



# FREE BURMA RANGERS

## 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

LOVE EACH OTHER. UNITE AND WORK FOR  
FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE. FORGIVE AND  
DON'T HATE EACH OTHER. PRAY WITH FAITH, ACT  
WITH COURAGE, NEVER SURRENDER.



## DEAR FRIENDS,

This coming year will mark 25 years of missions in Burma and 20 years since we started the Free Burma Rangers. We thank God and all of you who help FBR to function. We now have over 70 relief teams giving help, hope and love and getting the news out in Burma. This is our second year of operating under our new 501(c)3 foundation, Free The Oppressed (FTO), and we thank all who helped us set this up. As a Karen leader in Burma said when asked if FBR was good; "If FBR follows God it is good, if it does not, it is bad." That is a true statement and while people of different faiths make up FBR and all are welcome, for me, my family and leaders of FBR, following God is the most important mission we have.

While with families in a hiding place high in the Kachin mountains of northern Burma, I was reminded we serve a living, all powerful God. At the end of a relief mission I was feeling bad for leaving the people in their cold and rocky hiding place. I felt I was abandoning them. Then I was reminded, "Introduce them to Jesus. He will never leave them." Jesus has the answer to all our problems and the best thing we can do for each other is to help each other trust and call on Jesus. So I encouraged the people to call on His name, to ask Jesus for anything and to trust Him. We serve a living God and we do so by faith. Faith in the midst of evidence to the contrary, but faith in a God who cares so much for us He sent His son to live and die and live again for us.

In Burma, underneath the layer of a democratically elected government is a foundation of continuing military authority. We keep praying that the attacks against the Kachin, Shan and Ta'ang in northern Burma and against the Arakan in western Burma will stop. In western Burma, over 100,000 of the Rohingya minority live in concentration camps. Even in ceasefire areas, the Burma Army has not withdrawn its forces.

In the midst of ongoing conflict in Burma, ethnic relief team members have felt the call of God to go help people under attack in Kurdistan, Sudan, Syria, Iraq and other places in the world. As this report goes to print we have a team of ethnics from Burma giving humanitarian relief in Mosul, Iraq, and we have teams on an emergency



mission to help the Kachin of northern Burma who are under air and ground attack by the Burma Army. In Syria we are working alongside different ethnic groups to share the love of Jesus and help as we can. One night during a mission in Syria, we got to explain why:

It was late in Kobane, Syria, and we were finishing up a distribution of relief supplies to orphans and widows; a woman asked one of our team, "Why did you come? Why are you helping us?"

He answered, "My God sent us to help you."

"Who is your God?" the widow asked.

He told her, "My God is the one who loves you and sent us to help you. My God is the creator of all and loves us all. He sent His son Jesus to die for us. He helps us help each other." He went on to explain his own experience of God's love and why he came to help. The widow was joined by other widows holding their small children and saying to us, "Thank you, we are so glad you came, it is very good." We prayed with them and left as friends and fellow children of the God of love.

We see the power of God in this and we go compelled by His love to give help, hope and love in Jesus' name. We stand with the oppressed and pray for oppressors, be they in Burma, Kurdistan, Syria Iraq or Sudan. Psalm 77:19 says what I feel about how God leads us, "Your way was through the sea, your path through the great waters; yet your footprints were unseen." We follow an invisible God who visibly changes us!

Thank you for helping and praying with us!

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Eubank'.

David Eubank, family and the Free Burma Rangers



**Top:** Children competing in an origami frog race in Kobane, Syria.

**Bottom:** Students and instructors during graduation at TUW Camp.

**On the Cover:** Kachin IDP children after a Good Life Club program at Maga Yang IDP Camp in Kachin State, Burma. For more on the situation in Kachin State, see page 5.

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**THE FREE BURMA RANGERS (FBR)** is a multi-ethnic humanitarian service movement.

Ethnic pro-democracy groups send teams to FBR to be trained, supplied and sent into areas under attack or in crisis to provide emergency medical care, shelter, food, clothing and human rights documentation. In addition to relief and reporting, other results of the teams' actions are the development of leadership capacity, civil society and the strengthening of inter-ethnic unity. Rangers are volunteers. They choose to work for freedom for all people of Burma, working for spiritual freedom first, to lay the foundation for political and physical freedom. They go towards the attack to help people and they cannot run away if the people they are helping cannot escape.

For recent news and reports, follow us on social media:



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# BURMA OPERATIONS

## FREE BURMA RANGERS

Free Burma Rangers (FBR) is a multi-ethnic humanitarian service movement working to bring help, hope and love to people under oppression in the conflict areas of Burma since 1997. Working alongside indigenous pro-democracy groups, FBR trains, supplies and coordinates Ranger teams to help provide emergency medical care, shelter, food, clothing and human rights documentation. In addition to relief and reporting, other results of the teams' actions are the development of leadership capacity, civil society and the strengthening of inter-ethnic unity. The teams are to avoid contact with the Burma Army or other attacking forces and operate under the protection of the ethnic resistance armies. However, they cannot run away if the people they are helping cannot escape. Men and women of many ethnic groups and religions are part of FBR.



# A DIFFICULT HOPE: DISPLACEMENT CONTINUES IN KACHIN STATE

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High in the Kachin mountains, along the border with China, are acres of blue tarps erected in makeshift shelters, full of families trying to escape Burma Army violence. Mornings here, frost sometimes covers the ground as the people wake to start warming fires and carry water for cooking. A few mill around, wrapped in blankets, trying to find some sunlight to stand in. A work crew of men and women gathers to plan the day's tasks. One person from every household contributes to camp work, including gathering bamboo for building and wood for fires. Most of these people were first forced from their homes in 2011; this month Burma Army attacks forced them from the camp they had lived in since then, Zai Aung IDP (Internally Displaced Person) camp.

