



Kachin Women's Association Thailand

ACTIVITY REPORT

2007 - 2013

Supported by,





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This publication is the second activity report of Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT). Since its formation in 1999 by several Kachin women who saw a need for assistance among the people fleeing their homes due to the conflict in Burma, KWAT has been active in Thailand and on the China-Burma border for the past 15 years. We are proud to share our accomplishments, goals, and projects with our readers in this publication. This report is a comprehensive compilation of KWAT's activities and roles within society from 2007-2013.

We would first like to thank the Foundation for People of Burma for their financial support and their ceaseless motivation. The organisation has provided pivotal financial support, technical assistance, and encouragement, without which we would not have been able to successfully implement our programs and expand KWAT's outreach. Likewise, the Burma Relief Centre (BRC) has provided us with support and encouragement since the beginning. Your endless support allows KWAT to thrive and truly make a difference.

We would also like to acknowledge our supporters who have aided us in all of our endeavors. Without these funds and their limitless support, KWAT would not have been able to impact the lives of so many women. We would like to thank the National Endowment for Democracy, Norwegian Church Aid, Open Society Foundations, Planet Wheeler Foundation, GlobeMed at Dartmouth, Southeast Asia Technology and Transparency Initiative, The Fund for Global Human Rights, American Jewish World Service, Burma Medical Association, Burma Relief Centre, CCFD-Terre Solidaire, Euro Burma Office, and the Global Fund for Women. Moreover, we would like to send our thanks to Dartmouth College's GlobeMed GROW teams for composing, editing, and designing this report. And we would like to give special thanks to Open Society Foundations (OSF) for their financial support for this report.

We hope our readers are able to gain a better understanding of the conflict in Kachin State and become more familiar with KWAT's work. This report is meant to familiarise readers with our main goals of empowerment and improvement of Kachin women's lives. In the struggle for democracy and human rights in Burma, we believe that empowerment, education, and advocacy can truly advance a society. ◆

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FOREWORD

When we look back over the past seven years of our organisation, we can see many positive changes and successful achievements, as well as challenges. We have successfully reached and empowered at least 35,000 community members through our various programs. We have also increased our human resources, with 42 full-time staff members now carrying out our activities.

When KWAT started, we ran only a couple of programs, focusing on health and anti-trafficking, but now we have seven programs, including peace and reconciliation, and women's political empowerment. Especially since the change of government in Burma in 2011, we have been able to carry out more political awareness raising trainings among communities inside Burma.

"I am proud of KWAT, as it is growing big and has many network partners. Our community also recognises KWAT's achievements much more than before. One thing we have to do is to train our community more about women's rights, because there are still a lot of women and men who do not understand this issue." Said Mrs. Shirley Seng (one of KWAT founder)

A major challenge has been the renewed war by the Burma Army against the Kachin Independence Army, which has led to the displacement of over 120,000 people. We have been working hard to provide emergency relief for the Kachin IDPs along the China-Burma border, as well as documenting human rights violations, particularly sexual violence, committed by the Burma Army in Kachin and Northern Shan State.

We have published seven reports on women's rights/human rights violations and on the KachinIDP situation. We have also issued 15 press releases and statements on these issues, and carried out advocacy within our community in Burma as well as internationally. We have expanded our networks, particularly within Burma. Over the past seven years, we have doubled the number of our network and partner organizations to about 50.

The fact that KWAT works in both Burma and Thailand continues to create challenges regarding communications, security, and travel. We also face funding insecurity, struggling to maintain our existing funding and look for new funding every year. We are unable to provide full salaries for our staff, and still face challenges in staff capacity building.

We invite you to read this seven-year report to learn more about KWAT's work.

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

In Burma, the military regime has been in power for several decades, resulting in armed conflict with various minority ethnic groups. These include the Kachin, who occupy the northernmost state that borders China. The Kachin Independence Army (KIA) was the first to negotiate a ceasefire with the junta in 1994, but promises of investment in the infrastructure of Kachin State have not been met. Instead, the military regime has authorised and benefitted from large-scale extraction of Kachin's natural resources – timber, gold, jade and hydroelectric power – and these benefits have not been shared with the Kachin people. In addition, the ceasefire was broken in June 2011. The mismanaged economy, the prioritising of military expenditure over public services, and the spiraling costs of basic commodities as well as schooling and medical care are making it increasingly difficult for people to survive. Consequently, many Kachin people, mainly young men and women, have left their homeland and scattered to foreign countries to escape these injustices.

As the social and economic problems in the Kachin community have worsened, the number of Kachin people fleeing to Thailand each year has increased. In 1999, five women recognised the urgent need for women to unite in an effort to resolve these problems both in Kachin State and Thailand. They formed the Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, on the 9th of September.

MISSION

KWAT's main goal is to ensure the empowerment and advancement of Kachin women in order to improve the lives of women and children in Kachin society.

VISION

As a non-profit organisation working on behalf of Kachin women, we have a vision of a Kachin State in which all forms of discrimination are eliminated, all women are empowered to participate in decision-making at a local, national, and international level, and all Kachin children have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

VALUES

We are committed to meeting the needs of the Kachin community by promoting equality, respect, human dignity, and independence. To this purpose, we are committed to the development of KWAT as a strong organisation, based upon unity and trust through integrity and honesty. As individuals, we are committed to working together with passion, patience, wisdom, and sacrifice.

OBJECTIVES

1. Promote women's rights, children's rights and gender equality
2. Promote women's participation in politics and in peace and reconciliation processes
3. Oppose all forms of violence against women, including human trafficking
4. Provide health education and services
5. Promote women's awareness of management and protection of the environment.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

A KWAT Congress is held every two years; it is the job of the Congress to review the organisation's structure and the Constitution. During the Congress, past activities are evaluated, elections are held for the new term and future plans are discussed.

At the fourth Congress in KWAT's history, we discussed organisational structure. Having greatly expanded both our member base and programs, KWAT decided to adopt a more appropriate organisational structure to fit the growing size of our current work. Despite our adjusted structure, the Congress remains the organisation's most important decision-making body. The management team is responsible for the organisation's activities and decision-making on matters that the Congress does not have jurisdiction over. The coordinators, supervisor, program coordinators, office manager, and advisory board members create the management team. The team members are responsible for implementing and overseeing their specified program. The team members directly communicate with the management team about their projects. We are confident that KWAT's new structure will allow for free exchange of ideas and improved communication between different programs as KWAT continues to empower Kachin women and work for their rights.

ACTIVITIES SUMMARY

KWAT has developed many programs in an effort to help the Kachin people and empower them to ameliorate their situation. KWAT enables these struggling Kachin people to find new ways of liberating themselves, through means of receiving education and instilling confidence in their abilities. KWAT has been able to help many people using various forms of media and conferences across the world. KWAT strives to educate people across the world about the ongoing conflict in Burma and the help the Kachin people need to receive.

