



FREE BURMA RANGERS

2018 Annual Report

OUR MISSION

To free the oppressed and to stand for human dignity, justice and reconciliation.

OUR VISION

To bring help, hope and love to people of all faiths and ethnicities in conflict areas, to shine a light on the actions of oppressors, to stand with the oppressed and support leaders and organizations committed to liberty, justice and service.

OUR OBJECTIVES

1) To inspire, train and equip people spiritually, physically, relationally and professionally to bring positive change through acts of love and service.

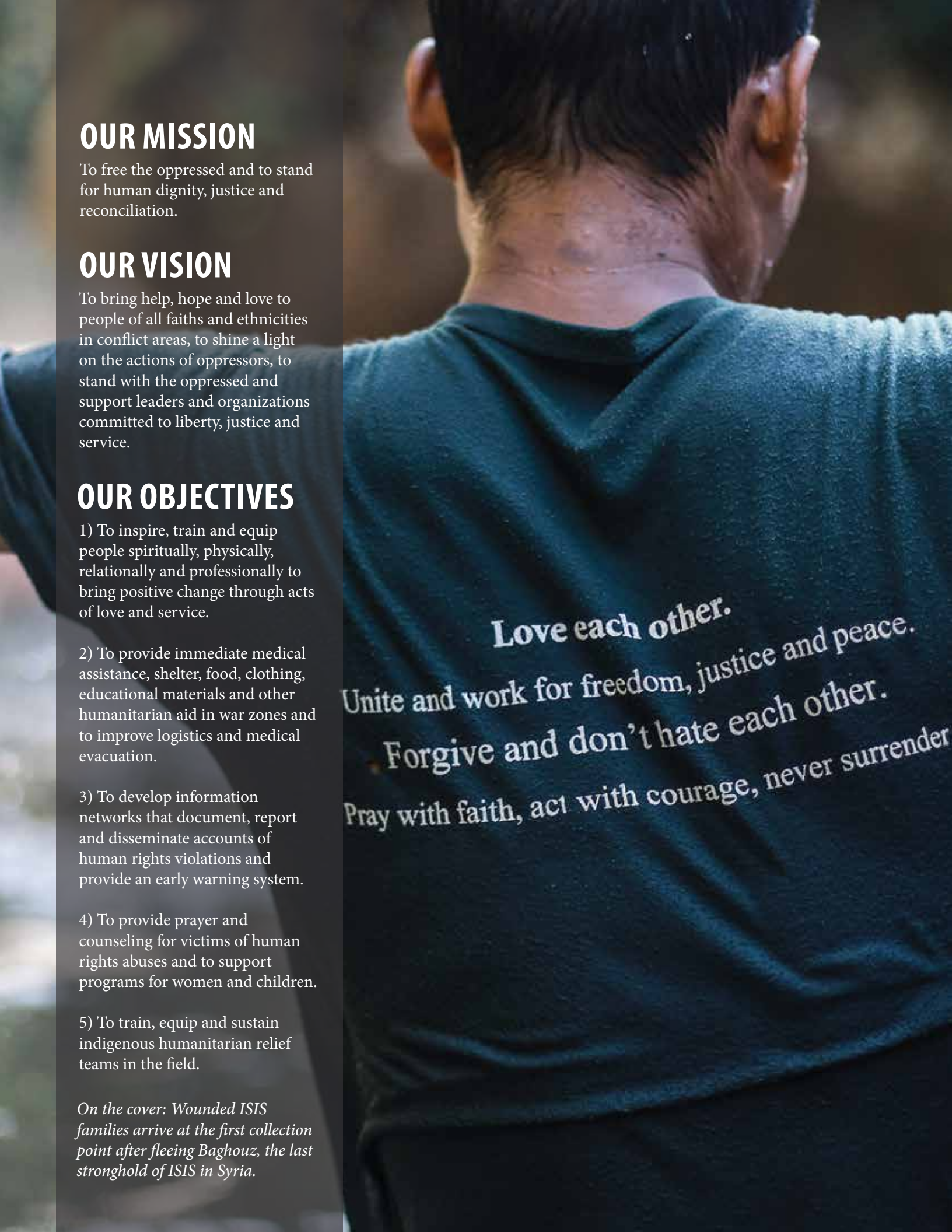
2) To provide immediate medical assistance, shelter, food, clothing, educational materials and other humanitarian aid in war zones and to improve logistics and medical evacuation.

3) To develop information networks that document, report and disseminate accounts of human rights violations and provide an early warning system.

4) To provide prayer and counseling for victims of human rights abuses and to support programs for women and children.

5) To train, equip and sustain indigenous humanitarian relief teams in the field.

On the cover: Wounded ISIS families arrive at the first collection point after fleeing Baghouz, the last stronghold of ISIS in Syria.

A photograph showing the back of a person with dark hair, wearing a blue t-shirt. The t-shirt has white text printed on it. The person's neck and upper back are visible, showing some skin texture. The background is blurred.

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,

Thank you for praying for us and helping us help others, from Burma to Kurdistan and Iraq to Syria.

In Kurdistan and Iraq we continue to bring teams from Burma to support our Kurdish and Iraqi team there. We work with our Iraqi and Kurdish friends to help people under attack by the remnants of ISIS, to provide relief, follow up on medical assistance to those who were wounded in the battles against ISIS and to build playgrounds in the former battle grounds with the help of organizations like Reload Love. We miss our many friends who died, like Shaheen, our Yezidi team member who was killed by ISIS in the battle of Mosul saving an Iraqi family. Before he died he told me, "I used to hate Iraqis because of what they did to my people. But now I love them, God has changed my heart. That is why I am here."

Syria is in turmoil with over 500,000 killed and 11 million displaced. Assad's forces, backed by Iranian troops, as well as Russian troops and air power, advance steadily and brutally across more and more of Syria. ISIS has lost control over all its territory but continues hit-and-run attacks, one of them recently killing American friends we had met in Membij. Turkish military forces along with their proxies, the Free Syrian Army, which is made of Muslim extremists including ISIS members, have invaded parts of northern Syria. They attack America's allies, the Kurdish, Syrian, Yezidi and Syriac Christian-led Syrian Democratic Council and Force (SDC/SDF). In the midst of this onslaught of death, hate and fear, we go in Jesus' name, joining others there to do all we can to help those in need.

We have been working in Burma for over 25 years and still we see the Burma Army murder, rape and displace its own people. We first met Naw Moo Day Wah (pictured on the next page) in 2001, after she was shot by the Burma Army in Karen State, eastern Burma. She was eight years old then and we met her again in January 2018; she was married and had a new baby. "Will the Burma Army attack again, will I have to run again?" she asked. Now, in 2019, in spite of a declared ceasefire, the Burma Army attacks again and again. Naw Moo Day Wah, and her baby and husband, run again and again. In Kachin and Shan states in the north, over 100,000 are in hiding, in western Burma over 6,000 Arakan have been displaced at the end of 2018 alone and also in western Burma over one million Rohingya have been run out of the country. This would seem hopeless except we know God cares and changes hearts. FBR relief teams are made up of people with changed hearts who live with the oppressed to give help, hope and love, put a light on the situation and pray for our enemies. These men and women of different ethnicities and religions join together for love, freedom and reconciliation.

We have over 90 multi-ethnic relief teams in the field, yet in every area we serve, we are small. Still, as long as God sends us and people are in need, we go. And, in spite of the power of evil, we see the good God brings: first in our own hearts, forgiving us and helping us forgive and love others. Second, showing the love of God helps people change from enemies to friends and inspires us all to help each other.

Thank you for helping us do this.

God bless you,



David Eubank, family and the Free Burma Rangers



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The Global Day of Prayer for Burma

Every year on the second Sunday in March, the Free Burma Rangers participate in a Global Day of Prayer for Burma and encourage others worldwide to join in praying for Burma, its many people groups, and its ongoing conflict. As part of the DOP, FBR publishes a magazine that gives a deeper look into the situation and the people affected by it. For the 2018 DOP, 18,000 magazines were printed. The magazine was translated into Burmese, Danish, German, Karen, and Thai. Over 4,500 English copies were mailed worldwide and the remaining languages and copies were handed out throughout the year in Thailand, Burma, the United States, and many other countries. All magazines and publications, including this annual report, are available for download on the Free Burma Rangers' website.