La Hpai is a Kachin mother we talked to about this new violence. She showed us her few belongings and the single basket everything had to fit into as she fled. She showed us her home, which was just a sheet of plastic draped over some bamboo. Suddenly, tears filled her eyes as she pointed to her son. Sobbing, she admitted she is losing hope for herself and for the next generation. Her son had been going to high school in Myitkyina but, after fleeing again, she cannot afford the school fees. He will not have a chance to graduate and have a chance for a better life. This troubled her the most. Living in a dusty, cold place under a piece of tarp did not trouble her nearly as much as seeing her son's education stopped.

Our FBR team came to this new IDP camp to provide help, hope, and love to the people. We loaded a big truck with \$5,000 worth of food and medicine. Seeing the need here, it feels like too little. The material and emotional needs are far more than a small group like us can fulfill. Still, in our short time with these IDPs and with our limited funds, we will do as much as we can. Our medics from Karen State treat as many patients as possible. Last night a baby had severe diarrhea and could

not eat or drink. Our medics gave medicine and our rangers prayed with the mother who was distraught thinking that her baby might not live through the night. This morning the child began to recover and the mother came back to us joyful that her child was healing. For that family, we provided help.

Primary and middle school students came to a Good Life Club program. We sang songs, performed skits, and played games with them; we tried to encourage them that God loves them and that He is with them.

Hope is a difficult message to share with the people here. They were first uprooted from their homes and their villages by the Burma Army in 2011; this year they are uprooted again and must start again from nothing. We believe the greatest message we can share with them is to put their hope in God. We share that we are here because we also put our hope and trust in God. We could not do this work without His help and love towards us. Maybe, in a small way, seeing us here, and knowing that we all serve a living God, will give hope. The people here can be reminded that though they are isolated in these cold mountains, they are not forgotten.

And they must not be forgotten as their struggle is far from over. The Burma Army has been relentlessly attacking the Kachin forces since August; once they broke through their defenses, they turned their firepower on the IDP camp. And so the people fled to this new camp of Sha It Yang. With over 2000 people having fled here, the KIO is working to try to build make-shift homes, secure food and firewood, set up a clinic, provide water and sanitation facilities, and install electricity for lights. As the Burma Army advances, more people are expected to flee. This could be just the beginning for Sha It Yang.



# MEET A RANGER: NAY TOE

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Nay Toe was born in western Burma and lived there until he was about three years old. His father was a police officer and as a part of his job, had to rotate to different areas. For the majority of his life, Nay Toe lived in Burma government areas. As a police officer, his father worked closely with the Burma Army. He said, "When I was young, I didn't understand the Arakan revolution with the Burma Army. When I was 25, I moved to Thailand to work and was able to use the internet and Facebook." He learned about the problems in Arakan state and the oppression of the Burma Army. "After that, I started reuniting with Arakan people. I had been living apart from Arakan people from 3 years old to 24 years old. Some friends in an Arakan freedom group sent me some photos and I felt ashamed that I wasn't doing anything to help my people. They asked me if I wanted to join them. They said it would be much harder than normal life. I would have to live in the jungle and run around by foot."

"All my relatives are in the Burma Army. They don't know I'm working for Arakan freedom or a part of FBR. I think if they knew, they'd be proud of me." His father doesn't work for the police anymore, and his parents have moved back to Arakan State. He hasn't spoken to them since 2013, but he sends his salary to help the family.

After Nay Toe joined the Arakan freedom movement, he heard about FBR. He heard the training was harder than commando training and at first he didn't want to come. The group chose the top ten most trusted members to go to the FBR training and they all went through an extra month-long training prior to it. After coming to FBR training, Nay Toe soon became one of the top students. He came back for Advanced Training a second year and was platoon leader for the students. Now as his second year mission is beginning, he says, "I want to help improve the FBR training and come back as a leader. The best part of the FBR training is love. Every instructor gives love to every student."

Nay Toe is one of many Buddhist students that goes through the FBR relief team trainings. For him, "religion is not a big deal. The important thing is to have faith in your mind. All the students understand that it is a 'God job.' GLC (Christian children's program) is based on faith so it is not strange for Buddhist students to participate in Christian songs."

In the past, Nay Toe wanted to be a rich man, but he has changed. Now he wants "to encourage and lead people to better themselves and be stronger people."





# TAH U WAH CAMP: TRAINING

On December 28, 2016, 17 new Ranger teams and six Advanced Ranger teams graduated at the Free Burma Rangers' Tah U Wah Camp in Karen State, Burma. This graduation marked the completion of a three-month training program which began with carrying loads to supply the camp and two weeks of intensive training in swimming, land-navigation, Good Life Club, and chaplaincy/spiritual development. Arakan, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Lahu, and both Northern and Southern Shan teams attended this year.

These FBR teams are well trained and equipped with the knowledge that they can make a difference. They can bring help, hope, and love to people under attack. They can report on what the Burma Army is doing and bring it to the attention of the world. They know that what the government of Burma is allowing their army to do to the Kachin, Rohingya, and other citizens of their country is wrong. Therefore they want to go and stand with the people there and tell the world that what is happening isn't right and isn't just. They are ready to go.

This training is the primary training event of the year and is foundational for all FBR team members. Those with specialized roles had opportunity to attend other trainings throughout the year as well, focusing on specific aspects of their work.

