LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY:**

In December 2010, a young couple made a difficult journey to the Mae Tao Clinic seeking help for their daughter who had a congenital growth on the back of her head. Than Zin Moe's physical condition was so severe that she had to lie on a specially made carrying board as her parents could not hold her like a normal child. The sack on the back of her head was bigger than her actual head and it was very difficult for her parents to manage her care. Her mother had to lie down on the floor to breastfeed her.



Than Zin Moe's mother was desperate to try anything to get her daughter treated – even if the chances were slim, she was eager and willing.

The operation took place in Chiang Mai in May 2011. She had further surgery in June and finally returned from Chiang Mai in July. Her mother was overjoyed at the success of her daughters operation.

*Full story: [www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/success-stories/children/than-zin/](http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/success-stories/children/than-zin/)*



# July 2011: Summary of New Cases

## Total number of new cases across the program **8**

- Children – Burma Children Medical Fund (BCMF) 2
- Children (under 12) with surgery funded by donor in Chiang Mai 3
- Special Adult Cases – [Burma Adult Medical Fund](#) (BAMF) 3
- Gynaecological Surgery – Burma Women Medical Fund (BWMF) 0

| NAME              | SEX | AGE | PROGRAM  | CONDITION                    |
|-------------------|-----|-----|----------|------------------------------|
| Saw Pwel Gay      | M   | 4   | BCMF     | Burn                         |
| Sai Aung Kam Htun | M   | 13  | BCMF     | Physical disability          |
| Snow              | F   | 8   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital Heart Disease     |
| Ka Ban Kyaw       | M   | 3   | BCMF/CDF | Hypospadias                  |
| Hsa Nlel Lay      | M   | 2   | BCMF/CDF | Undiagnosed rectal bleeding  |
| Ahnet             | M   | 25  | BAMF     | Stab-wound injury: colostomy |
| Ma Ni Mar Aung    | F   | 41  | BCMF/CDF | Rheumatic Heart Disease      |
| Aye Sai           | M   | 20  | BAMF     | Renal condition              |



### Snow – 8 years old – Congenital Heart Disease

Snow started experiencing cardiac disease symptoms at two years of age. Symptoms included lethargy, palpitations, difficulty breathing and recurrent chest infections. Snow was taken for a medical examination in Rangoon in 2005 and this was when her parents were first informed of her diagnosis and need for heart surgery. They were unable to afford the surgery.

In June 2011, Snow suffered an acute episode of heart failure in which she had severe difficulty breathing from a build-up of fluid in her lungs (pulmonary oedema). She was admitted to Mae Sot Hospital and encouraged to go to BCMF to help arrange surgery in Chiang Mai.

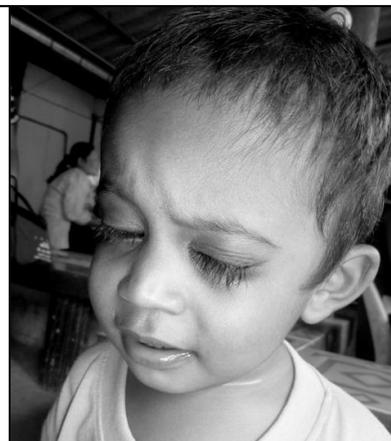
*[Snow will travel to Chiang Mai for further medical investigation very soon]*

### War Shin – 3 years old – bilateral eye condition

War Shin was born in July 2008. When he was around 40 days old, his mother noticed that he wasn't responding to light or other stimulus. His family had been living in Thailand (close to the border) so they knew about the Mae Tao Clinic. His mother brought War Shin to the Clinic and he was referred onto the local Thai hospital for further evaluation. The doctor there informed his mother that War Shin would need to go to Chiang Mai and have surgery on his eyes.

War Shin has been on the BCMF program since May 2009. He has travelled to Chiang Mai many times undergoing treatment for his condition.