The following report references all of the programs and actions undertaken by the organisation between 2007 and 2013. Each of KWAT's nine programs is outlined in the following pages. These programs are:

1. Anti-Trafficking
2. Capacity Building
3. Documentation and Research
4. Health
5. Migrant Worker
6. Political Empowerment
7. Peace and Reconciliation

"Before, we did not aim to work this broadly, but now KWAT is becoming a big organization and working effectively for Kachin communities both in Burma and in Thailand. Moreover, the organization is working on political empowerment now and can advocate internationally. It is growing much more than we ever imagined. I am happy to see this."
Said Mrs. Jannet (one of KWAT founder)

In addition to these programs, KWAT also frequently distributes publications, primarily on the radio and in reports, to many organisations and political institutions around the world. These publications help reach a very large and diverse audience, which benefits KWAT greatly.

Finally, in order to have a significant impact, KWAT members often attend conferences across the world in order to inform people about the current situation in Kachin State. KWAT also collaborates with other local organisations, such as the Kachin Women's Association (KWA), in order to make the greatest impact possible on the surrounding area. They participate in global events like International Women's Day (IWD), World AIDS Day, Child Trafficking Awareness Day, International Human Rights Day, and the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. ♦

ANTI-TRAFFICKING PROGRAM

The Anti-Trafficking Program was started after KWAT research showed shocking numbers of trafficked Kachin women and children in 2003 and 2004.

The program's goal is to reduce the number of trafficked women and children from Kachin and Northern Shan States and to assist in the rehabilitation of trafficked victims. The Anti-Trafficking Program raises awareness among local communities about trafficking. For example, they run a partnership exchange in Laiza that allows women from various IDP camps to come and learn about anti-trafficking strategies. As a consequence, Kachin women and girls are better able to protect themselves. Local Kachin authorities have even developed policies that protect and promote the rights of trafficked women and girls. In addition, the program provides a range of supportive services to the victims and families of trafficking, including shelters, medical and mental health services, education and vocational training, and seed funding for income generation.

Over the past several years, the program has collected data on human trafficking in the Kachin State; the results of these findings were published in three significant reports: "Driven Away" in 2005, "Eastward Bound" in 2008, and "Pushed to the Brink" in 2013. KWAT has also published and distributed pamphlets to raise trafficking awareness in Kachin State. ♦



Participants attend an awareness training held in Kachin State.

There have been **20,000** participants in Trafficking Awareness Trainings over the past seven years.

Kachin Area Trafficking Awareness Trainings

2007 - 2013

These trafficking awareness trainings began in 2006 and are conducted on a regular basis by KWAT and other community partners. The trainings consist of facilitated discussions through presentations, role-play, articles, videos, and songs on trafficking, gender equality, and human rights. Participants, including men, women, and children, are able to discuss their views and opinions even though most have never participated in this type of training before. There have been over 55 trainings, reaching more than 1,665 attendees. Nine other organisations have collaborated to hold these trainings.

Vocational Training for Prevention of Trafficking

2007 - 2010

KWAT has established a program operating out of the Crisis Support Centre in Laiza to provide vocational training to women. The vocational programs aim to develop a community-based anti-trafficking program to help these women be successful in their transition back into the community. They learn how to sew, weave, and make handicrafts. KWAT has national and international markets to sell the items that the women make. Although these projects are small-scale, with training for just a few days, it has a sustainable result.

KWAT aims to empower Kachin women by helping them become self-employed and financially independent. There have been eighteen trainings with over 400 participants. The efficacy and necessity of the vocational training programs have been established; however, the management of these programs is often difficult since participants come from vastly different backgrounds.

Kachin women attend an Anti-Trafficking Awareness event.