**Each year, FBR provides training in a variety of subjects including but not limited to:**

- Ethnic Unity
- Leadership Principles
- Map Reading and Drawing
- Compass Reading, Land Navigation and GPS (Global Positioning System) Use
- Landmine Removal
- Swimming and Lifesaving
- Solar Power and Battery Management
- Human Rights Violations Recording
- Video and Photography
- Medical Training
- Physical Training
- Rope Bridge Building
- Good Life Club Training and Counseling

**In 2016, FBR provided and participated in the following trainings:**

- **Karen State, Burma**  
Primary Ranger Training: 17 basic teams and 6 advanced teams
- **Karen State, Burma**  
JSMK Medic Training: 19 new medics trained
- **Shan State, Burma**  
Basic Pre-Training: 12 rangers
- **Kurdistan, Iraq**  
Basic First Aid Training: 1,000+ trained by FBR medics from Burma
- **Urban Saints/GLC Training:** 23 rangers given specialized training in leading children's program
- **Human Rights Documentation:** 10 rangers



*Rangers practice during a relief simulation exercise at Tah U Wah Training Camp.*



# FREE BURMA RANGERS: 70 TEAMS

After training, Rangers are added into teams operating throughout Burma. The map and division show both the 2016 full-time teams (in green) and part-time teams (in brown) for each state in Burma, along with international headquarter teams.

At a glance, the Rangers did the following:

- 58 missions in Burma
- 30,000+ patients treated in Burma
- 8 playgrounds built in the Middle East
- 20,000+ fed in the Middle East
- 2,000+ patients treated in the Middle East
- 1,000+ orphans assisted in the Middle East



Each figure represents one team of 4-6 Rangers. Green represents a full-time team while brown represents a part-time team.

## HEADQUARTERS



### HEADQUARTERS

**First Team Established:** 1997

Two HQ teams work in the conflict zones all over Burma conducting relief missions and trainings. One HQ teams serves on international missions in Iraq and Syria.

## MON STATE



### MON

**First Team Established:** 2009





## KARENNI STATE



### KARENNI

**Partner Organizations:** Karenni National  
Progressive Party

**First Team Established:** 1999

## KAREN STATE



### KAREN

**Partner Organizations:** Karen National Union

**First Team Established:** 1999

## KACHIN STATE



### TA'ANG

**Partner Organizations:** Palaung State  
Liberation Front

**First Team Established:** 2012



### KACHIN

**Partner Organizations:** Kachin Independence  
Organization and Kachin National Organization

**First Team Established:** 2008

## SHAN STATE



### PA'OH

**Partner Organizations:** Pa'Oh National  
Liberation Organization

**First Team Established:** 2010



### SHAN

**Partner Organizations:** Restoration Council  
of the Shan State and Shan State  
Progressive Party

**First Team Established:** 2004



### LAHU

**First Team Established:** 2005

## ARAKAN STATE



### ARAKAN

**Partner Organizations:** Arakan Liberation  
Party and Arakan Army

*(four teams active in Kachin State)*

**First Team Established:** 2003

## SAGAING DIVISION



### NAGALAND

**First Team Established:** 2010

## CHIN STATE



### CHIN

**First Team Established:** 2010



# JUNGLE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE- KAWTHOOLEI

As the ceasefire is maintained, and political freedom arrives in central Myanmar, what impact have these developments had on life and work in JSMK?

Building of rough roads through the jungle means that during the dry season, supplies can be brought much closer to JSMK using tractor and motorbike, and sick patients can be referred out more easily. During the rainy season, the roads become too eroded to use. Fear of travelling and transportation through Burmese towns and cities has also eased. Families experience less uncertainty, which simplifies farming. After so many years of conflict, people are still worried that fighting will resume. They notice

that the Burma Army has built up their military camps with more weapons. Negotiations regarding the future structure and staffing of health care within Karen State are ongoing, and clinics still need more staff, supplies and training.



## Healing Hands

An elderly farmer fell onto a broken branch, impaling his right hand. Over the next two months, his hand grew so swollen and painful that he could no longer use it. He visited two clinics where treatment with antibiotics and several efforts to probe his wound brought minimal improvement. An infected hand is a problem anywhere, but particularly so for a Karen farmer whose family depends on the rice he grows on the jungle hillsides. Farming in Karen State requires a sharp machete and a stout arm. At JSMK, we were able to identify and remove a chunk of wood using an ultrasound and an anesthetic method that numbs his entire arm, permitting a large incision and thorough surgical hand exploration. Wound management and soft tissue infections are among the most common ailments we treat, and our students become competent in caring for both acute and chronic wounds, abscesses, joint infections and pyomyositis. These skills will serve them well as FBR medics, and as future health care providers in village clinics.

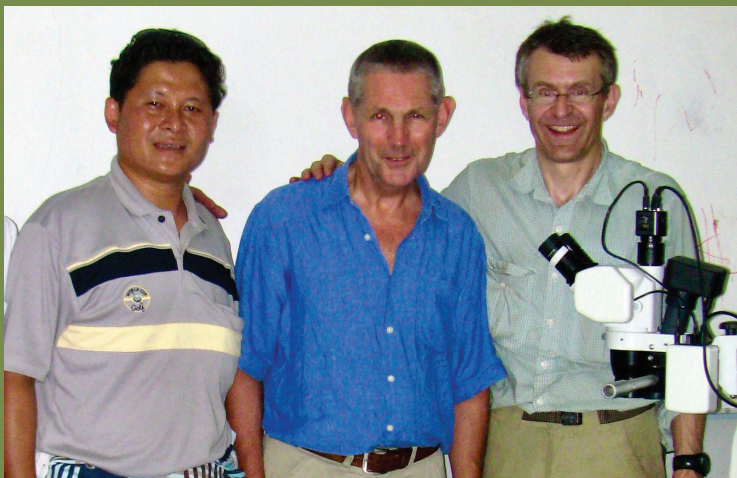
## During 2016, JSMK\*:

- Graduated another one-year class of 19 medics
- Trained 3 interns from other nearby clinics
- Provided care to 436 hospital patients and 1537 outpatients
- Vaccinated 110 children from 5 villages
- Provided deworming and nutritional supplements for hundreds of children
- Referred 13 patients to a neighboring country to provide specialized care
- Received 42 patients referred to JSMK from other clinics in the region
- Built a new bridge across the river that runs through our campus
- Improved solar, hydro and generator power
- Built a second house for volunteers
- Added/Renovated staff houses
- Expanded vegetable gardening space and added a new fish farm

*\*We would like to thank the Willett Foundation for supporting our operations.*







***Clockwise from top left:** Saw Nay Hser (left) with Scottish ophthalmologist, Dr. Frank Green (center) and Dr. Bob Arnold; Saw Nay Hser performing cataract surgery in a remote village while Eliya and medical students watch; Saw Nay Hser providing vision checks in Karen State.*



## A NEW PARTNERSHIP: BURMA VISION JOINS FBR MEDICAL PROGRAM

In 2016, FBR's medical program was officially joined by Burma Vision, an initiative of Dr. Bob Arnold and Saw Nay Hser. Dr. Bob says of the program: "The FBR medics are sometimes faced with discouraging and "hopeless" medical conditions. I believe that delivering immediate vision improvement will have a multiplied benefit: 1) adults and children will see better, 2) adults will be able to read to the children, 3) a few might not step on land mines and 4) the medics will be encouraged knowing that a simple addition to their back-pack load was able to immediately help many of their people.

In 2012, Dr. Robert Arnold, a pediatric ophthalmologist, met Nay Hser. Prior to that meeting, Arnold had tried to adapt American optics, vision screening, and surgery with FBR head medic, Eliya, near Bung Klung and Leh Tong Ku villages. Nay Hser had previously been trained by a Scottish ophthalmologist in cataract and other sight-saving microsurgery, and had become an eye medic of extraordinary skill.

Nay Hser quickly trained the FBR medics about instruments, sterilization and cataract surgery. Burma Vision also purchased more

portable equipment for Nay Hser to use as he traveled on his eye-treatment missions.

Nay Hser travels throughout Karen State, by foot, boat, mule, scooter, and jungle truck and holds clinics for 1-2 weeks, seeing hundreds of referred patients, dispensing whatever spectacles Free Burma Rangers and Burma Vision have collected, and preparing patients for eye surgery under local anesthesia in schools, churches or even under a large tree. Instruments are sterilized by "pressure cooker" over a fire. Power is usually with their small generator.

Over 2016, he performed 916 cataract extractions with intraocular lens implant, 44 glaucoma procedures, 99 pterygia, and 26 other. He dispensed 865 pairs of glasses. His biggest expenses are disposable materials and lenses for cataract surgery, travel, and spectacles. Free Burma Ranger medics never seem to have enough glasses to had out. Burma Vision is a welcomed addition to FBR medical work.

# A STEP AHEAD: LEARNING TO BE VIGILANT IN LOVE

BY: KAREN EUBANK

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On January 29th, in Al Rashidia, northeast Mosul, Iraq, our team gave a Good Life Club children's program to about 300 local children living in a community liberated from ISIS only the week before. We were there with the Iraqi Army and together we celebrated with the families in the neighborhood the new freedom of mind, body, and spirit that they could begin to experience after two years of heavy oppression under ISIS. Yet, the area was still in ISIS mortar and drone range, and the day after sharing about our love for them and the love of God that was deep and wide, a mortar struck a group of children less than a kilometer from where we had held our program, injuring five and killing six, and one adult. We had left our program cheered by a joyous, fun-filled morning with these resilient children; loading wounded and lifeless bodies into our ambulance the next day was a heavy contrast indeed.

But not unusual.

In Karen State, Burma, sometimes it has seemed that we are just a step ahead, with the Burma Army right behind us, as we would hear of children we had just seen now hiding in the jungle. In Sudan, we shared precious hours with children who were repeatedly bombed by the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) dictatorship while we were there, and after we left. In November last year, in southeast Mosul, we hadn't quite finished our program before mortars were landing near the school where we were meeting and we had to evacuate together with the children.

Experiences of conflict following a GLC program remind me of the moment I felt God direct me to the core of our mission – through a news program I watched in a hotel room. It was 2003 and I watched a report of a school shooting in Chechnya. In a profound and unexpected way, that event brought distilling questions to mind: What was the last thing those children had been taught before the attack? What

was the last thing their parents said to them that morning? I knew in that moment that in the broad scope of subjects on which to 'educate' children, the most important message was about God's love and the saving hope of Jesus. I would never know how much time a child would have after we met, or how much time I would have, for that matter; therefore, the most essential message to give would be the Gospel.

And yet, even with this knowledge and faith, after the fun and games end it is hard not to be rocked when the reality of the warzones we work in hits. In Kachin State in 2013, we returned to a school we had been to the year before, that had been recently attacked and ransacked by the Burma Army. Children's clothes and personal possessions were scattered in their torn-apart dormitories. We found the bead bracelets we had given them tossed with everything else on the floor. I was sick at heart and asked God, "Where is your gospel now? How could this happen after all I told them about your love and care for them?"

And I soon felt an answer, an affirmation: "You got there first, before the attack. The message was there ahead to strengthen them for whatever the future would hold. Keep a step ahead. Be vigilant to get my love out there before whatever may follow."

After hearing about the deaths of so many children in Al Rashidia a day after we had met them, I hoped and prayed that those children had been at our program, and understood that there is a God deeper and wider than the destruction man can cause. While I was deeply saddened, I was just as deeply grateful that we had been there first to let them know that God controls their soul's destiny despite any act of man in their lives. With reason, we are called to be vigilant in our message, and of necessity we must have hope in the truth of God's promise to reveal Himself in the lives of these, his children, on earth or in heaven.