*[War Shin traveled to Chiang Mai in July 2011 for further treatment]*



War Shin at the Mae Tao Clinic  
(May 2011)

## July 2011: BCMF Patient Movement

In July 2011, BCMF organised the logistics for the [departure of four \(4\) vans](#) departing the Mae Tao Clinic. Thirty-six (36) patients (plus their carers) were transported to Chiang Mai for surgery and follow-up (existing cases) and also for initial investigation and detailed diagnostics (new cases).

The departure dates and patient load were as follows:

### BCMF PATIENT VAN - 7 JULY 2011 (see [video of BCMF patient van](#))

| NAME                  | SEX | AGE | PROGRAM  | CONDITION                            |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Zin Min Latt          | M   | 9   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (follow-up) |
| Aung Pyin Nyein       | M   | 14  | BCMF     | Congenital heart disease (follow-up) |
| Pha Sai               | F   | 2   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (surgery)   |
| Pu Pu Sai             | F   | 9m  | BCMF/CDF | Urological (surgery)                 |
| Hein Zin Oo           | M   | 6m  | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (follow-up) |
| Nyein Shin Shin Han   | F   | 3   | BCMF/CDF | Hydrocephalus/Club foot              |
| Hae Kh Mu (SMRU Case) | F   | 2   | OTH/CDF  | Imperforate Anus                     |
| Chi Chi (SMRU Case)   | F   | 4m  | OTH/CDF  | Congenital heart disease (follow-up) |
| Roung San             | F   | 2   | BCMF     | Bilateral eye condition (surgery)    |



*Nyein Shin Shin Han*

BCMF Patient Van – 7 July 2011

*Pha Sai*

*Roung San*

### BCMF PATIENT VAN - 14 JULY 2011 (See [video of BCMF patient van](#))

| NAME                                     | SEX | AGE | PROGRAM  | CONDITION                                    |
|--|-----|-----|----------|--|
| Hnin Si Paw                              | F   | 5   | BCMF     | Ganglioneuroma (tumor of the nervous system) |
| Htet Lay Aung                            | M   | 16  | BCMF     | Broken femur                                 |
| Zaw Htet Hlaing                          | M   | 5   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease                     |
| Yoon Darli Kyaw                          | F   | 9m  | BCMF/CDF | Meningocele (growth on base of skull)        |
| Ga Chor ( <a href="#">full story</a> )   | M   | 9   | BCMF/CDF | Encephalocele (growth on nose)               |
| Maung Nay Linn                           | M   | 4   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease                     |
| Nai Na                                   | M   | 33  | BAMF     | Broken leg (old injury: for surgery)         |
| Win Ko Oo ( <a href="#">full story</a> ) | M   | 19  | BAMF     | Broken leg (old injury: for surgery)         |
| Yan Naing Linn                           | M   | 17  | BCMF     | Congenital heart disease                     |

## BCMF PATIENT VAN - 21 JULY 2011 (See [video of BCMF patient van](#))

| NAME  | SEX | AGE | PROGRAM  | CONDITION                            |
|---|-----|-----|----------|--------------------------------------|
| War Shin                                    | M   | 1   | BCMF     | Eye problem (follow-up)              |
| Rapiporn ( <a href="#">full story</a> )     | F   | 1   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease             |
| Sher Gay Paw                                | F   | 6m  | BCMF     | Eye problem (follow-up)              |
| Naw Dah Dah Leh                             | F   | 3m  | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (surgery)   |
| San San Maw                                 | F   | 32  | BAMF     | Infection in TB cavity (for surgery) |
| Saw Eh Ka Lu ( <a href="#">full story</a> ) | M   | 4m  | BCMF/CDF | Hypospadias                          |
| Tin Htun Naing                              | M   | 4   | BCMF/CDF | Mass on neck                         |
| Nant Moo Kee                                | F   | 2   | BCMF/CDF | Cranial stenosis (neuro follow-up)   |
| Saw Pwel Gay ( <a href="#">full story</a> ) | M   | 4   | BCMF     | Burns                                |