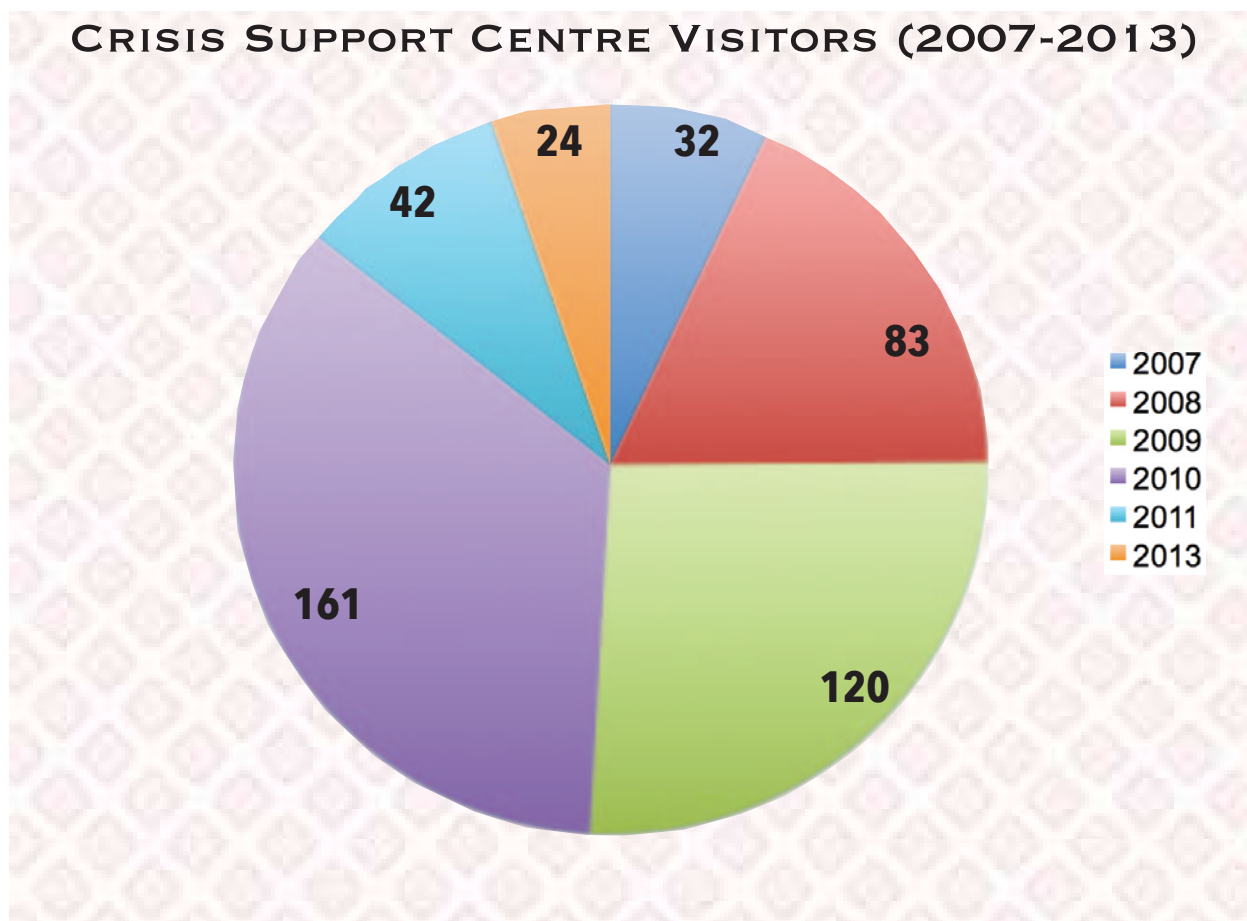


Crisis Support Centre and Safe House

2007 - 2013

KWAT established Crisis Support Centres and Safe Houses in Laiza and Mai Ja Yang, along the Burma-China border, to provide medical assistance, counselling, community outreach programs, and vocational training to the local communities. The Safe House has provided an escape for many women facing violence, including trafficking and the threat of being sold into marriage. The Safe House is not only beneficial, but also absolutely necessary for women and their families. More than 460 people have benefited from the Crisis Centre and Safe House during the past seven years.

During the community outreach trainings, KWAT has educated the community on the resources available to report these incidents of trafficking while also raising awareness about trafficking issues; the centre and house are capable of reaching 800 people per year. KWAT works closely with the Committee for Defending Trafficked women and girls (CDT) and has been co-operating with the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) police and administration since 2008 in order to deal with trafficking cases. KWAT still feels more training and capacity building with local groups are needed to continue the anti-trafficking program. For example, the staff members' lack of knowledge about the reproductive system proved to be an obstacle while working in the Safe House.



The number of participants was increasing, but KWAT needs donors like you to keep all of its programs sustainable. Without the proper funds, it becomes hard for KWAT to implement their programs to the best of their ability.



Community members receive support at the Crisis Support Drop-In Centre.

Trafficking Awareness Songs

2008

KWAT contacted Kachin composers and shared ideas about women's issues. Subsequently, the composers drafted fourteen trafficking awareness songs and provided lyrics for KWAT to review and edit. A Kachin musician from Yangon then recruited singers for the recording to be distributed in Kachin and Shan States.

Anti-Trafficking Scholarships

January - May 2008

KWAT provided scholarships and financial aid to eighteen children and family members of women who had been trafficked in Burma. Money went towards schooling and living costs. In some cases, KWAT also mediated mother and broker meetings to rescue trafficked women.

Anti-Trafficking Community Outreach

2008 - 2013

There were multiple anti-trafficking awareness events implemented throughout villages in the Kachin state. Many community members attended these events, in which they discussed trafficking issues and distributed pamphlets and posters throughout the Kachin state. There are three international events per year that participants attend--International Women's Day in March, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in November (a sixteen-day campaign), and Child Trafficking Awareness Day in December.

Committee for Defending Trafficked Victims (CDT)

2009 - 2010

Kachin State has no established judicial process to deal with cases of sexual assault or trafficking, and Burmese police often only harass victims further. Therefore, KWA established this committee, with the support of KWAT, to discuss trafficked victims' cases and decide on a course of action for each one. This committee has also discussed awareness campaigns, International Violence Against Women Day activities, and solutions to combating trafficking and its problems. Not only does the committee provide defense for victims, but it also handles all of the trafficking cases in the area. Although KWAT is no longer active on the committee, community members continue to run this program.

Expanding Networks in Kachin and Northern Shan States

June 2013

The Anti-Trafficking program conducted a meeting in Myitkyina to expand KWAT's network. Members from Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), such as Humanity Institute, Metta Foundation, Kachin Legal Aid Network, Kachin Lawyers group, and Kachin Youth from Myitkyina, took part in this meeting and engaged in conversation about ways to prevent and eradicate human trafficking. This meeting not only allowed KWAT to gain more contacts in Kachin, but the participants also gained a greater understanding of human trafficking and its impact. ♦



Participants in October 2013 from the partner exchange through the Anti-Trafficking Program.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The Capacity Building Program is comprised of internal and external actions, delivering trainings both for KWAT's staff and for people from Kachin State and Northern Shan State. The trainings take place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and in Kachin State with the help of partner organisations in the region. These trainings improve the efficiency of the participants as they work in organisations with similar goals of improving Kachin communities. ♦

INTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING

KWAT runs and participates in internal capacity building programs to further the efficiency and capability of its staff, as well as to strengthen its ties with other organisations that have similar goals. KWAT uses the Training of Trainer (TOT) method, in which a small group is taught a skill and then expected to share it with their own communities. For example, in 2007, the Volunteer Service Organisation (VSO) organised and facilitated a workshop for 27 KWAT staff members, Advisory Board members, and interns. In this workshop, the group reviewed the current goals, objectives, and activities of the organisation. They also conducted situational and stakeholder analyses, in addition to SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis. Synthesizing all of this information, the workshop members produced a three-year strategic plan, a one-year business plan, and plans for upcoming projects. Since then, KWAT staff has attended other workshops in organisational development, monitoring, evaluation, and logical framework analysis.

The topics of other workshops included documentation and research, conflict resolution, HIV/AIDS, and gender and sex. KWAT works frequently with organisations like ND-Burma, VSO, and the Asian Harm Reduction Network (AHRN) and periodically conducts reviews to make sure that each organisation is receiving maximum benefit from the partnership.



These trainers pose for a picture after completing their peace building training sponsored by KWAT. All of these members went on to raise awareness about peace issues among their respective communities.



Community members in Kachin and Northern Shan States participated in Gender Training. They learned about various issues pertaining to gender and sex.

EXTERNAL CAPACITY BUILDING

Through discussions with Kachin community leaders, KWAT works to establish awareness amongst community members as well as leaders in higher positions, who have the potential to authorise change within Kachin and Northern Shan States. The most important facet of this initiative is the internship program.

KWAT also consults with CBOs to build strong, local networks and spread awareness within the communities. KWAT has held many discussions about the non-violent method of political change and why it is necessary. They have held similar programs to teach women along the Burma-China border about women's rights, gender roles, trafficking issues, environmental concerns, the history of Burma, peace building skills, English, and computer skills. They also outreach to people in Thailand, in the hopes of spreading knowledge about the current conditions in Kachin State.

Internship Program

2006 - 2013

KWAT runs a yearly internship program (beginning in 2002) for leaders, aged 18 to 25, selected from Kachin and Northern Shan States. KWAT has learned that democratic change in Burma begins with the youth, so it is imperative to develop their knowledge and critical thinking skills through discussions and lectures. Through this program, KWAT aims to equip young Kachin leaders with necessary knowledge and practical skills.