**Free from ISIS:** An Iraqi girl shows off her new GLC bracelet about Jesus' love in newly liberated eastern Mosul.





***Clockwise from top left:*** A boy shows off his new GLC shirt at a GLC program in Shan State; Rangers brainstorming how to engage children during an extra training with Urban Saints; Rangers practicing Bible dramas during the Urban Saints training; Kachin IDPs after a GLC program at Maga Yang IDP camp in Kachin State; a Ranger hands out beads for bracelets into eager hands during a GLC program in Kachin State; a Ranger leads local kids in a song as part of a GLC program in Karen State.





# BEYOND PHYSICAL NEEDS: GOOD LIFE CLUB PARTNERS WITH URBAN SAINTS

Following graduation and a month-long mission, 23 Rangers joined a training done in partnership with Urban Saints. Urban Saints, a Christian organization based in the UK, “exists to reach children and young people all over the world and see them transformed through the love of Christ.” One of their main functions is to train and build up children’s ministry workers.

Many, but not all, FBR Rangers are Christians while others are Buddhist or Animist. Also, most of the FBR leadership are Christian, but not all. Of the 23 Rangers that joined us after graduation and a month-long training mission, only about half were Christians. Yet, even with a difference in beliefs, the Rangers thought it important to continue their training to be better equipped in working with children.

It would be easy after a long history of conflict in Burma for locals to settle into a mindset of survival. However, the purpose of GLC is to think beyond our basic physical needs and remember we are emotional and spiritual beings as well. This advanced training was special because we could go deeper.

This training in particular involved concentrated Bible reading and spiritual conversation. The students were all very respectful, involved, and open to the gospel. Each day started with worship and devotions, and was attended by all students.

Discussions throughout the week involved questions like: Why does Jesus find children important? What are challenges children experience when they want to go to church? If we are to “be all things to all people,” then how do we get on level with kids? Why is effective communication important and how do we know that we have communicated well? What do children think? How do we engage them? Why do we play and what are the benefits?

We didn’t want the Rangers to just know how to put on a great children’s program, but why we should do it in the first place. We must first start with the question of why children are so important that we should focus so much of our mission on them. We have to remember the amount of trauma children in war zones have experienced. Then, beyond that, we must remember how important just the normal development of a child is. When communities are focused on survival, children often lose a significant period of innocence and security in their lives. If children’s workers are going to work well within these types of communities, they must understand the significance of what they are doing and how it is affecting the children. They are strengthening children’s identities, giving them an opportunity to feel joy, security, and acceptance. Even further, they are being shown that not only do we believe they are important, but God does.

On the lighter side, we practiced all kinds of new games, songs, and biblical skits. We had a running score board all week and four teams competed for victory. It was hilarious to watch a room full of adults playing children’s games in such a competitive manner. Overall the structure of the classes and the engaging content really made an impact on the staff and students alike. Our future children’s programs will certainly be stronger and richer because of it.





# MIDDLE EAST OPERATIONS

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## **FREE KURD RANGERS, FREE IRAQI RANGERS, FREE SYRIAN RANGERS**

We continue as God leads us to help people in all areas of Burma – those still in active conflict and those in improving areas. As for other areas in the world, people know of the FBR teams and how they have been a force of good in Burma. There is a need for people who are willing and able to go into the midst of the attack and help physically and spiritually. Our main effort remains Burma, but in 2015 we went to Iraqi Kurdistan to help those caught up in the fight against ISIS. And in 2016, we expanded Middle East operations to include three missions to Syria and medical and humanitarian support and relief for those caught up in the battle to retake Mosul from ISIS. Thank you to those who help us so much in our work there, especially our partners ATP, Reload Love, Bring Hope Foundation, and PRAD.



# JESUS IN MOSUL: FINDING HIM AMIDST THE VIOLENCE

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Before we were invited to help bring food for people in Mosul, when we were still working with the Kurds, we were told, “You Free Burma Rangers may be able to work in Kurdistan and pray with people there, but in Mosul it’s completely different. There is no place for Jesus stuff in Mosul because God is not there. It is a violent, extremist place. It is not your place.”

Still, we believed He led us to Mosul and our prayer continues to be His ambassadors. In spite of our own weaknesses and sins we saw Jesus there and saw the hunger of people for Him.

In the fall of 2016, the Iraqi Army gained a foothold in eastern and southeastern Mosul, a city of over one million people on the Nineveh plains. This was the first major city that ISIS took in Iraq during their 2014 conquest of parts of Iraq and Syria. The people of Mosul are predominantly Sunni, with many supporting ISIS due to injustices felt from the post-2003 Shia-rule in Iraq.

One day in December, in a corner of Southeast Mosul, our team was taking in supplies for distribution in areas recently liberated from ISIS. Even though ISIS had been pushed out of those areas, they still held most of the city and were often only a building or block away from Iraqi forces.

During the distribution, ISIS attacked us with rifles, machine-guns, and mortars. The Iraqi Army held them off and we continued to pray with the locals and give out food. Families would dash from their houses, get the food and medical care, and then run back inside.

Many had decided to stay in the war zone because they were afraid of what could happen if they fled. In November we had heard how ISIS told people that even if they managed to flee ISIS, the Kurds would behead them. Some chose to flee anyway and found that the Kurds were not

waiting to behead them, but were waiting to help them.