Above: The cover of the 2019 DOP magazine features Naw Moo Day Wah, a longtime friend of FBR. Her story of being shot by the Burma Army as a child, her healing, and her situation now is featured in the magazine. In her hand is a copy of the 2017 DOP magazine in Karen.



The Last Stronghold of ISIS: Can Love Win?

Bullets flew by our faces and smacked into the ground around us. Snipers were shooting at us from Baghouz, the last physical stronghold of ISIS. Below us, in a smoke and dust shrouded valley at a bend in the Euphrates River, was the distillation of the most hard-core living ISIS members.

The battle being fought out in this corner of Syria began when, with their families, ISIS retreated from Mosul, Iraq, pushed out by the Iraqi Army and coalition forces, to Raqqa, Syria. From there the SDF took over the offensive and, with the support of coalition air and artillery, pushed them to here: the little town of Baghouz on the east side of the Euphrates on the Iraq/ Syria border.

Thousands of people remained and were compressed into a dense collection of trucks and tents. We could see bunkers under many of the trucks and possible tunnel entrances. An ISIS woman who had fled earlier told us that there were over 30,000 people packed into this small space and each person had a three-by-six foot space to live in. "It is a horrible, dirty, starving, stinking place of constant maiming and death," she said.

In the middle of this were numerous buildings, the strong points anchoring the defense of Baghouz. On the west side of the Euphrates was Assad's area; any ISIS who tried to escape there were killed. To the east of the camp was a wall of cliffs the SDF controlled, pouring fire down at ISIS; this was where we were. Under the cliffs more ISIS fighters, families and vehicles hid. Men would venture out, sometimes to shoot at us, and sometimes with no weapons to collect water from a ditch nearby.

At left: ISIS families in line to receive supplies.



Clockwise from top left: Wounded ISIS children; ISIS families after receiving supplies like food and water; Sahale Eubank gives supplies to ISIS families; Baghouz burning in its final days under ISIS control; the team treats a wounded SDF soldier.

From the tent city, 800 meters from our position, came constant sniper fire and, from the cliffs below, intermittent fire from nearer ISIS fighters. They tried numerous times to infiltrate through gaps in the cliffs, with some getting as near as 70 yards before the SDF stopped them. Sometimes ISIS machine-guns opened up from different locations in the valley and raked our position.

As I looked at this scene, a wire-guided rocket rose out of the valley and flew at us. I could see the long, silver body and fins as it flew by and exploded into the position 20 yards to my right and behind me.

I ran to help and saw that seven men had been hit. One of them was Zau Seng, our Kachin FBR cameraman. I asked him, "Are you ok Zau?"

He said, "Sir, I am ok but not ok, a little bit hit. Ok, I keep filming."

Medics Eliya and Joseph and I began treating the most badly wounded, managing to keep all the casualties alive until the SDF could evacuate them. After they left, Zau said, "Sir, my wound, it is a little bit spicy." We treated Zau for his leg wound, which was minor, and rejoined the SDF at the front.

Immediately we came under accurate machine-gun fire to our front, while simultaneously being attacked on our left from 100 meters. We returned fire and stopped the immediate attack. Over the next three days at this position, 14 SDF were wounded and two killed. We treated these and alternated between helping the SDF at this position and caring for ISIS families as they escaped into the desert northeast of us – and this would be where our main mission was.

From February 1st to March 9th we lived in the desert, our tents and supplies clustered inside a dirt berm dug in a circle by an SDF backhoe. Several kilometers away from Baghouz, we were close to the IDP collection sites, and as the SDF checked those who had been evacuated, we provided physical help and prayed with those we could. We also were with the SDF on the front, helping them, but our main work was with the thousands of IDPs being evacuated from the fighting.

Our friends in Kurdistan had enabled us to come and help in this, our 8th mission to Syria since 2016. During the mission, we fed over 25,000 people and treated over 4,000 wounded, who came to these IDP collection points.

We provided medical care, food, water, baby formula, diapers, blankets, and shelter. In total, over 30,000 people fled this last ISIS stronghold; we had been told on the day we arrived, in

February, that there were only 3,000 people left and the battle would be over in three days.

More than six weeks later the battle for Baghouz has finally ended, but ISIS lives on in scattered desert positions, in villages and in ambush sites in Syria and Iraq, where there are still an estimated 20,000-30,000 ISIS members left. ISIS lives in the minds of many who still feel that the ISIS creed is the ultimate way to serve God. The ISIS idea is based on a hate-filled and violent faith and a prejudice against anything that is not it. It gains strength from real injustices people live under and takes advantage of this.

Except for some Yezidi captives and other hostages, now freed, the people we helped were ISIS people; by then, only the most hard-core were left, including many foreign families. An ISIS woman from Tunisia, in a full black burqa with only her eyes showing, told us boldly as we gave her food, "We are right, God is testing us. We will win." She asserted ISIS' right to enslave Yezidi women, saying, "They deserve it and our men can use them." She said she had watched executions in Raqqa and thought they were right.

More than one woman raised her fist to strike my daughters as they handed out supplies. "You are all dirty _____ infidels and may you rot in hell," a woman screamed.

Suicide vests were found on some of the women as they fled, as was a grenade a man tried to hide as he came near. None of us were injured but many of the SDF have died when women and men exploded themselves in their midst.

The press of angry people, the cry of children, the moaning of wounded, the cold, calculating look of the ISIS men as they sat in rows on the ground, the constant threat of attack – all of this made it easy for me to hate these people.

Still, many of the SDF troops showed mercy and care. "We have to live with these people when this is over. We want a new way for Syria," they said. They surprised and inspired me.

I asked myself, "Can love win?"

We tried to give love to all who came to us, but of the women who could speak English, only one of ten were sorry they had joined ISIS. The overwhelming majority looked at us in contempt and hate.

Theirs wasn't the only contempt we experienced. One day as we were helping ISIS families into trucks that would take them to a refugee camp, a US soldier approached one of our team and asked, "What does it feel like to be a sherpa for ISIS?"

I thought about that question and the answer came to me: While we were still God's enemies, God sent Jesus to carry our burdens. We have been given second chances. With His help can't we do the same? And aren't we called to do the same?

I believe that in order to stop the evil actions of ISIS we must fight them. But in order to stop the idea of ISIS we must also respond in love. The evil is not abstract for me: I was shot once and wounded three times by ISIS in the battle of Mosul. 30 Iraqi and Kurdish friends died around me. My friend and interpreter, Shaheen, was shot and killed, suicide bombers tried to kill my family and our team as they handed out food and water. I saw children killed by ISIS right in front of me. I have been attacked by and fought ISIS in trenches, tunnels and houses. I have killed ISIS soldiers as they tried to kill us.

I have felt the hate of, and also felt hate for, ISIS. But I have also felt the forgiveness of Jesus and the healing of my heart. I have learned: justice is only attainable by love, and revenge destroys us. We need to stand against ISIS to defeat that evil – but that will not kill the idea. Only love will, and I believe only the supernatural power of Jesus can enable me to have that love.

Each day at the Baghouz front I asked Jesus to forgive me when I began to lose my temper and hate these ISIS people. I asked Him to give me love. Every day I felt love and patience that I knew were from God.

The last day we were there, a group of ISIS men came to the holding area. They looked angry, scared and dangerous, watching us with hard eyes.

They'd had no water or food for a long time and were thirsty and starving. I radioed our team: "Bring food and water for about 60 people here please."

Miles and Suuzanne drove up with supplies and began to hand them out. The ISIS fighters were horrified that an American woman was giving them help. They were ashamed and bowed their heads and covered their eyes. Yet they all reached one hand up for the food and water. They were desperate, but dismayed at the source of help. Earlier, we had read in Proverbs: "When your enemy is hungry, feed him, when he is thirsty give him something to drink. In so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."