Specifically, interns learn and explore social issues (such as women's health, human trafficking, and environmental advocacy), fundamental political knowledge (such as democracy and constitution, gender equality, women's rights and human rights), and other relevant topics (such as history of Burma and media and communication). Interns also have a chance to develop a variety of abilities, including English, Thai, critical thinking, computer skills, office management, accounting and other practical skills, through trainings and workshops run by KWAT members and trainers from other organisations.

Interns come from a variety of backgrounds; working and learning together, the interns become effective leaders. By training men and women in the same program, they become more comfortable living and working together, ultimately learning to dispel gender stereotypes. Graduates either return to their communities in Burma, work for KWAT, study in international universities, or work for relief organisations in IDP camps on the Burma-China border. Over 120 interns have graduated from this program between 2007 and 2013. ♦



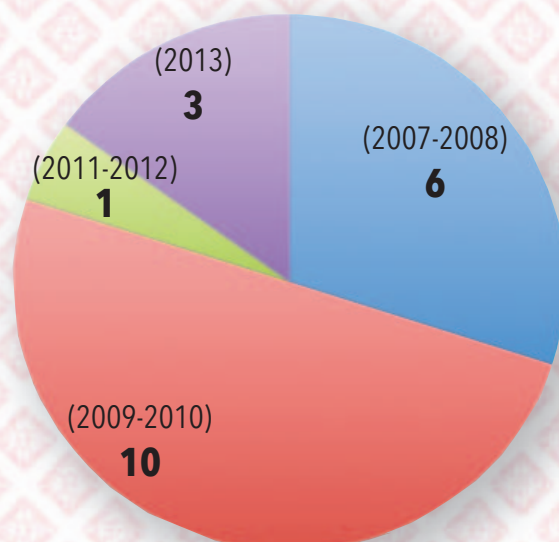
All of KWAT's interns from 2011 (top left), 2012 (top right), and 2013 (bottom) graduated the program successfully. They pose for a picture upon completion of their internships.

DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH

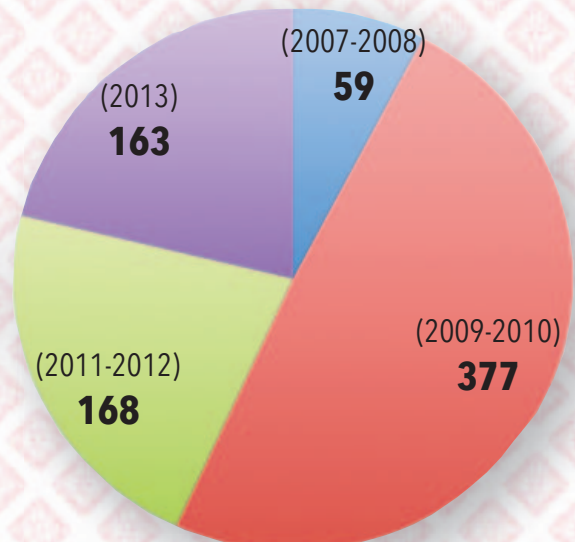
The Documentation and Research Program began in 2003 with the goal of researching and documenting the human rights violations (HRV) on the indigenous people in Kachin and Northern Shan States. The program also includes research on human trafficking, women's health, women's education, and sexual violence within Burma. KWAT also educates locals about what constitutes a HRV and the proper method of documenting these instances. Documenters then survey target areas in Kachin and Northern Shan States to document all abuses perpetrated by the military. The documenters have found numerous reports of human trafficking, domestic violence, rape, forced labour, and even some cases of child soldiers. Many adolescents and men are using drugs, which is directly correlated to an increase of domestic violence. The high incidence of human trafficking can be attributed to the political instability in the area. KWAT collected separate data sets on election-related violence in 2010, finding 58 cases in the month of July. In total, KWAT has documented nearly 800 cases of HRV since 2007.



DOCUMENTATION TRAININGS



CASES DOCUMENTED





Around
800 cases of hu-
man rights violations
have been collected over
the past seven years by
KWAT's documentors
and researchers.

Internally Displaced Peoples share their stories and experiences of human rights violations.

By collecting data through interviews, KWAT is able to understand the communities' feelings and attitudes towards these violations. Many people think that the government taking their land is "fate; the government has power to take our land." By talking with these people and their community leaders, KWAT was able to augment their awareness about individual rights in such situations.

KWAT is able to use the data they collect on HRVs for advocacy projects. For example, in March 2008, KWAT contributed data to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) shadow reports, which are organised by the Women's League of Burma (WLB). They have also uploaded data about drug use and addiction to Martus, a human rights tracking software program. KWAT has received funding from the Open Society Institute (OSI)* in order to document HRV since 2009.

Not only does this program spread awareness of the violations occurring in the region, but KWAT also seeks to preserve Kachin culture and history through this research and documentation program. ♦

**OSI was renamed Open Society Foundation (OSF) in 2011*

HEALTH PROGRAM

The Health Program serves to provide health services for the Kachin people. The program's operations are centred in Mai Ja Yang, located in the south of Kachin State. Some of KWAT's many programs include adolescent reproductive health lessons, basic health care and awareness classes in schools, malaria and tuberculosis prevention/treatment campaigns, community health campaigns for local villages, distribution of contraceptives, and a clinic for mothers and children in Ja Reng Yang. The clinic also serves many IDPs with tuberculosis, malaria, malnutrition, and water borne diseases. KWAT also does periodic community health surveys in the surrounding fourteen villages, gathering information to be used to modify patient care to best fit the needs of the surrounding community. ♦



Children receive health education in schools.



Mothers and their children receive general health check-ups.



KWAT Health Program's nurses and staff pose for a picture.



Students at Alen Bum School in Burma learn about hygiene.

In
2013 alone,
nearly **5,000**
students were taught
about proper hygiene
and disease
prevention.

Traditional Birth Attendants (TBA) Training

2007

At the Ja Reng Yang clinic, 53 people were trained for five days to be traditional birth attendants. It is necessary for people from every village to be trained in this skill, as death is very common during childbirth for both mothers and children. It is not always possible for mothers to reach the Mai Ja Yang clinic or any other health care provider at the time of delivery.

Reproductive Health Trainings

2007 - 2012

These trainings have been conducted in Mae Sai, Thailand, as well as other communities and have taught participants a variety of topics, including family planning, unsafe abortion practices, adolescent physiological changes, reproductive anatomy, and HIV/AIDS. After these trainings, KWAT conducts tests to assess the knowledge gained by the trainees. These tests have often showed an increase in knowledge from 30% mastery to 70-75%.