During ISIS attacks Iraqi soldiers have shielded civilians and exposed themselves to direct fire. ISIS launches their assaults from a network of tunnels, rat holes, suicide vehicles and IED’s. They continue to attack night and day with heavily armored vehicles full of explosives, which they detonate into Iraqi positions and into civilian-concentrated areas. ISIS soldiers attack on foot through doors, windows and alleyways, pouring down fire on the Iraqi soldiers. They do not spare those distributing food, and they especially do not make a distinction for the civilians who receive it. In seven of the ten distributions we had done up until mid-December, we came under direct attack from ISIS. Despite this, people continued to come to our food distributions because they need to eat and there was no other way of getting it.

All of those we met were grateful for our food and help. However we do know that some of them still support ISIS and that many of them are wary to trust us. On some occasions after receiving their rations, the small group of civilians who support ISIS would call them from their phones so ISIS would know where we were and attack us. We knew this going in, but we prayed and felt this was the door God wanted us to go through in order to share his

love in their time of need and to develop new relationships.

Towards the end of one distribution, while we were under fire, Dave gave a Jesus film in Arabic to one of the men, Haman. Dave said, “This is a film about my leader but if you don’t like it you can throw it away.” The man looked at the cover and said, “Jesus. We need Jesus because Jesus brings love, forgiveness and truth; we need him. Thank you for loving us and sharing about Jesus.”



*Sahale Eubank with Haman.*

# BUILDING UP: MIDDLE EAST PLAYGROUNDS

Mirky is a small Christian village in Kurdistan, nestled at the base of a mountain, just a couple kilometers from where ISIS was finally stopped by the Peshmerga in their devastating march across Iraq. These villagers fled but came home soon and tried to pick up normal life, though they were still in rocket range of ISIS.

Sinjar City was occupied by ISIS in August of 2014 and finally liberated in November 2015. By then, it was a vastly different place than the thriving town it had been: the extremist fighters had intentionally destroyed sections that were Yazidi, Christian, Jewish or Shia Muslim. Sunni areas were treated more lightly. Points from which ISIS had launched attacks had been pounded by coalition airstrikes. Much of the city is now rubble. This, along with the fact that the new ISIS line is only about 5km away, has slowed the recovery of the city and 10 months after the city's liberation, only some 200 families had returned.

Sinjar Mountain, which the city sits at the base of, is where most of the citizens fled to escape the ISIS onslaught in August 2014. It was the site of desperate fighting and has become the home for some 8000 people who did not leave it for the security of Kurdistan's refugee camps and continue to live in tents on the side of the mountain until they can return home. For some, their villages are still occupied by ISIS; for others, their homes are destroyed or still too close to ISIS for them to be able to move back.

Faizalia was occupied by ISIS until November of 2016, when the Peshmerga retook it as part of the final push to take back Mosul. The people are mostly Sunni Muslims; instead of fleeing for their lives and

losing everything, they chose to stay, and endured more than two years of oppressive ISIS rule. One family lost eight people when an airstrike targeting ISIS fighters entrenched next to their home landed instead on their home.

Sharhazad was liberated from ISIS in November 2016. A neighborhood in the southeast corner of Mosul, the more than 100 families there remained vulnerable for days after its liberation as ISIS continued to control and launch attacks from the surrounding areas. In those days it was muddy, dreary, and there were mortars and sniper fire falling daily. The children of the village would dart around, hugging the walls as much as possible and trying to avoid the mud as they moved around. A month later, ISIS had been pushed farther back. Kids played in the streets, men sat around outside trying to soak up whatever sun appeared in the cold of winter. The basics of infrastructure were still lacking, it was still muddy and grey, but the people could begin to think about things like school – theirs was full of broken windows and the grounds were full of mortar craters.

These places all have in common devastation caused by ISIS; they have endured much evil. But they have not been overcome. And so they are also places where we, with help from partners like Reload Love and Sport Kids, have been able to build new playgrounds. We hope that this gift, dedicated to the children, to fun, and to life abundant and bigger than just survival, will give a boost. We hope that a bright, whole, colorful playground standing out in these broken, shot-up places, a space dedicated to the kids, can serve as a new focal point that is focused on the future, that can be part of a fresh start in the wake of ISIS.



*A girl plays on a slide at the new playground in Sinjar City.*



*Children in Sharhazad the day their new playground was dedicated.*

**So far, 8 playgrounds have been built. Five around the Sinjar area, and three additional ones in cities like Mirky, Sharazad, and Faizalia.**



# ENTERING SYRIA: ANSWERED PRAYERS

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Throughout spring 2016 we felt a desire to go into Syria to help but had no sure answers. We knew that in order to go we needed four things: conviction and peace from God, a trusted guide, a way into Syria that would honor the Kurdish government and our hosts there, and confidence knowing that we could really help and be useful.

Through a friend, our team in Kurdistan was connected to a Syrian man named Bashir. Dave Eubank spoke by satellite phone with Bashir on one of the team's last days in Kurdistan, asking for a meeting near the Kurd and Syria border to see if we should extend into Syria. Bashir said he would try to meet us, but traveling to the border usually took one day and five days to get a permit. The meeting was to happen in two days.

Two days later, Bashir walked up to us beaming. After shaking hands and embracing, he told us what he had heard about us, how we worked in conflict areas and that we could be of real use in Syria.

"I have prayed a long time for Christians to come and help us. I am the only Christian in my family and came to the Lord through a Christian priest. I got involved in the revolution in Syria and have been asking God for help. The biggest need my people have is spiritual. We need a new way. We need Jesus to help change our lives and help us live in the way of love and liberty with each other. I have prayed

for someone like you to come and help, to help meet the physical and humanitarian needs but more importantly, the spiritual needs. I prayed about coming to see you even though it was on short notice and that God would have to do a miracle for me to see you in just two days. But I got to the border in one day and then in three hours I was across it. This has never happened and I knew it was from God. I needed to see you and God opened the way."