Here I understood what this meant. Here was food and water, mercy and love to those who had made themselves our enemies. That love offered an opportunity for change. It is their choice.

We left in peace and with love in our hearts. For us, because of God, love wins.



From top: A Yezidi boy holding the Eubank family newsletter; A father and daughter who escaped ISIS read new Bibles given to them by the team; Joseph, a Karen medic, checks a newborn the team helped deliver in the desert.



The Woman Who Didn't Let Go

Reuniting with Eman

Within a few months of the end of the Mosul battle, we were able to reunite with almost everyone we rescued. Only Eman, the woman we had dragged to us across open ground, and Suriya, her daughter who helped us, we could not find. We prayed, and walked many streets and neighborhoods in Mosul, trying to find them. We heard different things – that she was dead or in hiding, and that her husband was dead. For sixteen months we could not find her.

On October 1, 2018, after checking up on Aisha, the “girl in the yellow dress,” who now has a prosthetic eye, we prayed again: “Lord, help us find Eman today, in Jesus’ name.”

We went again to the rescue site at the destroyed Pepsi factory. As we pulled up a man walked by carrying a small engine, a normal passerby. But he stopped and, with a light in his eye, asked: “Who are you and what are you doing?”

We told him, “We are visiting the place where we did a rescue last year.”

His eyes widened and he said, “That was my wife and daughter you rescued. We have been looking for you for over a year. Thank God!”

Neither of us knew the other would be here on this day, at this time. In awe at what we knew God had done, we hugged and prayed and tears of gratitude came.

Right then, Rahab, who we and the Iraqi Army and fire department had rescued on 6 May 2017, arrived. We have been helping her and had coordinated for her and her family to meet us in Mosul for a follow-up. After talking,

praying, and giving her more help, we followed Eman’s husband, whose name is Mohammad, to their house.

We walked inside and there was Eman, sitting on the floor on a thin mattress, still too injured to stand but smiling and with peace in her eyes. They called in Suriya, who was outside playing. I knelt down and hugged them both. It was a beautiful reunion.

Eman told us how much of a miracle it was to her to be alive. She had thought she was dreaming when we came and rescued her off the street by the factory. Now she is pregnant but cannot walk; she kept telling us how wonderful her husband is and how he is caring for her and their five children.

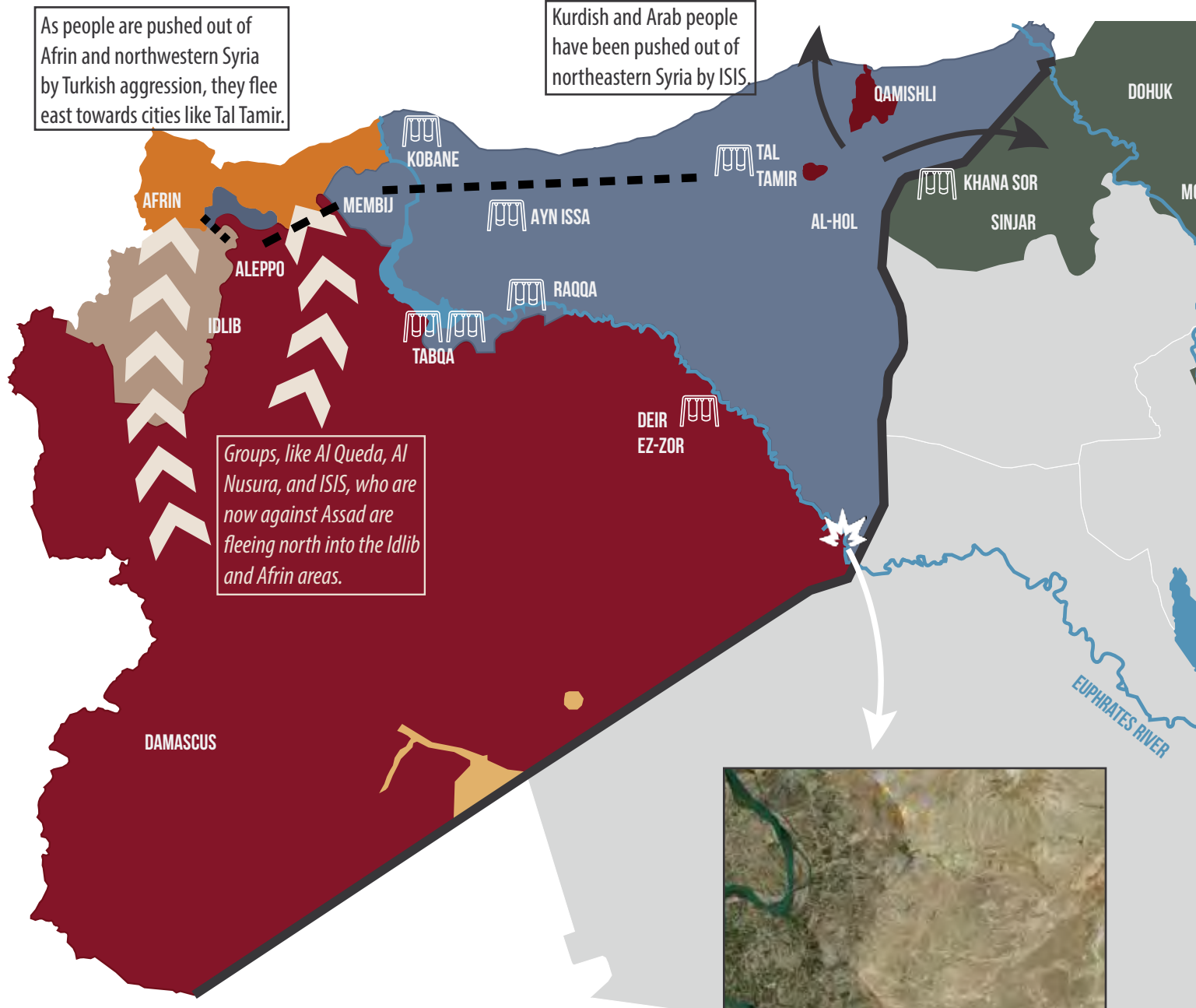
Together they told us of the day they fled: he had been ahead of her helping four of their children flee, when a mortar barrage and ISIS gunfire separated them. After realizing they were separated he knew he could not stop and go back, but had to save the children still with him. In the week following his escape, he had searched every hospital and displaced persons camp without success. He started to think his wife and daughter were dead. He told us of the joy they all felt when he finally found them alive. We gave Eman, Suriya and Mohammad medals for bravery and being wounded, and also funds to help them.

Eman has not been able to walk since mortar shrapnel broke her hip; she still has an ISIS sniper bullet lodged in her arm. We told her we would help her and that many people were praying for her and would help her too. We are praying for funds for the surgery Eman needs, and full healing in Jesus’ name.

As people are pushed out of Afrin and northwestern Syria by Turkish aggression, they flee east towards cities like Tal Tamir.

Kurdish and Arab people have been pushed out of northeastern Syria by ISIS.

Groups, like Al Qaeda, Al Nusura, and ISIS, who are now against Assad are fleeing north into the Idlib and Afrin areas.