Basic Health Education for Schools

2008 - 2013

Twice a year, leaders from the Ja Reng Yang clinic are able to teach a class in 20-30 nearby schools on hygiene, infections, drugs, nutrition, contraception, and the reproductive system. In 2013, they taught 31 schools and 4,716 students. The staff also distributed Albendazole (an anti-parasitic drug) and Vitamin A supplements to all of the students.



Dartmouth College's GlobeMed GROW team interned at KWAT for three weeks in 2013.



Migrant workers learn English in Pattaya.



KWAT celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2009.



KWAT held a staff farewell in 2013.



KWAT held its 5th Congress in 2008.



Migrant Exchange discussion about violence against women.



Migrant workers learn how to use various programs on the computer through the Migrant Workers Training program.



Workshop for Organization Development was a success in 2013.



KWAT staff team building activities



Dartmouth College's GlobeMed GROW team interned at KWAT for the first time in 2012.



KWAT celebrates its 14th Anniversary.



2009 KWAT interns are all smiles after completing their internship.



KWAT's coordinator participated in a Women's Democracy Network meeting in 2009.

Ja Reng Yang Clinic

2007 - 2013

Located on the China-Burma border in Mai Ja Yang, this clinic has seen more than 11,084 patients with a variety of health needs, such as pneumonia, malaria, diarrhoea, malnutrition, tuberculosis, and more. The clinic activities include outpatient and inpatient departments, delivery assistance, prenatal and postnatal care, family planning, reproductive health care, school health, health campaigns, nutrition and health education. Staff also visits two nearby IDP camps regularly, serving a population of 4,300 IDPs (2,600 in Lana Zupja camp and 1,700 in Loi Je camp). They also complete long-distance health outreach campaigns of three to four days each. In 2013, they treated 460 villagers and IDPs in more remote areas during these campaigns. They also provided food for and discussed nutrition with approximately 500 pregnant women, breastfeeding women, and children under five from IDP camps near Mai Ja Yang. Overall, KWAT works with an IDP population of around 10,000 people.

In the future, the clinic will also provide a laboratory to test blood type and check for anemia, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. This will lessen the need to send patients or samples to hospitals in either China or Burma, making patient care more effective and efficient.

Trauma Healing Training

April - June 2013

This project has successfully accomplished trainings on trauma healing and basic counselling for 29 women, who had already attended the Peace Building Training. During these training sessions, the women learned how to handle various trauma situations and also gained counselling skills. Participants from locally based women's groups need practical experience meeting with war victims, victims of trafficking or domestic violence, and other women who have experienced violence. A follow-up program will provide these women with advanced trauma healing and counselling trainings. ♦




Counselling training for KWAT staff took place in 2013 in Maijayang.


INCOME GENERATION

The Income Generation Program, founded in September 1999, is headquartered in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and serves as a significant portion of the fundraising arm for KWAT's Burma and Thailand operations. Its goal is to help women who have been rescued from trafficking. The women receive vocational training to craft many different products using cloth, woven in the traditional patterns and colours of the Kachin culture. This training helps restore their confidence and personal pride by providing them with an opportunity to become financially independent. Moreover, these products help preserve and spread appreciation for the Kachin culture. They are sold at the Mae Sot Borderline Shop and the Women's Education for Advancement and Empowerment (WEAVE) shop in Chiang Mai. Products are also sold at regional conferences and seminars.


KWAT crafts many different products using cloth woven in the traditional patterns and colours of the Kachin: bags, shawls, wall hangings, wallets, belts, neck ties, longyis, slippers, and many products decorated with small dolls dressed in traditional Kachin costume such as pins, bookmarks, pencils, key chains, and magnets. ♦



A weaving loom is loaded with Kachin colors and pattern.



Left: A traditional Kachin patterned pair of slippers.



Right: Three dolls dressed in traditional Kachin attire.

MIGRANT WORKERS PROGRAM



Kachin migrant workers receive basic gender training.

The Migrant Worker Program began in 2006 and operates in Chiang Mai, Thailand, to empower and support around 800 migrant Kachin women and children. Through trainings, language courses, and counselling, women find methods of becoming more financially independent. Programs include monthly migrant exchanges, outreach and home discussions, reproductive and general health trainings, family planning materials, computer training, and English and Thai lessons. We also offer a library of books and DVDs in Burmese and Kachin. KWAT is confident that after these trainings, the migrant workers know how to apply their newfound knowledge to aid them in daily life. Moreover, the participants have overcome a fear of these issues, becoming more comfortable saying words like “politics” out loud--something they could not always easily do. A migrant worker Drop-in Centre was established in 2008 as a safe space for women to exchange experiences in addition to seeking medical or personal advice. KWAT also provides temporary housing for unemployed or sick migrant workers until they are able to find work. ♦

Migrant Worker Empowerment

2007 - 2012

KWAT trained migrant workers in Thailand on key topics including human rights, gender equality, women's rights, migrant worker policies in Thailand, and the political situation in Burma. KWAT also provided temporary passports for the migrant workers. They gained confidence about political topics of which they had no prior knowledge. KWAT also raised awareness of the concerns involving workers' rights and labour legislation. With additional funding from Mama Cash, KWAT has been able to train over 650 people with this program.

Peace in Kachin State Discussion

April 2007

KWAT collaborated with the All Kachin Students and Youth Union and the Kachin National Organisation to arrange a discussion with 25 migrant workers on the case of four Kachin girls who were gang raped by State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) soldiers.

Migrant workers
celebrated International
Migrant Day in 2011.
A KWAT member led
discussions among
the workers.



Monthly Migrant Exchanges

2007 - 2011

KWAT conducts Kachin community meetings and exchanges for migrant workers in Chiang Mai. During these exchanges, they discuss various topics such as trafficking, industrial environment, International Peace Day, family planning, Burma referendum and constitution, dams in the Kachin state, IDPs in Burma, human rights and the history of Kachin people. Information on labour cards in Thailand, the scholarship programs, and healthy habits is also given to the migrant workers. Over 700 people have participated in this program.

Migrant Worker Drop-in Centre

2009 - 2012

A total of 700 migrant workers have visited the drop-in centre in Chiang Mai for various reasons, such as illness, joblessness, consultation and more. They are given access to computers and books at the centre as well. They often come to the centre to get medicines and family planning supplies or simply to rest. The centre provides them with a safe place to stay when they cannot afford a home or do not have the documents to reside legally anywhere else. Therefore, the drop-in centre serves as a home, resource centre, and location for monthly exchanges for the migrant workers.

Leadership Training

2010

The Migrant Program conducted a leadership training for 40 Kachin youths in Chiang Mai. The goal was to increase women's participation in leadership and decision-making activities in all parts of society.