Dave told him, "We are so small, we are only small drops who can help a little. We too feel God brought us together but you should know we are very small."

Bashir replied, "We are all like small drops, but from these drops will come a river that will sweep the land. We may not see it in our lifetime but God will use us to be part of that river to come. The river is of love, truth, new life in Jesus, freedom and reconciliation. I thank God you came and let us go forward together. Also I am so excited that God sent not only you all but people from Burma too!"

Since that meeting we have done three relief missions into Syria, along with helping orphans and the displaced, treating soldiers fighting ISIS on the front line, feeding and clothing those in need, and meeting and supporting believers and sharing the love of Jesus.



*Eliya, a Karen medic, provides dental care to internally displaced people (IDPs) in Kobane, Syria, during a mission there in June 2016.*





# PLEASE TELL THE WORLD

We first met Nezar, a Yezidi, in January 2016 in the ruins of Sinjar City. Nezar's wife and two small children had been captured two years previously by ISIS. His mother, father, sister, brothers, uncles, and aunts were executed by ISIS, their bones left in a mass grave outside of Sinjar. The Yezidi have been especially singled out for murder, rape and enslavement by ISIS.



***Clockwise from top left:***

*Nezar showing us his wedding photo; Nezar at the mass grave where many of his family were killed; Nezar with his wife and children after being reunited (identities hidden for security).*

We met him again in September 2016 and he showed us his wedding picture with his extended family: “Dead, dead, dead, dead,” he said as he pointed to each person in the photo. Only his wife was alive, a captive of ISIS with their two children. He offered to show us the mass grave where his family had been killed. It’s a shallow depression in the ground, about 60’ by 30’; a mile away are the ISIS front lines. Over 70 men, women and children had been shot and beaten to death there by ISIS. Skulls, hair, bones and scraps of clothes were scattered about and bones protruded from the earth. Some of the small skulls, belonging to children, had their teeth bashed in.

As Nezar stood silently looking at the bones of the mass grave, a shudder rose through his chest and he put his hands to his face and began to sob. Later he said, “Please tell the world what happened. It is not just my family who have been killed and captured, there are thousands more. Please act in time to save the living captives.” I cried with him and prayed for his wife and children to be set free. I committed to him that I would keep praying, do all I could, and keep coming back until they were free.

In early 2017, as this report was being made, amazing news came: they were still alive and she had made contact with him. With the help of his extended community he was able to gather the funds necessary to procure their release. On April 8th he talked to her again, by phone, for the first time in over two years. She was on her way back – at that point still in an ISIS-held city, but on the way. On April 11th, they were reunited on Sinjar Mountain and are now in an IDP camp in Kurdistan, Northern Iraq – the camp where other survivors from their village are living. Their village is still under the control of ISIS.

Thanks for praying for this man and his family and thank God for bringing them back together. But please don’t stop! Please continue to pray for Nezar, his wife, and their children, a son and daughter – for healing, for their future, for a new beginning, and for others still in captivity. I am reminded of these words about Jesus and our lives, “As He died to make men holy, let us live to make men free.”

# 2016 FINANCES

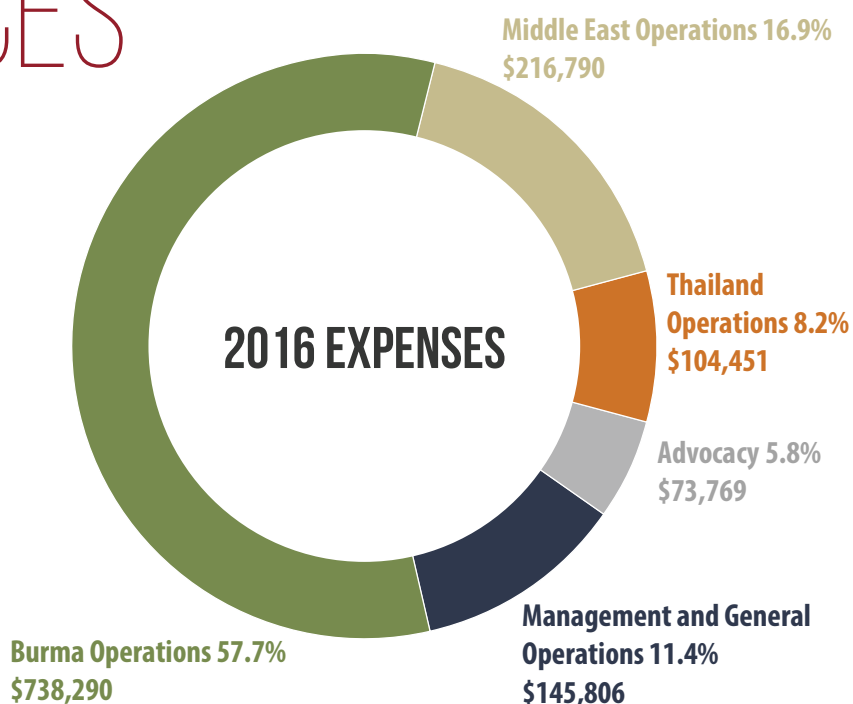
**2016 REVENUE: \$1,942,119**

**2016 EXPENSES: \$1,279,106**

FBR is funded by donations from individuals, churches, and other organizations from around the world. We are encouraged by and grateful for all of those who give to support the work of FBR.

FBR uses Thai Baht, Iraqi Dinar, and US Dollar (USD) currencies in its operations. The numbers here reflect the totals in USD using the actual or average conversion rate of each currency.

We ended 2016 with a surplus of revenue. This is primarily because our fiscal year-end falls on the same date as the individual taxpayer year-end, and many people still choose to donate at year-end. It is also the result of capital assets that we purchased during the year that will be depreciated in future years. See the summary below.