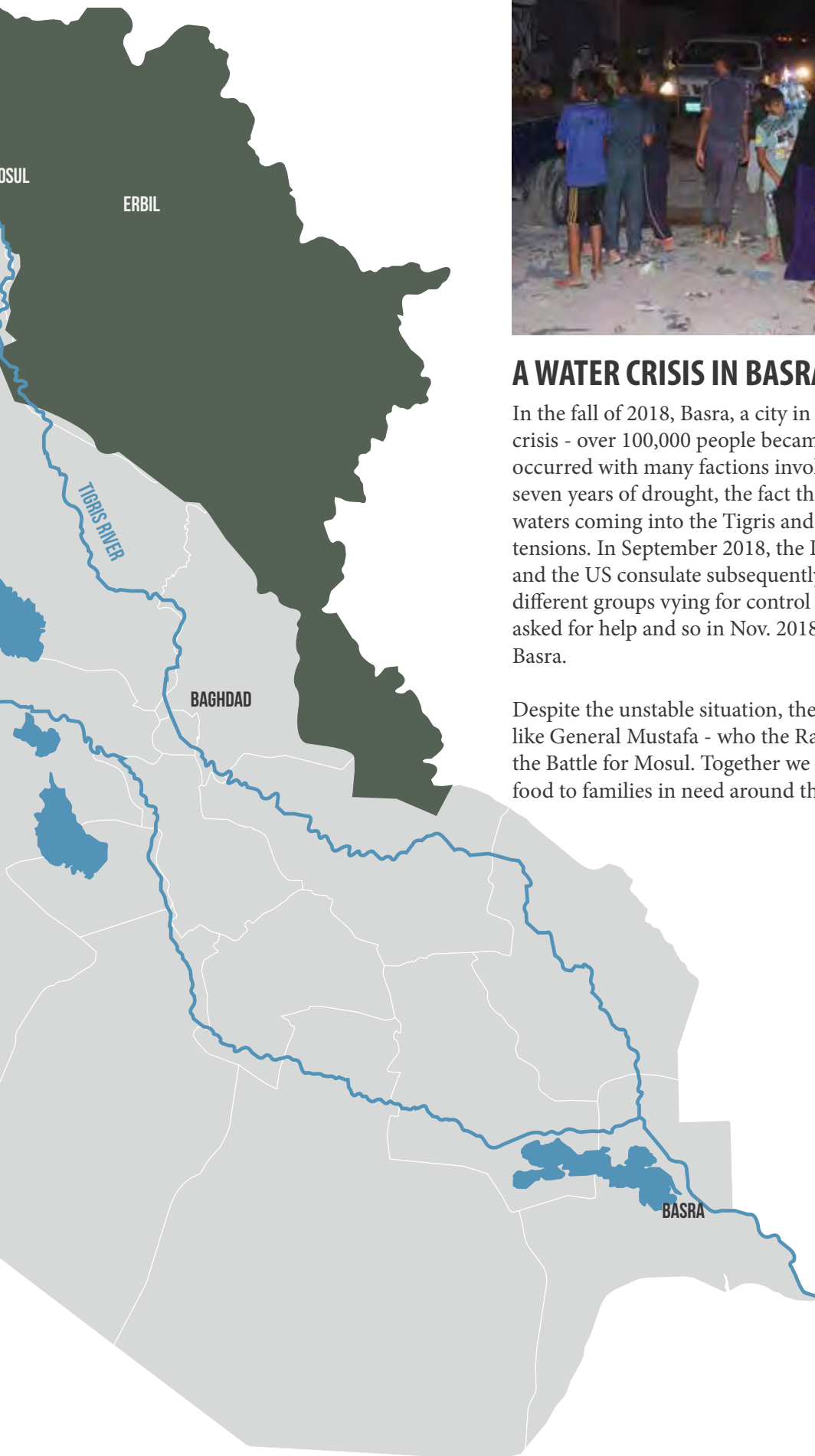


IRAQ AND SYRIA LAYERS OF CONFLICT

Syria is in its 8th year of civil war, while in Iraq political conflicts and resurgent ISIS cells result in instability. In Syria, Assad continues to wage brutal war against his people in the west. In the northeast, Syrian Democratic Forces fought to defeat ISIS. In the northwest, Turkey crossed into Syria and, with help from the Free Syrian Army, attacked the Kurds in Afrin, causing mass displacement of Kurds, Christians and Yezidis. The conflict continues to force people to flee in multiple directions as the arrows above show.



Located in southeast Syria near the Iraq border, the small village of Baghouz became the final physical stronghold of ISIS. In the satellite image above, the white box shows Baghouz. Over 30,000 people fled the fighting here, including ISIS families.



A WATER CRISIS IN BASRA

In the fall of 2018, Basra, a city in southern Iraq, experienced a water crisis - over 100,000 people became sick from polluted water and riots occurred with many factions involved. Adding to the problem were seven years of drought, the fact that Iranian and Turkish dams control waters coming into the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and historic factional tensions. In September 2018, the Iranian consulate was burned down and the US consulate subsequently shut down as tensions rose among the different groups vying for control of the nearby oil fields. Iraqi friends asked for help and so in Nov. 2018, a small FBR team traveled down to Basra.

Despite the unstable situation, the team met up with Iraqi Army friends like General Mustafa - who the Rangers had worked with in 2017 during the Battle for Mosul. Together we helped distribute water, clothing, and food to families in need around the city.

Map Key

- Turkish Forces*
- Syrian Democratic Forces*
- Mix of Rebels and Jihadists*
- Assad's Regime*
- Syrian Rebel Forces*
- Kurdistan*
- RAQQA City*
- One playground built in 2018*

The Good Life Club

Finding rest in hard places

By November 2017 ISIS was defeated in Raqqa. The city had been its birthplace and became its headquarters and one of its final strongholds. The people who had not fled had endured four years under the occupation of one of the most destructive combinations of brutality and organization seen in recent history. The religion of the people had been turned against them and used to build a cage of fear and hate around every aspect of their lives. Raqqa was where we came for our first program on this mission: a children's program, to dedicate a playground that had been donated by our friends at Reload Love, a Good Life Club program to share the message that good life comes from God.

Seven months after liberation, Raqqa is still dominated by piles of rubble that used to be buildings. And while there is no fighting, there is still unrest. Coordinating with the local leaders, we had installed the playground in a park near the city center, close to both a destroyed church and the town square that had been a public execution site for ISIS. Children were playing on the playground when we arrived and we had just started to set up when shots rang out. We realized they were not aimed at us but at a Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) position further down the street. It seemed someone took an opportunity to get off a few shots and then fled.

There is a simmering resentment among some of the indigenous Arab population against the Kurdish forces of the Syrian Democratic Front (SDF) that drove ISIS out. This is due to the ethnic and religious differences, the fact that many here still support ISIS, the perceived injustice of SDF rule, and instigation by Assad's regime and Iranian allies.

Nothing came of the shooting and we continued the preparations. We broke out a jump rope to break the ice while we planned our program. We soon had

(continued on page 14)

Photos from top left: Children at a GLC program at a church destroyed by ISIS in Tel Tamir, Syria. Bullet holes are visible in the church walls behind them. Children play at a newly built playground amidst the Raqqa rubble. Two girls with lambs given by All Things Possible Ministries. Peter Eubank jumps rope with kids in Syria.





“My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest” (Ex. 33:14)

an enthusiastic group jumping and, by the time we began the program, around 200 kids were barely managing to stay seated, brimming with curiosity and energy. There were curious moms and dads and other onlookers as well, who joined in the laughter at the Good Samaritan skit, were entertained by both us and their kids as we sang songs together and taught health and hygiene – and were eager to see what gifts we were giving out at the end.

For gifts, we had snacks, GLC bracelets and two kinds of shirts: one said “Let the little children to come to me. ~Jesus” and the other, “Good life comes from God.” We had handed out around 30 of these, funneling the kids one by one through our distribution line, when a local council member stopped us. The shirts, he said, were a problem. We couldn’t hand them out. There was discussion, and while he agreed that it did not say anything against his religion, he was afraid – the words could cause a problem. We agreed that next time we would write something different: “Love each other” – and the distribution continued without shirts.

Even so, we gave away some 50 more shirts, to parents who came to us on the side, and kids who managed to sneak in and snatch one. Not everyone was afraid.

The next day we did a similar program in the city of Tabqa, west across the Euphrates, which had also been held by ISIS and was liberated in May 2017. At the city park in Tabqa we were joined in our program by a local NGO. These men were happy to help us with keeping the kids’ attention and distributing GLC bracelets and snacks.