Computer Skills

2010-2011

Forty-two migrant workers learned various computer skills. They learned how to use Microsoft Word, Excel, the Internet, Google, social networks, email, and basic Photoshop.

Reproductive Health Class

2010-2011

The Migrant Program conducted reproductive health trainings for over 135 migrant workers. These workers learned about unsafe abortions, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV/AIDS prevention. Trainings are also held for adolescents every year.



Kachin migrant workers from Mae Sai learn about the reproductive system.

Thai Language

February 2011

Twenty-seven migrant workers in Mae Sai on the Thailand-Burma border learned Thai. Their language skills improved vastly; some were even able to negotiate more holidays and time off with their employers in Thai.

English Class

March 2011

Twenty-five migrant workers in Pattaya were taught English. ♦

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM

In 2009, political awareness activities were planned to educate Kachin communities. By 2011, KWAT realised the necessity of these activities and created The Political Empowerment Program. This program's goal is to educate women and youth about democracy and forms of government. In Kachin and Northern Shan States, knowledge about political systems is not readily available, prohibiting members of the community from participating in their government. In an effort to raise awareness about forms of democratic government, KWAT holds trainings and advocacy events for community members to increase understanding and give them the background necessary to spark political change.

KWAT staff works with members of the Kachin Youth Organisation (KYO) to complete TOT training to increase political knowledge and empowerment. The eleven trainers trained in 2013 were able to spread their knowledge to over 100 people in five areas in multiple trainings. They also work with the Political Empowerment Program (PEP) in Chiang Mai, to encourage them to support the KIO and KWA as well as political candidates from Kachin State. ♦



Community members participate in a political awareness discussion led by a KWAT trainer..

Political Awareness Discussions

2009 - 2013

Various discussions were organised by KWAT in both rural and urban areas in Kachin and Northern Shan States. Community members participated in these discussions covering topics such as human rights, democracy and elections, current events, and the political system. They learned about Kachin political history as well as the course future politics could potentially follow. They requested that KWAT facilitate more discussions centred on democracy and politics. Field workers also requested more advanced training on political education in order to become more confident in their political knowledge. These suggestions were incorporated in 2013 discussions. By comparing different constitutions and government structures, they learned that federalism can protect minority rights in Burma. They also learned the value of democracy and cooperation among different ethnic groups.

Political Empowerment Training

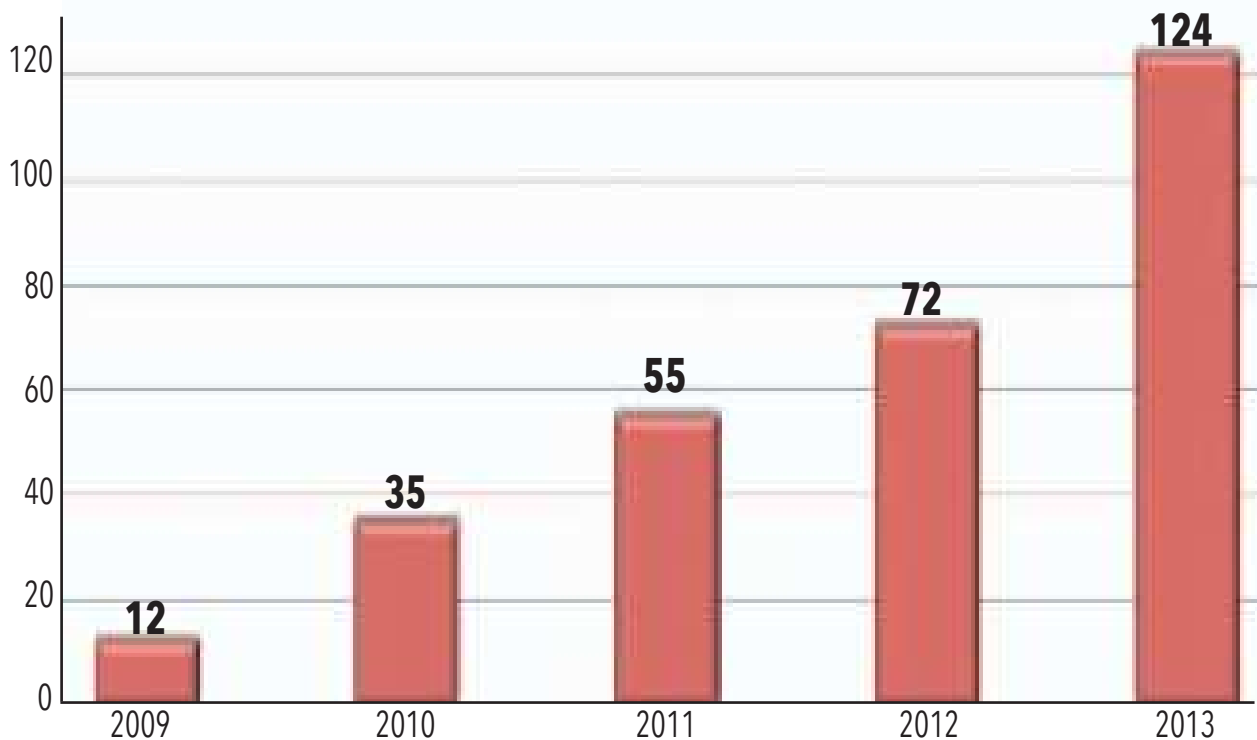
2009 - 2013

This program existed prior to 2009 under the Political Empowerment Capacity Building Program, which was expanded to be its own KWAT program. This training brings university students, church youth leaders, and general community members from Kachin State and Shan State together. Attendees learn about the different types of democracy, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, the need to respect others' rights, gender discrimination, and more. By the end of the training, participants are able to identify human rights abuses and can fully understand the severity of the situation in which they live. Evaluations of the training show that the participants had not been exposed to these topic areas previously and were interested in continuing to learn about them in the future. It allowed them to develop strong relationships with each other and work within the community to promote a more equal and just society.



Members receive Advanced Political Empowerment Training in 2013.

PARTICIPANTS IN POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT TRAININGS





More
than **2,500**
people have attended
Political Discussions
and Trainings
sponsored by
KWAT.



Radio Distribution Project

August 2011

In 2011, 2,536 radios were distributed to 255 villages in Kachin State and Northern Shan State. Over 3,000 people and their families listen to these radios. Popular stations include FM stations, BBC, RFA, and VOA.

Political Advancement Training

February 2012 - May 2013

Eight participants from Kachin State and Shan State came to Chiang Mai and learned about advanced democratic election processes, democracy, federalism, the Constitution, human rights, gender equality, community development, and even English. In addition, the eight students learned the basics of accounting, proposal and report writing, project management skills, and Internet security awareness. The program was repeated in 2013 with eleven participants.