## BCMF PATIENT VAN – 28 JULY 2011 (See [video of BCMF patient van](#))

| NAME   | SEX | AGE | PROGRAM  | CONDITION                                    |
|--|-----|-----|----------|--|
| Aung Aung  | M   | 8   | BCMF     | Tractor accident: urological follow-up       |
| Sa Mee   | M   | 10  | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (post-op follow-up) |
| Linn Htet Oo   | M   | 9m  | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease (follow-up)         |
| Naw Soe Myint  | F   | 5   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease                     |
| Chit Chit  | F   | 7   | BCMF     | Shrapnel injury (post-op follow-up)          |
| Phyo Maung Maung                                     | M   | 3   | BCMF     | Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL)          |
| Saw Nay Linn Oo                                      | M   | 14  | BCMF     | Gastrointestinal (post-op follow-up)         |
| Zin Ko Pyint Maung<br>( <a href="#">full story</a> ) | M   | 6   | BCMF     | Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia (ALL)          |
| Htet Inzali  | F   | 3   | BCMF/CDF | Congenital heart disease                     |



14-year-old **Nay Linn Oo** returned to Chiang Mai on 28 July for a follow-up. He arrived at the Mae Tao Clinic in March with a gastrointestinal haemorrhage. Within days his condition deteriorated further to be life threatening. He went to Chiang Mai in May and was diagnosed with **portal vein thrombosis** (*blockage of the large vein that brings blood from the intestine to the liver*). He underwent surgery and was given clearance to return home in early June. Nay Linn Oo is an unassuming teenager who appears unaffected by his past near-fatal haemorrhaging. He said he was not scared in the hospital because he could speak Thai and could understand what was being undertaken to help him.

## July 2011: Meet some of our new cases...



Saw Pwel Gay – 4 years old - burns

In April 2011, four year old Saw Pwel sustained serious burns when he accidentally knocked a pot of rice cooking on a stove. The boiling fluid poured onto his buttocks, perineum and down his legs. Three months after the accident the scarring is a combination of skin contractures and seeping open wounds. He can no longer walk as his knees are fused by scar tissue at 90 degree angles. He has had to adapt his mobility and now has to roll and crawl to get around.

Saw Pwel and his family live in a mountainous area of Karen State, Burma. His parents are subsistence farmers and grow rice. Since they do not have an income, they are not expected to give rice when armed military groups come to their home. Payment can be 10 to 20 kilograms of rice per request. Sometimes the military come to their village to take people as porters. The expectation is that they provide free labour for 2 days before they are allowed to return home. Saw Pwel's village is so remote that a visit from the [Backpack Health Worker Team \(BPHWT\)](#) is the only health service available.

At the time of Saw Pwel's accident his mother took off his trousers and believed the best thing to do was to pour cooking oil on his wounds (other remedies in rural Burma include applying toothpaste). For two weeks she used traditional medicine on her son primarily rubbing in turmeric powder. After this time period the Backpack Medics arrived in their village. They cleaned and dressed Saw Pwel's wounds and instructed his parents to discontinue traditional therapy and to take him to the Mae Tao Clinic (MTC) on the Thai side of the Thai-Burma border. His mother was given antibiotics and medical stock and was taught how to attend to his wounds on a daily basis.

Saw Pwel is a very brave and delightful boy. He never complains to his mother about pain and his injuries have certainly not stopped him from playing with his friends. He has adapted to crawling instead of walking. The only question he asks regarding his condition is why he can no longer walk and run. Over the past two months Saw Pwel's parents have constantly wondered what they should do about their son's injuries. They felt they did not have the money to travel into Thailand and the road from their village to Myawaddy (Thai- Burma border) had become unsafe due to escalating conflict.