Our final playground program was back in Iraq, in the Iraq/Syria border town of Khanasor, in the Sinjar mountain area. The people here are mostly Yazidi and ISIS took this town in 2014 when they overran the entire area. Now the people are returning and last February Dave had met a widow who lost both her husband and son to Al Qaeda and ISIS. Dave talked and prayed with her and offered to put a playground in as a memorial to her husband and son and all who had been killed. “This will be very good for the children and good for all of us,” she said. We coordinated with the local Kurdish leaders to install the playground and dedicate it.

The kids and adults were enthusiastic here, and the local YPG leaders interviewed several of our team to find out more about our organization and why we were building playgrounds.

For the people living in these places unrest means just that – no rest. It means no routine, it means uncertainty about the future, it means every aspect of daily life requires extra work – finding food, finding water, finding shelter, going to school, staying alive.

Spending a couple hours with the kids singing songs, playing games, entertaining and teaching them – we hope and pray that we were able to provide a couple hours of rest in these places of unrest. And we pray that this can point the way to God’s promise of rest that no political group or army can take away. This is the peace of God’s presence: “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest” (Exodus 33:14). Please pray with us for our friends living here.





GLC High in the Kachin Mountains

As the Burma Army continues its attacks in the ethnic areas of Burma, the Good Life Club (GLC) is now more important than ever. Burma has been divided for more than 70 years and, while the government has attempted to broker peace with the ethnic groups, the predatory attacks of the military at the same time belie the sincerity of these peacemaking overtures.

The focus of the GLC is to show God's love to the children in conflict areas. Through spiritual dramas, songs, games, and other activities, GLC counselors spend time with the children and show them that, even though their lives don't always feel very stable, they are not alone. Inspired by John 10:10, where Jesus promises abundant life, the GLC believes that promise is true even for these children and strives to share this life with children everywhere they go.

In February 2018 my family and I went to Kachin State, Burma, where we, together with an FBR Kachin team, completed a mission to internally displaced people (IDPs) hiding in high, cold mountains. The people had fled their villages and, for safety, established their camps in these remote areas. We drove far over broken roads to reach these families, many of whom lacked warm clothes; we saw many red-cheeked children, barefoot, cold, with running noses. When we gathered them for a program in a big field close to one of the schools, they all crowded together, shivering. Their faces looked serious and suspicious. I thought, "Children are not supposed to worry about anything, but these children are worried that they will freeze or starve, and they might not even trust us."

In Matthew 11:29-30, Jesus says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

This might be easier said than done, especially as an IDP, when there are so many things to worry about. But Jesus promises to carry our burdens and take our worries and I believe He speaks to the children as well. They shouldn't have to worry about things like clothing, food, or the Burma Army. This is one of the reasons we do GLC: to show them love, joy and to give them an opportunity to just be children.

Written by B. Cusic

At left: Kachin children during a GLC program in Kachin State, Burma.

Information and Reporting

Ongoing information about Burma is provided by FBR relief teams. Teams across Burma conduct missions every year to help civilians affected by conflict and natural disasters through medical clinics, Good Life Club programs, gathering information about troop movement, human rights violations and the state of civilians, and more.

Teams submit their reports to FBR headquarters where reports are translated, compiled, and then packaged for publishing across FBR media. Additional information is collected and given to governments and larger international organizations as needed and by request.

At right: A local Karen villager protesting new bridge construction.

Below: A bridge built by the Burma Army which violates the ceasefire agreement.



Burma in Review:

A quick look at what's happening in Burma's ethnic states

As in years past, ongoing conflict throughout Burma disrupts civilian life. For over 70 years, the central Burma government has been at odds with the ethnic groups and has used the state-sponsored Burma Army to attack the very people it should be protecting. While some ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) signed a National Ceasefire Agreement in 2015, ethnic states have continued to experience conflict.

Karen State and Karenni State

In Karen State, the Burma Army continues to violate the National Ceasefire Agreement. From killing villagers, like Saw O Moo in April 2018 and seven others in April 2019, to building up military bases, to building roads without permission, the Burma Army shows no sign of decreasing their activity or aggression in Karen territory.

Most recently in Karen State, the Burma Army has built roads and bridges, displacing over 1,000 villagers and causing problems for local farming.

The villagers who are trying to stop the construction are civilians and not Karen National Liberation Army or Karen National Union representatives. Despite their civilian status, the Burma Army commander said that they will continue building bridges and if people come and try to stop the process, the Burma Army will shoot them. If villagers are seen carrying guns or rifles, they will also be shot. And, if anyone shoots at the Burma Army, the Burma Army will fire artillery on the villages.

So far, the Burma Army has finished building four bridges. There are over 15 streams in need of bridges and the Burma

Army shows no signs of stopping their building projects. Troops continue to be placed as security on the sides of relevant roads, over 50 meters on either side and extremely close to local villages.

In Karenni State, the Burma Army has built four new army bases. The growth of military bases and troops leaves villagers living in fear of what might happen as the construction is usually an indication of bigger conflict coming.

"The Tatmadaw and the Ethnic Armed Organizations agree to abide by the following troop-related terms and conditions:

Avoid troop reinforcements in the ceasefire areas other than the provision of administrative support, emergency medical support and routine rotation of troops; avoid building new military bases and supplying of ammunition and weaponry, except those already agreed by both parties. In the event of a threat to national security or to defend against external threats, the aforementioned activities may be undertaken in consultation between the parties."

**-National Ceasefire Agreement,
Chapter 3, Section 5a**



These photos were taken by rangers during their missions throughout Burma. In 2018, teams completed 57 missions in Burma which resulted in over 35 web reports about the situation in Burma. In total, FBR published 60 web reports about the situations in Iraq, Kurdistan, Syria, and Burma, and about the ongoing work of the rangers.

Clockwise from top left: A Burma Army camp as seen during a Karenni mission; while on mission, the Rohingya team met this man who showed them the remains of his house; photos from the Naga team of flooding and delivering supplies in the Naga region of Sagaing Division; in Chin State, a Christian funeral procession must ford a river because a local leader refused access to a bridge due to their religion; a villager points to where a bomb fell in Kachin State.



Kachin State and Shan State

Northern Burma, comprised of Kachin State and northern Shan State, saw a similar conflict pattern as in years past. The Burma Army has continued to attack ethnic armed organizations, like the Kachin Independence Army, along with villagers, despite a temporary four-month ceasefire. Checkpoints, bribes, gunfire and mortars, landmines and rape are still commonly employed by the Burma Army against villagers. As a result, more continue to flee into internally displaced persons (IDP) camps along the Burma/China border.

Additionally, international aid groups have cut funding and supplies to the IDP camps, putting more stress on the local organizations who help provide food and other materials to the IDPs.

Further south in Shan State, fighting continues to break out between ethnic groups such as the Ta'ang, Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army-South and Shan State Progressive Party/Shan State Army-North. Inter-ethnic tension over territory has resulted in clashes between the armed groups and the displacement of villagers.

In July 2018, the Burma Army captured and murdered six female Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) medics.

Arakan (Rakhine) State

In 2017, Arakan State received international attention as the Burma Army launched a campaign against the Rohingya ethnic group. Some 800,000 Rohingya fled into Bangladesh as the Burma Army burned down their villages, raped women and girls, burned babies alive, and murdered Rohingya villagers. Towards the end of 2018, Burma and Bangladesh announced a repatriation plan for the Rohingya which ultimately failed as Rohingya refugees and the international community acknowledge that the situation in Arakan State was still too unstable for them to return home. Now, the Rohingya remain in refugee camps in Bangladesh, unsure of their future. They will not be able to stay in Bangladesh for long, where they have no rights, but neither can they return to their homes in Burma which have been burned and where they also have no rights.

In 2018, tensions in northern Arakan State continued as fighting occurred between Arakan groups vying for political control and later escalated as the Burma Army started attacking the Arakan EAOs and villagers. Arakan villagers

are fleeing their homes now and have little help as they flee. Once again, northern Arakan State has been cut off from outside access due to the violence and increasing conflict.