Women Political Forum

January 2013 - March 2013

KWAT conducted three Women Political Forums at two churches in Myitkyina and one IDP camp. The topics covered were government accountability and responsibility, gender and women's rights, leadership, trafficking awareness, and the participation of women in Burma's peace process. A total of 79 women participated.

All participants actively contributed to discussions. Although some were shy and had never spoken in a large group before, all the women said they were going to share the information with their family and friends. In addition to increasing their understanding of the issues, they were interested in KWAT's mission, aims, and activities. Feedback from the participants was generally supportive of KWAT and several individuals requested similar events in the future. ♦



Eight members from Kachin and Northern Shan States receive Political Advancement Training in February 2012.

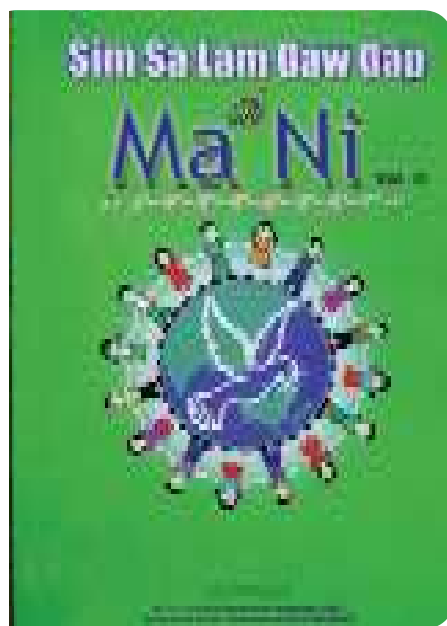
PEACE AND RECONCILIATION PROGRAM

In 2008, this project was established under the Capacity Building Program with the primary goal of convincing young people and children that non-violent action (NVA) and reconciliation is a better route to democratic change in Burma than militaristic conflict. These discussions proved positively effective and spurred political NVA activism for the 2010 election. In 2013, it became its own program, with seven trainings and a total of 155 participants composed of IDP camp leaders, volunteers in IDP camps and women from local organisations. ♦

A Peace Builder's True Story Book

December 2009

A book was published containing the inspiring stories of young adults who have worked toward peace and justice among their family, community, and nation. The book is comprised of two stories from the local area and eleven from around the world. One thousand copies were printed and distributed throughout Kachin State in December 2009 as a resource for peace training. The circulation of this book promoted an understanding of the merits of non-violent methods of change. ♦



EMERGENCY RELIEF ASSISTANCE FOR KACHIN IDPS

This program provides emergency assistance to IDPs and victims of armed conflict in Kachin and Shan States along the China-Myanmar/Burma border, giving them food, basic supplies such as blankets, mats and tarpaulins, and medical help. This aid is essential to their survival. ♦

Relief Assistance for Kachin IDPs

2011 - 2013

KWAT provides emergency assistance to IDPs and victims of armed conflict in Kachin and Shan States along the China-Myanmar/Burma border. With the help of KWA, Wun Pawng Ninghtoi (WPN, also known as “Kachin Light”), KYO and other organisations, KWAT provides nutrition such as wheat, nuts, beans, ovaltine, milk, eggs, and cooking oil to IDPs. KWAT

has distributed blankets, mats, tarpaulins, and many other supplies in the Mai Ja Yang area. After the earthquake in 2011, KWAT provided emergency assistance to 27 households in Thiri and Tay Lay villages. These funds allowed the families to rebuild their homes and buy grains to plant. In addition, KWAT has provided over 5,000 IDPs with medical services through seven health workers in the Mai Ja Yang area. They also teach health education programs and educate IDPs on maternal health.

KWAT has provided emergency relief assistance to more than **5,000** IDPs in the Mai Ja Yang area.



Volunteers bring blankets to an IDP camp on the Burma-China border.



KWAT members distribute a nutritious soup to new mothers and their children.

Educational Materials Distribution

2011 - 2013

KWAT has distributed various educational materials, such as books, pens, pencils, rulers and many other supplies to schools in IDP camps. With the help of other organisations, KWAT has provided many of these necessary materials to support the under-resourced schools in IDP camps in Kachin and Northern Shan States. Through funding from the Burma Relief Centre (BRC), KWAT was able to establish a student support fund to pay for school materials and uniforms for students in IDP camps.

IDP Camp Fact Finding Meetings

July 2012 - September 2012

KWAT visited Kachin and Northern Shan areas to meet with local organisations that provide assistance to Kachin IDPs caught in the conflict between KIO and the Burmese Army. Information on population of IDP camps, amount of current funding assistance from international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and living situations of IDPs was collected. Kachin community leaders from Shan State, Mai Ja Yang area, Laiza, Mansi IDP camp, Moe Mauk IDP camp and Bahmo IDP camp were visited. KWAT met with CBOs to collect information on the IDP camp populations. ♦

ADVOCACY

GLOBAL CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

KWAT attends global advocacy meetings and conferences in order to spread the word about the ongoing atrocities committed by the Burmese government, and to ensure that people are aware about the situation in Burma. It is imperative that world leaders recognise that statements made by the Burmese army about peace negotiations do not accurately reflect the conflict situation. KWAT members travel to speak with various foreign governments, such as those of the UK, US, and Japan. They also attend meetings with various NGOs, discussions with the World Bank, and sessions of the UN Human Rights Council.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

In addition to attending meetings abroad, KWAT also participates in local seminars and meetings in order to strengthen its relationship with other organisations that have similar goals. This includes documentary screenings about HRV, political discussions among female leaders, and strategic planning workshops. ♦



*Above: KWAT member Moon Nay Li meets World Bank Representatives at the Annual Meeting.
Below: KWAT members meet Keith Simpson, a British politician, during the EU Parliament Advocacy trip.*



LEADERSHIP

KWAT Congresses

2008 - 2012

Every two years, KWAT holds a Congress in Chiang Mai to evaluate its last years and make a plan for the future. During the time from 2007 to 2013, KWAT's fifth, sixth, and seventh Congresses took place.

All members of KWAT are invited to the Congress. During the meeting, they elect the executive committee, advisory board, and secretariat. All offices, programs, and projects describe what they have done the past two years, then analyze whether things were successful, what the strengths and weaknesses were, and if the programs should be continued for the next two years. Anything in the Constitution or organisational structure that needs to be changed is amended at this time.