In mid-July 2011, Saw Pwel's parents decided to make the journey to Thailand. To avoid the area of active conflict they backtracked up to the capital of Karen State and approached Myawaddy from another route. The trip cost 7,000 Kyat (US\$7) per person which they had to borrow from community members. The decision to make the journey was because the family could no longer bear seeing Saw Pwel suffering and this often made his mother cry. His parents have also had difficulty attending to their crop as a great amount of time has gone into looking after their injured son.

Saw Pwel's family wish for him to get better so that he will be able to walk again. In the Karen Language Saw Pwel's full name means '*content*'. This is a very apt name as despite being badly burnt and unable to walk; Saw Pwel seems content with his predicament and displays a calm demeanour beyond his years.



**Saw Pwel's story:** [www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/saw-pwel/](http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/saw-pwel/)

**Video of Saw Pwel in Chiang Mai:** <http://youtu.be/hI53rIjKKTU>



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## JULY 2011 ACTIVITY REPORT – MORE INFORMATION

### PATIENT STORIES:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Saw Pwel Gay</b>                                | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/saw-pwel/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/saw-pwel/</a>                                 |
| <b>Ma Ni Mar Aung</b>                              | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/ma-ni-mar/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/ma-ni-mar/</a>                                   |
| <b>Ga Chor</b><br>(transferred 14/7/11)            | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/chor/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/chor/</a>   |
| <b>Win Ko Oo</b><br>(transferred 14/7/11)          | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/win-ko/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/adults/win-ko/</a>   |
| <b>Zin Ko Pyint Maung</b><br>(transferred 28/7/11) | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/zin-ko/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/zin-ko/</a>                                     |
| <b>Rapiporn</b><br>(transferred 21/7/11)           | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/rapi/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/rapi/</a>   |
| <b>Saw Eh Ka Lu Htoo</b><br>(transferred 21/7/11)  | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/eh-ka-lu/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/children/eh-ka-lu/</a>                                 |
| <b>Than Zin Moe</b>                                | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/success-stories/children/than-zin/">www.burmachildren.net/our-cases/success-stories/children/than-zin/</a> |

### VIDEOS/PHOTOS:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>BCMF Patient Van</b><br>7 July 2011            | <a href="http://youtu.be/FJ2zKlfhI3I">http://youtu.be/FJ2zKlfhI3I</a>   |
| <b>BCMF Patient Van</b><br>14 July 2011           | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/2011/07/14/bcmf-patient-van-14-july-2011/">http://www.burmachildren.net/2011/07/14/bcmf-patient-van-14-july-2011/</a>   |
| <b>BCMF Patient Van</b><br>21 July 2011           | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/2011/07/21/bcmf-patient-van-21-july-2011/">http://www.burmachildren.net/2011/07/21/bcmf-patient-van-21-july-2011/</a>   |
| <b>BCMF Patient Van</b><br>28 July 2011           | <a href="http://youtu.be/shdmT9IIA0g">http://youtu.be/shdmT9IIA0g</a>   |
| <b>BCMF Patients at<br/>Mckean Rehabilitation</b> | <a href="http://youtu.be/hI53rIjkKTU">http://youtu.be/hI53rIjkKTU</a>   |
| <b>What do we do - BCMF<br/>Hydrocephalus</b>     | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GntYMRq6PE&amp;feature=related">www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GntYMRq6PE&amp;feature=related</a><br><a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4drytAilms&amp;feature=related">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4drytAilms&amp;feature=related</a> |

### MORE INFORMATION

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| <b>About BCMF</b>         | <a href="http://www.burmachildren.net/about-us/">www.burmachildren.net/about-us/</a>   |
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| <b>Mae Tao Clinic</b>     | <a href="http://www.maetaoclinic.com">www.maetaoclinic.com</a>   |
| <b>Diagnosis Critical</b> | <a href="http://bit.ly/pYDEDt">http://bit.ly/pYDEDt</a> (report in English)  |
| <b>Diagnosis Critical</b> | <a href="http://bit.ly/piytch">http://bit.ly/piytch</a> (report in Thai)   |