Chin State and Sagaing Division

While not as conflict-heavy as other ethnic states, areas like Chin State and Sagaing Division still face many challenges of their own. As rainy season approaches, these remote areas face flooding and landslides with little help in the aftermath.

Fighting between the Arakan Army and Burma Army has forced Chin people to flee into neighboring Bangladesh and India. Religious and ethnic discrimination and struggles over land rights continue to roil the area as the Burma Army seizes ethnic land from civilians. One Chin leader said that while many Chin people are not in IDP camps, they are worse off than IDPs because of all the challenges they face on a daily basis, but without receiving any aid.

“The Tatmadaw and the Ethnic Armed Organizations shall abide by the following provisions regarding the protection of civilians:

b. Avoid acts violating a person’s dignity, violence, extrajudicial detention, kidnapping, torture, inhumane treatment, imprisonment, killing or otherwise causing the disappearance of the individual.

e. Avoid unlawful and arbitrary arrest, entrapment, prosecution and pronouncement of judgment against civilians. Any action against civilians shall be undertaken in accordance with the law.

f. Avoid forcible confiscation and transfer of land from local populations.

g. Avoid the destruction of public property, looting, theft, or the taking of property without permission.”

**-National Ceasefire Agreement,
Chapter 3, Section 9b, 9e-g**

FREE BURMA RANGERS 92 Teams

After training, Rangers are added into teams operating throughout Burma. The map shows both the 2018 full-time teams (in green) and part-time teams (in tan) for each state in Burma, along with international headquarter teams. The highlighted states show where teams are located.

At a glance, the Rangers did the following:

- 57 missions in Burma
- 59,000 patients provided with medicine in Burma
- 30,000 fed in the Middle East (includes beginning of 2019)
- 5,000 patients treated in the Middle East (includes beginning of 2019)
- 1,000+ orphans assisted in the Middle East



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

HEADQUARTERS



HEADQUARTERS: 3 Teams

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: 3 Teams

Partner Organization: New Mon State Party

First Team Established: 2009



KARENNI STATE

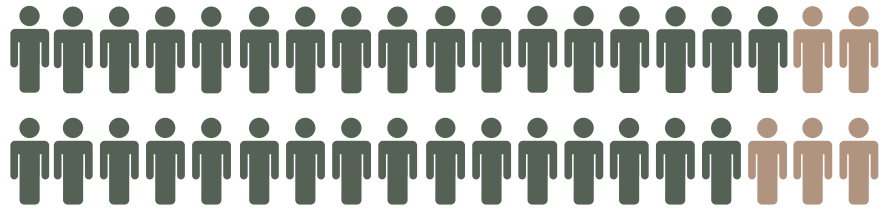


KARENNI: 9 Teams

Partner Organization: Karenni National
Progressive Party and Union of Karenni State
Youth

First Team Established: 1999

KAREN STATE



KAREN: 38 Teams

Partner Organization: Karen National Union
First Team Established: 1999

KACHIN STATE



TA'ANG: 8 Teams

Partner Organization: Palaung State
Liberation Front

First Team Established: 2012



KACHIN: 8 Teams

Partner Organizations: Kachin Independence
Organization and Kachin National Organization

First Team Established: 2008

SHAN STATE



PA-OH: 2 Teams

Partner Organization: Pa-Oh National
Liberation Organization

First Team Established: 2010



SHAN: 11 Teams

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

First Team Established: 2004



LAHU: 2 Teams

First Team Established: 2005

ARAKAN STATE



ARAKAN: 11 Teams

Partner Organizations: Arakan Liberation
Party and Arakan Army

(four teams active in Kachin State)

First Team Established: 2003

SAGAING DIVISION



NAGALAND: 4 Teams

First Team Established: 2010

CHIN STATE



CHIN: 2 Teams

First Team Established: 2010

Tah U Wah Training Camp

On 27 December 2018, 137 new rangers comprising 28 teams, and 40 advanced rangers, stood at attention on the drill field of FBR's Tah U Wah Training Camp in Karen State, to be honored for completing the Free Burma Ranger Servant Leadership and Relief Team Training. This was the end of more than two months of training that had begun on this same field with opening ceremonies on 15 October 2018.

By the end of training, rangers have completed classes and practical exercises in topics including the following:

Ethnic Unity
Leadership Principles
Land and GPS Navigation
Map Reading and Drawing
Compass
Landmine Identification
and Removal
Swimming and Lifesaving
Solar Power and
Battery Management
Reporting
Video and Photography
Medical Training
Physical Training
Rope Bridge Building
Poncho Raft Use
Rappelling
Good Life Club Training

This year, students came from nine different organizations and five different ethnic groups. Arakan, Kachin, Karen, Karenni and Shan organizations all sent men and women to be trained. There are three requirements for FBR team members:

- 1) They must be literate in at least one language, to be able to send out reports.
- 2) They must have the physical and moral courage to be able to do physically hard and dangerous missions, and cannot run away from the enemy if the villagers they are helping cannot run.
- 3) They must do this work for love; they are not paid by FBR.

On arriving at camp, many students find themselves next to others who they, either because of ethnicity or organization, would normally be in conflict with. But the training forces them to work together

and the spirit of love that the teaching is founded on often breaks down these conflicts. One Shan ranger, after finishing the 'ranger run,' in which the whole camp of some 180 people together run up and over the mountain, help each other ford the river and return to the field for pushups, exclaimed, "I feel like I've gained a new family! So many new brothers and sisters!"

Just before graduation ceremonies, five rangers were baptized. Four were new graduates and one was one of the founding members of FBR.

The teams are then divided into five groups to complete follow-on relief missions, together with their instructors. They will have an opportunity to practice their new skills on a real mission but with instructors and experienced rangers available for further coaching and feedback.

Once finished with the mission, they will return to their home areas, ready to conduct missions there. They will have learned and practiced many new skills to be able to help their people in many kinds of crises, as well as having gained new relationships across ethnic lines. Both these skills and relationships will be of vital importance as Burma and her people move into an uncertain future.



A Kachin Ranger in camouflage gear is climbing a rope at a training camp. The Ranger is wearing a green and black camouflage jacket and pants, black socks, and black boots. He is holding the rope with both hands and has one foot hooked over it. The background shows a dirt ground and some trees.

What Motivates a Ranger?

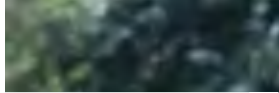
“I am a teacher and help train young activists from Shan State. I have learned how to communicate with different ethnic groups and have learned how to understand people of different cultures, ethnic groups and religions. I have learned to be flexible in any situation, and I will use that in my training. It will be very effective for my students and my community.

I am here because the conflict has affected my family. I have seven siblings and my mother and father. My oldest brother is a Burmese soldier because he was taken away by the Burmese Army when he was thirteen years old. My third brother is in a militia that is under control of the Burmese army. My youngest brother serves for the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). Even in our own family, we cannot be united when we are forced to fight each other because of the conflict. My siblings didn't get to finish their education because of the fighting. Three of them had to serve in different armed groups, and the others didn't have access to education because of the rural area that they lived in. My hometown itself has no infrastructure at all.

I want to become physically, mentally and spiritually strong so I can work inside Burma. I hope for equality in all of Burma. In any part of the country and in any capacity - administrative, politically, socially, economically, etc. We have been oppressed and abused for a long time and it happens consecutively. I want it to stop.”

- A Kachin Ranger, Class of 2018

At left: A ranger practices rope-climbing skills at training camp.



Never Give Up, Never Surrender

Following a Ranger team through a 24-hour test at TUW Camp

New FBR teams are routinely field-tested on various skills throughout the course of the training. During training exercises, they visit a series of stations that are scattered in the jungle surrounding the training camp. The exercise must be completed without food or sleep and not using trails. Besides being an opportunity to practice specific skills, it is designed to push the rangers beyond what they think they can do, and teach them to never surrender. They are encouraged to pray, and ask God's help as they go. The following is one team's experience.

The Team: The stand-out athlete and leader of this team of Karen rangers is Saw Eh Htoo. Lay Der Htoo is athletic, quiet and steadfast. Htoo Wah is reserved, yet gifted and strong. Hser K'Paw Moo is the backbone of the team.