KWAT Annual Meeting

2007 - 2013

Each year, KWAT holds a meeting to analyse their activity for the past year. In addition to doing SWOT analysis of each program, they also discuss any changes that need to be made. ♦



KWAT held its 5th Congress in history in 2008. Here, KWAT executive members and staff workers evaluated all past, current, and future projects.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

'Shayi Shanan' Newsletter

2007 - 2013

This quarterly newsletter covers the activities of KWAT, political awareness issues, trafficking awareness, women's political participation articles, updated news about Kachin, and other general topics; the newsletter aims to provide civic education to its readers. It is distributed to Kachin communities in Thailand, Kachin and Shan States, and even overseas to Malaysia, Japan and Singapore. By the end of 2013, 16 volumes had been published.

For more details about KWAT's publications, please visit www.kachinwomen.com.

Eastward Bound

August 2008

Trafficking Awareness Cartoon

January 2009

Trafficking Awareness Pamphlet

February 2009 - June 2009

Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Abortion, and Complications Booklet

June 2010

Burma's Covered up War: Atrocities Against the Kachin People

October 2011

Ongoing Impunity

June 2012

IDP Fact Sheet: From Persecution to Deprivation

October 2012

State Terror in Kachin Hills: Burma Army attacks againsts civilians in Norhter Burma

February 2013

Booklets of Children Peace Builders V.II and Women Peace Builders V.I

April-June 2013

Pushed to the Brink: Conflict and human trafficking on the Kachin - China border

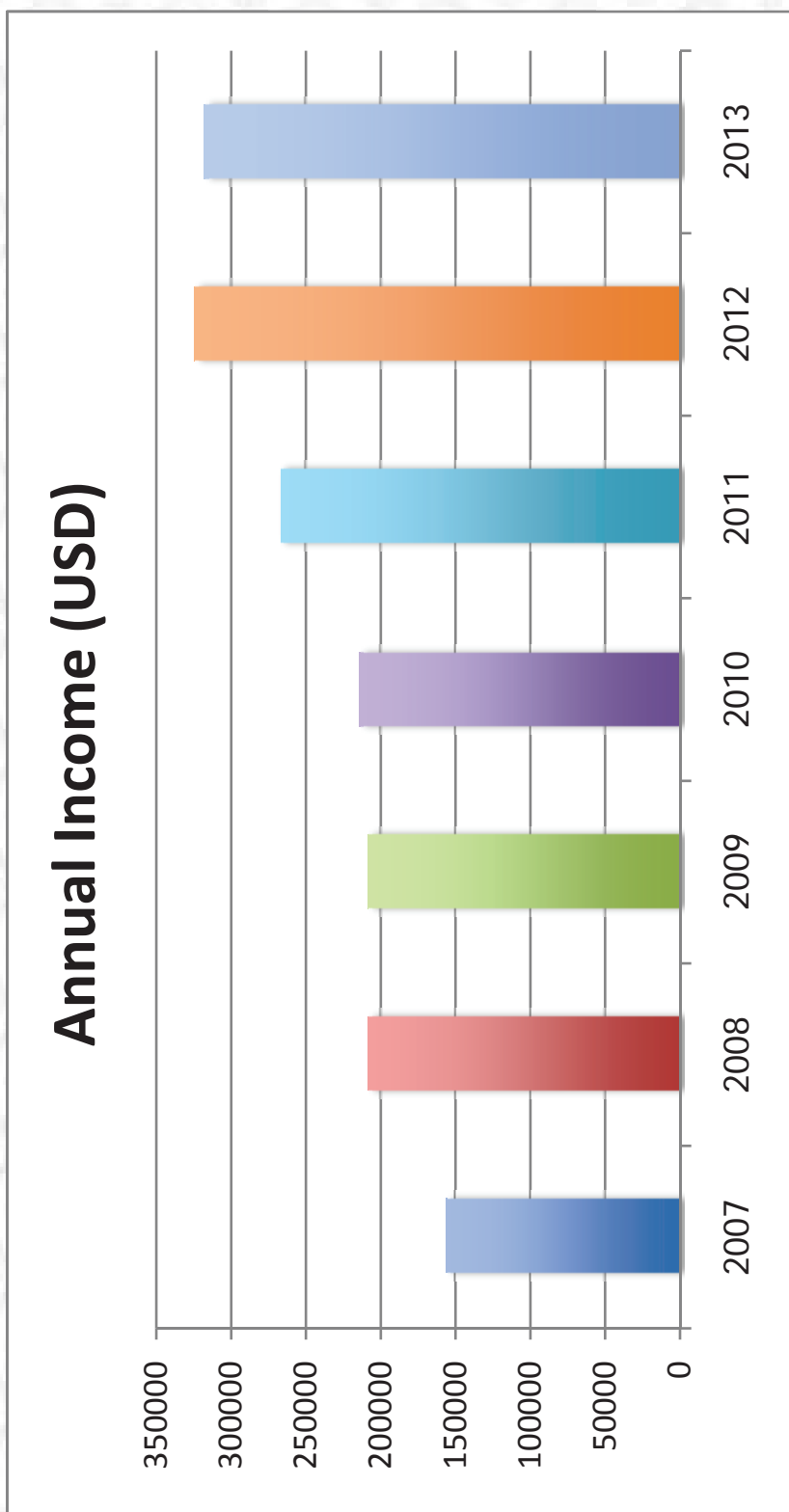
June 2013

Joint Letter from Ethnic Nationalities Civil Society Organisations Regarding Foreign Military Engagement with the Burmese Military

October 2013

Ongoing Burmese Army Atrocities in Kachin State are Undermining the Peace Process

October 2013



Annual Financial Information (2007-2013)

ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------------|--|
| AHRN | Asian Harm Reduction Network |
| BRC | Burma Relief Centre |
| CBO | Community Based Organisation |
| CDT | Committee for Defending Trafficked Women and Girls |
| CEDAW | Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women |
| HRV | Human Rights Violations |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Peoples |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organisation |
| IWD | International Women's Day |
| KIA | Kachin Independence Army |
| KIO | Kachin Independence Organisation |
| KWA | Kachin Women's Association |
| KWAT | Kachin Women's Association Thailand |
| KYO | Kachin Youth Organisation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NVA | Non-Violent Action |
| OSI/F | Open Society Institute/Foundation |
| PEP | Political Empowerment Program |
| SPDC | State Peace and Development Council |
| SWOT | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats |
| TBA | Traditional Birth Attendant |
| TOT | Training of Trainer |
| VSO | Voluntary Service Overseas |
| WEAVE | Women's Education for Advancement and Empowerment |
| WLB | Women's League of Burma |
| WPN | Wun Pawng Nightoi (Kachin Light) |

For more information, please see <http://www.kachinwomen.com>



In 1999, these four women created KWAT to empower Kachin women and raise awareness of the atrocities occurring in the region. Nearly 15 years later, the four founders have helped KWAT grow into a successful organization. Thank you to all of the donors who aided KWAT in all of its endeavors.

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