## 2016 PROGRAM SERVICES

	Burma Ministries	Middle East Ministries	Thailand Ministries	Advocacy	Management and General	Total
Relief Activities	257,355	123,963	—	—	—	381,318
Travel and Vehicles	33,627	53,917	14,373	34,528	38,633	175,078
Stipends and Support	75,179	16,265	77,023	—	—	168,467
JSMK	129,442	—	—	—	—	129,442
Training Relief Teams	103,841	—	—	—	—	103,841
Other Administration	—	—	—	—	82,032	82,032
Medical Supplies	61,358	7,677	—	—	—	69,035
Communications	38,540	4,353	644	2,922	1,288	47,747
Good Life Club	36,628	10,615	—	—	—	47,243
Facilities	2,320	—	12,411	6,978	23,853	45,562
Advocacy	—	—	—	29,341	—	29,341
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>738,290</b>	<b>216,790</b>	<b>104,451</b>	<b>73,769</b>	<b>145,806</b>	<b>1,279,106</b>

*In 2016, FBR purchased capitalized assets in Iraq and Thailand consisting of the following:*

Location	Category	Original Cost	2016 Depreciation Expense**	31 Dec. 2016 Net Asset Value
Iraq	Vehicles	142,000	2,367	139,633
Thailand	Office Equipment	2,908	610	2,298
<b>Total</b>		<b>144,908</b>	<b>2,977</b>	<b>141,931</b>

To give a financial gift, please send your check, made payable to Free The Oppressed, to one of the addresses at right. Our EIN is 47-4648581. Online donations can be made at [www.freeburmarangers.org](http://www.freeburmarangers.org).

**Mailing Address:**  
Free the Oppressed  
PO Box 912938  
Denver, CO 80291-2938

**Overnight Address:**  
Lockbox Services 912938  
Free the Oppressed  
MAC C7301-L25  
1740 Broadway St - LL2  
Denver, CO 80274





# JOIN THE MOVEMENT



## ORGANIZE A RUN FOR RELIEF FOR BURMA

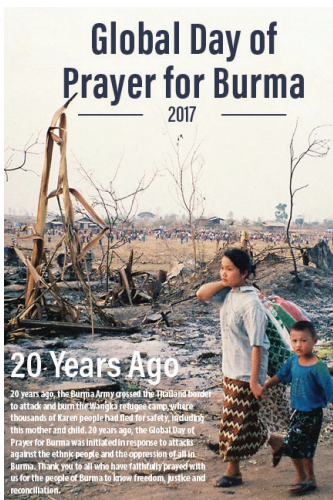
Races have been held in 21 different locations, in 6 different countries, on 3 continents. Offshoot events include a ski-for-relief and a climb-for-relief.

[www.runforreliefburma.org](http://www.runforreliefburma.org)



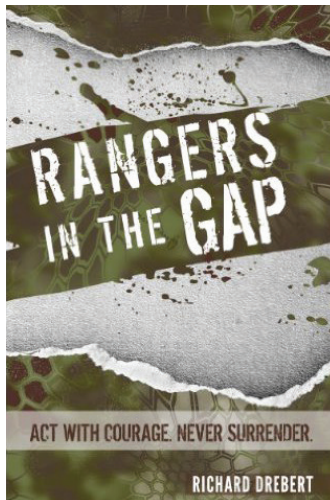
## DONATE YOUR TIME OR SPONSOR A RELIEF TEAM

It costs approximately \$6200 to train and equip one team of Rangers. Each training is completed with the help of volunteers at the home office.



## PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF BURMA

Join in the Global Day of Prayer for Burma with churches and individuals from 56 countries on six continents to pray for the people of Burma, every year on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of March. For more information or to order a Day of Prayer magazine, email: [info@prayforburma.org](mailto:info@prayforburma.org)



## LEARN MORE AND BECOME AN ADVOCATE

Advocate in your school, workplace or church, and with your government. Follow FBR on social media for reports and updates from the field. Request more information, resources, and books like *Ranger in the Gap* at [www.freeburmarangers.org](http://www.freeburmarangers.org)





**Clockwise from above:** Chaplain Monkey in Iraq; Paul Bradley with the injured Iraqi soldier; Dave Eubank (left) and Pastor Edmond (right) baptize Hsa Nu, a Karen team leader. Pastor Edmond is a Karen pastor and FBR Chaplain, one of many ethnic leaders working to provide spiritual hope and guidance to their people.

# IN JESUS' NAME: WHAT'S IN A NAME?

BY: PAUL BRADLEY

Ever wonder why we pray in Jesus' name? As chaplains and members of FBR we are always praying in Jesus' name for all of our decisions and requests. By doing so we are acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus in our lives.

We also acknowledge Jesus' position as our intercessor to the Father. He is our High Priest and brings our requests to the Father on our behalf.

***"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."***

***- Hebrews 4: 14-16 (NIV)***

Recently in Iraq Chaplain Monkey and I were there when an Iraqi soldier was injured by an ISIS mortar round. Our team helped care for the soldier and got him into an armored vehicle to transport him to the casualty collection point.

While he did not appear to have any outward physical injuries it was obvious that he was severely concussed and thought he was going to die. I laid my hands on him and prayed over him several times, out loud in Jesus' name for healing and that he would live.

Several hours later to our great surprise he showed up at the front again with a bandage around his head and IV ports in his hands. He was all smiles and was hugging all of us.

I asked him if he thought he was going to die and he said yes. He asked me directly if I was a Christian and I said yes and that I had prayed for him several times in Jesus' Name that he would not die and be healed. He said "I love Jesus!"

Jesus loves us! He calls us to "Cast all our cares upon Him." In doing so we proclaim His goodness to each other and the world. Amen.