1800

Operation Order (OPORD) issued: the exercise includes 25 tasks to be completed in 24 hours.

Hours 1-8: 1830-0230

First station is a land navigation point consisting of a small marked tree in the jungle, which the team must find based on map coordinates given in their briefing.

As the team searches each station and performs the specified task at each, they must also provide security and support for each other and avoid instructors on the prowl. If the rangers are caught by an instructor they are disciplined with a physical exercise, like sprinting with barbells on their shoulders.

Out of camp, the moon, stars and intermittent use of headlamps provide the only light. The jungle is thick and they must be aware of the dangers of snakes and other creatures difficult to see in the dark, as well as steep terrain that sometimes turns to outright cliffs.

The team nears where they think the point is. Another team is looking for the same coordinate and they join forces on a forty-five minute search. Finally, someone spots it. The first station is complete. Each team stands in front of the mark and takes a video as proof they have completed the task. It's taken them ninety minutes to complete the first of 25 stations. The next stop is back at camp for a written test on leadership.

They easily finish the written test. It's 9:00 p.m. and they begin a night of running around the jungle.

*Pictured at far left from top to bottom: Saw Eh Htoo, Htoo Wah, Lay Der Htoo, Hser K'Paw Moo
Background photo: the team crosses a river during the training exercise.*

Hours 9-11: 0230-0530

Eight hours into the exercise, they've completed a rope-bridge crossing, rappelled down a cliff, taken written tests, and trekked around in search of navigation points: 11 stations are complete.

The Good Life Club (GLC) is next. They spend 30 minutes singing children's songs, telling a story of God's love and teaching a health lesson. With spirits lifted by the song, they carry on.

Next is one of the furthest points on the map. After nearly an hour of trudging through the jungle, and just before sunrise, they find themselves utterly exhausted and somewhat lost. As the night fades to meet the sunrise, they sit down and take a mental and physical break, resting in silence with their heads in their hands for ten minutes.

At exactly ten minutes, Saw Eh Htoo motions them to rise. They search for thirty more minutes before arriving at an abandoned house, where instructors are standing by a fire. There is a whimper coming from behind the building and they find a young boy from a nearby village acting as an injured civilian. They carry him to a sheltered position, examine him for injuries and find a wound on his thigh. They apply a tourniquet and check for head injuries.

Completing the medical station, they set out for their next stop.

The sun has fully risen now. The team has completed 13 tasks in 12 hours. The next stations include swimming and self-defense drills.

Hours 12-22: 0530-1530

The team rushes to the river to begin their self-defense test. Stripping down to their shorts, they execute the moves they've been taught in training. Once finished, they run to the river. They swim fifteen laps upstream and downstream, using a different stroke each time. Successful and soaking wet, they dress and head out to another navigation point far from camp.

By 11:30 a.m. the heat is becoming intense as the rangers trek up the mountainside, searching for their point. They

top out onto a brush-covered hillside, devoid of trees and shade. They push through the heat and shrubbery and after an hour of exhausting trekking they find the next point.

By the 22nd hour of their exercise, they have completed 22 of 25 stations.

Hours 23-25: 1530-1930

Around 4:30 p.m., the team is chasing down the 23rd station and the terrain is difficult. They arrive at a waterfall, with the coordinates suggesting that the point lies above the waterfall. The team scales the cliff only to find a second waterfall above. They follow the stream up a narrow path through a wall of rock, finally reaching the point beside yet another waterfall.

Returning to camp for their final written test, the team spots the final land navigation point. They know they must first complete their written test before recording this final point. Though the idea of trekking back out is daunting, knowing where it is helps.

The final written test takes an hour to complete and by the time they are done, the sun has set and the temperature dropped. They head out to the last point, motivated by the fact that they are less than an hour away from finishing the exercise. When they arrive at the final point, everyone celebrates with hugs and high fives.

Training Goes On

The team is one hour over time, finishing in 25 hours – but they are the first team of basic students done. Some teams will take another five hours and some will not finish at all.

The team stays humble, knowing they have excelled but that the tests will only get harder. They have the next day to recover, as it is a Sunday and set aside as a day of rest and worship. On Monday, training will resume with the 0530 whistle on the drill field.

Photos from top left: Using their land navigation skills, the team locates one of their target points; rappelling in the dark; crossing a rope bridge; swimming laps in the river; pre-FTX briefing with the rangers and instructors.



Jungle School of Medicine - Kawthoolei

By combining training and patient care, the Jungle School of Medicine Kawthoolei (JSMK) is able to serve the needs of sick Karen patients both now and in the future. Over its nine years, JSMK has trained 150 medics. In 2018, the school trained 19 medics, four interns and five second-year students. The JSMK campus is part of the FBR training camp in an isolated jungle mountain setting, and provides health care for 13 villages within a day's walk of the clinic. Additional patients walk or are carried up to five days along highland footpaths to obtain medical help at JSMK.

Students train for 15 months, including initial FBR team and leadership training, two month-long missions, and 11 months of on-campus classes and clinical rotations. If they pass their foundations examination, they carry on for the remainder of training, which combines patient care and didactic activities in the classroom.

In 2018, JSMK helped 1826 outpatients and 229 inpatients.

Pictured below: The team teaches a local village how to make and use oral rehydration solution to replenish fluids - especially important where diarrhea is a common occurrence.

In March 2019, a man arrived at JSMK thinking he was coming to have his leg amputated. Two days earlier, while working on a chainsaw crew, his leg had been broken under a falling tree. Medics at a nearby clinic told him it was broken in two places and had a large bone fragment completely broken off. A large portion of his lower leg was open and exposed. Infection was a serious concern. These were prime conditions for amputation.

The team at JSMK, however, thought that they might be able to save his leg. In a fully equipped hospital the surgery would require plates and pins to hold the bones in place while they healed for several months. The medics and Dr. John didn't have the equipment for such an operation. Instead, under anesthesia, the team manually realigned the bones, thoroughly washed the wound, and started to sew the edges of the wound together. Over the next week the sutures holding the open wound were daily 'cinched up', bringing the edges of the wound together until the wound was completely covered. After antibiotic treatment for infection and complete immobilization of the leg, the patient showed great improvement and we're happy to say that there is no need to amputate!





JSMK Infrastructure

In 2018, JSMK made several improvements: the size of the in-patient ward was doubled from 6 to 12 beds; a brick-maker was purchased and construction of a new, brick lab building begun; the solar power system was finished, and the bridge, which was washed out in extreme flooding, was replaced.

Despite its remote, off-grid location, JSMK offers a variety of ancillary and diagnostic services, including:

- Ultrasonography
- X-rays
- Simple laboratory testing (hematocrit, urinalysis, pregnancy testing, blood typing and crossmatching, sedimentation rate and rapid diagnostic testing for malaria, HIV, Hepatitis B)
- Microscopy for malaria, tuberculosis, white cell count, and gram stain
- EKG

Community Health and Patient Referral

The JSMK team provides vaccinations to seven surrounding villages. Every vaccination visit also includes deworming, vitamin supplementation, water and toilet infrastructure development and maintenance, and village health education.

Sometimes patients present at JSMK with conditions that require more care than JSMK can provide. With help from friends and the patient care team, some patients are referred to more advanced care, both within Burma and beyond. 2018 saw 19 new referrals and 22 patients returning for follow-up care.

One such patient, Naw Moo Nay Dah, came to JSMK in June. She was 2 months old, small, weak, and croupy. Born with a cleft palate, she had difficulty nursing and so was malnourished with a compromised immune system. She was referred out to a neighboring country, where we partnered with another organization that focuses on cleft-palate patients to have the necessary surgery. Surgery was successfully performed three months after her initial JSMK visit.

Photos top to bottom: the bridge after it was washed out; Naw Moo Nay Dah before surgery; Naw Moo Nay Dah after surgery to fix her cleft palate.

2018 Finances

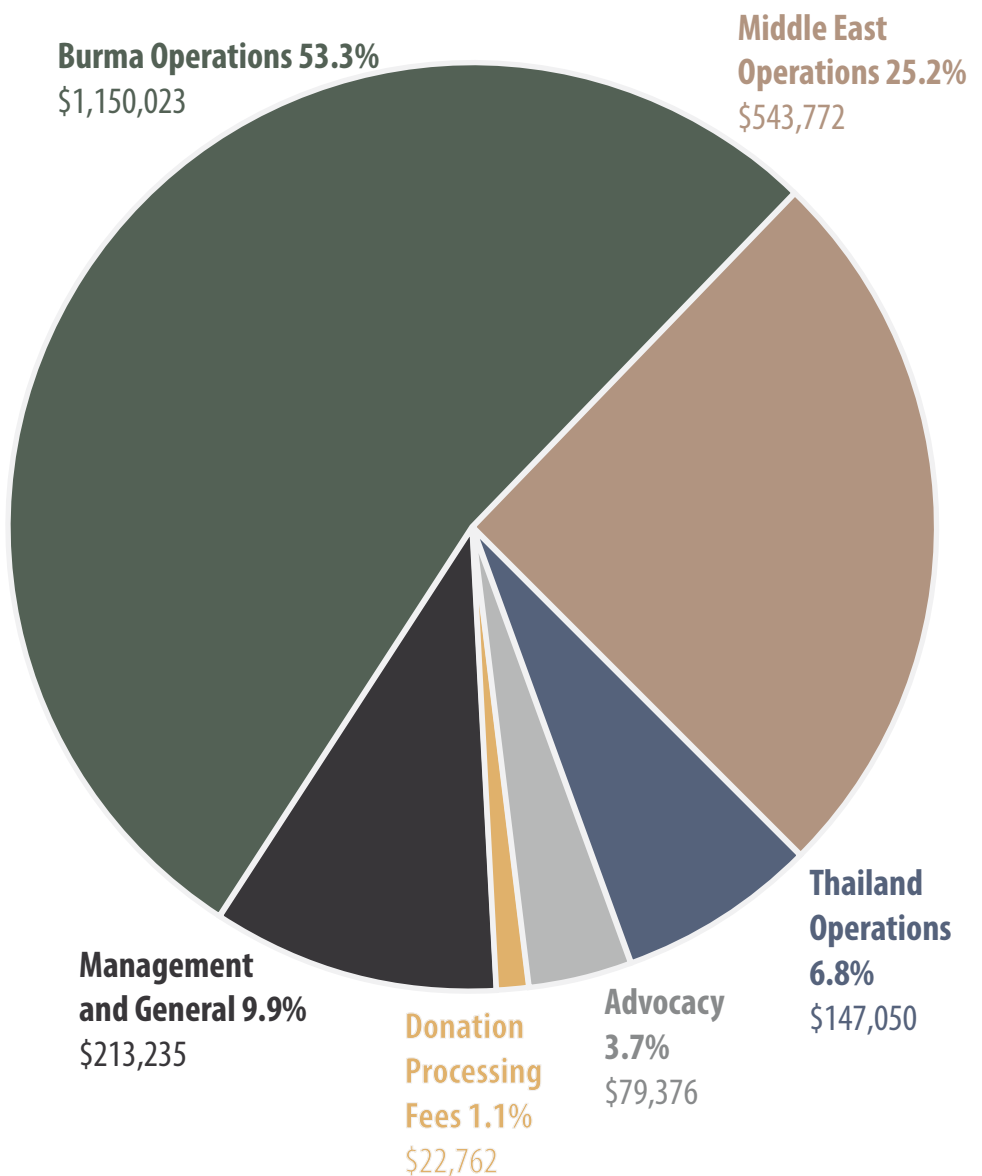
2018 Revenue: \$2,452,680

2018 Expenses: \$2,156,218

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 is registered in the United States as a 501(c)3 organization called Free the Oppressed (FTO). FTO is inspired by the words of Jesus in Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

FBR uses Thai Baht, Burmese Kyat, Bangladesh Taka, Chinese Yuen, Iraqi Dinar, Syrian Pounds, and US Dollars (USD) in its operations. The numbers here reflect the totals in USD using the actual or average conversion rate of each currency.



*Did you know that Amazon will donate a percentage of your eligible AmazonSmile purchase to **Free the Oppressed** whenever you shop through AmazonSmile?*

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- 2) Log-in to your Amazon account
- 3) Search and select **Free the Oppressed** (Colorado Springs, CO) as your charity.

After selecting FTO, remember to always start your Amazon shopping at smile.amazon.com and Amazon will donate to Free the Oppressed.

Introducing: FBR Aviation

Kittikoon Wichitponpaiboon, head of our Finance Department, is also now the director of the new Aviation Department based in Chiang Mai. We are excited about the potential of this tool and how aviation will increase the effectiveness of FBR's work. Here's what Kit said about his pilot's journey so far:



1. What was it like growing up along the Thai/Burma border?

When I was about 6 years old there was a war between the Karen and Burma Army. As my home was right on the border, it was not safe to live there during the fighting. We temporarily moved a little deeper into Thailand. At the same time, there were a lot of Karen people who lived in Karen State who ran away from their homes and relocated in refugee camps in Thailand. Most of them were afraid to go back home because of the brutal Burma Army. Many children that lived in the refugee camp decided to stay with my family so they could go to school.

2. How did you become involved with Free Burma Rangers?

David Eubank helped me, my family, and the children who stayed with my parents. I got to see him about once a year when he visited. After finishing university, I wanted to be a part of their ministry because as a kid I saw all the good work they do for people.

3. How was your training in Alaska with Kingdom Air Corps?

It was challenging for me because my English speaking, writing, and reading was not that good. The first year I showed up in Alaska, my instructor gave me a thick aviation book to study. When I was reading it, I felt like almost every sentence that I read I had to open the dictionary to translate different words. In that book there were thousand of sentences. However, I tried my best and prayed that God would help me with this. By the grace of God and good flight instructors at KAC, I passed written test and check ride on the first time.

4. What are your long-term goals with FBR Aviation?

I want to help FBR to start an aviation program in Thailand, Burma, and other countries if God is willing. Aviation can be used to spread the word of God, relief work and help others.

5. What help do you need to see these goals accomplished?

We are working on building a runway in Thailand. At the same time, we are also praying for a bigger plane that can carry more supplies and fly for longer range. For myself, please keep me in your prayer. I am working on getting my commercial and flight instructor certificates.

Top left: Kit, far left, on the Thai-Burma border with his father, Samuel, on the right.

Bottom left: Karen and Peter Eubank with Kittikoon while flying in Alaska.



Join the Movement

PRAY FOR PEOPLE UNDER OPPRESSION

Pray for those under oppression in Burma, Iraq, Kurdistan, Syria and Sudan. 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 2nd Sunday of March. For more information or to order a Day of Prayer magazine, email: info@prayforburma.org

ORGANIZE A RUN FOR RELIEF FOR BURMA

Races have been held in 21 different locations, in 6 different countries, on three continents. Offshoot events include a ski-for-relief and a climb-for-relief. Email info@freeburmarangers.org for more information.

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 Rangers in the Gap at: www.freeburmarangers.org

DONATE YOUR TIME OR SPONSOR A RELIEF TEAM

It costs approximately \$6,200 to train and equip one team of Rangers. Each training is completed with the help of volunteers at the home office.

To give a financial gift, please send your check, made payable to Free The Oppressed, to the address below. Our EIN is 47-4648581. Online donations can be made at www.freeburmarangers.org.

Mailing Address:

Free the Oppressed
PO Box 912938
Denver, CO 80291-2938



At the end of training camp and just before graduation, five rangers were baptized. Above, Dave Eubank and Pastor Edmund baptize a Karen ranger.



Contact us by email at:
info@freeburmarangers.org

For more information visit us
online:
www.freeburmarangers.org

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:

 www.facebook.com/FreeBurmaRangers

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