

CHILDREN OF THE TSUNAMI; WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

DECEMBER 2006-JANUARY 2008



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ChildTRAC<sup>o</sup> 2008

"GO OVER, GO UNDER, GO THROUGH BUT NEVER GIVE UP"

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### STATISTICAL TABLES

ChildTRAC research teams

### RESEARCH

ChildTRAC teams, Bang Niang, Thailand

### REDACTION

ChildTRAC Management Team

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**We believe that...**

All children have the right to play, learn, love, and grow in a healthy and nurturing environment. This is their right as children; this is their right as human-beings'.

**Our mission is...**

To protect and safe guard the rights and well-being of all children by means of responsibly collecting, evaluating and disseminating information concerning the status of all vulnerable children to protection agencies, local communities and government bodies. We call this process '**TRACING A PATH TO ENSURE A FUTURE**' and endeavour to bring invisible children out from the shadows to ensure that no child is forgotten or ignored. Above all, ChildTRAC works to serve and empower children, irrespective of race, gender or status, while simultaneously strengthening and supporting all governmental and aid organisations that directly affect the lives of children everywhere.

**Our objectives are...**

- To trace, locate and screen children in vulnerable situations
- To continue to encourage children to speak out about their individual situation to assess their well-being
- To promote public awareness about child rights and child protection
- To distribute information and develop tools to enable governments, organisations and communities to help children in vulnerable situations
- To create a database with information provided by the children we aim to serve and protect

**PLEASE NOTE:**

To avoid repetition and confusion throughout the report; the term, *caregiver*, will be used in this report to indicate biological parents, members of the extended family and all other persons providing care and shelter to the child.

## Why this project?

The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami devastated an area of Thailand occupied by approximately 1.9 million people, 600,000 of which were children. Many children were separated from their families and caregivers, exposing them to the perils of living alone, in unfamiliar and unsuitable environments. Over time, children were replaced with extended families, caregivers and institutions such as boarding schools, nurseries and orphanages with little reference and follow-up.

Despite the initial swift response after the tragedy, there are still many issues that needed to be understood and addressed. These were some of the main areas of concern:

- 1. Is the official estimate of tsunami orphans a realistic figure?**
- 2. Where is each child and what is his or her current situation?**
- 3. What are their living arrangements, what is the legal status of that arrangement?**
- 4. What type of assistance (if any) are they currently receiving?**
- 5. Which children have been relocated and are no longer in need of placement?**

There was no official recording method at the time of the tsunami and so when children were relocated many remained disappeared into the cracks and became 'untraceable'. Organisations and government agencies were unaware of their backgrounds, new placements and / or family history. Without the knowledge of their whereabouts, agencies were unable to provide these children with the required services and support they needed; such as helping them attain legal status, find a more satisfactory family placement and provide them with medical, emotional and financial assistance.

Working with the Thai Social Department of Human Securities (SDHS), UNICEF, and other local partners, ChildTRAC traced located and screened each child orphaned in the December 2004 tsunami and visited almost each child and/ or caregiver in person to determine the circumstances surrounding their placement and well-being.

## **Project purpose**

To *ensure* the correct support reaches the tsunami orphans, ChildTRAC endeavoured to track down the children in person by tracing the child's placement, screening them to determine their current situation, well-being and needs. All this information has been gathered in one single electronic 'Master- List' and will be made available to relief organisations and government bodies.

## **Who benefits?**

1. Children who lost parents or caregivers as a direct result of the tsunami.
2. Child protection agencies and governmental organisations operating in Thailand

## **Geographical scope**

ChildTRAC surveyed the six tsunami-affected provinces known to have tsunami orphans, which include:

1. Ranong
2. Krabi
3. Phuket
4. Satun
5. Trang
6. Phang Nga

## **The 'Master-List'**

All possible information which could benefit the orphans in the best possible way will be gathered in one accurate electronic 'Master-list'. The data and information, which has been gathered by CHILDTRAC researchers after screening and locating every orphan, has been manually entered in the one accurate electronic 'Master-list'; this information consists varies from the name and age of the orphan to the outcome of the well-being and placement screening assessment.

### **Collecting and updating of the data**

By February 2005, the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the United Nations (UN) estimated that there were 1,480 tsunami orphans living in Thailand. Since the release of this figure, ChildTRAC has collaborated with many other aid organisations and 'bodies' such as the MoE and the UN, the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security (SDHS), Save the Children UK (SCUK), The Asia Foundation, Childline, PLAN Thailand, and the Thai and French Red Cross; By doing this and working with more than thirty different resources we were able to **create a new and more accurate electronic 'Master-List.'**

After **creating one electronic Master-List**, ChildTRAC started *cross checking* all gathered data. During this time we encountered some problems, for example certain information was outdated or incorrect; perhaps the child, who had been recorded as living somewhere at the time of the tsunami, had already graduated or dropped out of their school or institution a year or two later; other cases revealed that some orphans had transferred to other districts, provinces or schools altogether. It often appeared, that sources 'lost' orphans out of their sight; so we had to start our survey for the location of the child, all over again.

Therefore during our research our 'Master-list' needed to be constantly updated as and when it was discovered that the original sources' information that was incorrect.

### **Locating, screening and data compilation**

This new and updated electronic 'Master-list', where all data from our sources was gathered and cross-checked, functioned as the starting point to determine the location and placement of *each* child.

After we found out the 'correct address' of the child's school, institution, residence or house, and the placement of the orphan was determined, we **contacted** their caregiver and/or teacher to arrange a time to interview both the child and the relevant adult(s).

Our researchers **visited each child at their home, institution or school**, where we tried to screen each orphan with our screening model.

After the screening, **all gathered information** for each case was completed and entered in to the electronic Master-List.

With this '*tracing methodology*' we created **one electronic 'Master-list'** where all vital information such as, name, age, address and even more significantly - a breakdown of the well-being of the tsunami orphan, had been gathered.

The electronic Master- List **will be made available** to relief organizations and government bodies. A **training and education material** will also be provided to these bodies for a better understanding of the outcome and findings, our methodology and screening method.

## Tracing Methodology

### 1. DATA COLLECTION

Collecting the data from all our *30 sources*,  
MoE, SDHS, Government, provincial, district and sub-district offices, NGO's & GO's,  
institutions and schools

### 2. CREATING THE 'MASTER-LIST'

Gathered data from all sources is compiled into one electronic Master-list,  
containing all the names and additional information on tsunami orphans

### 3. 'UPDATING' AND 'CROSS-CHECKING' THE DATA

**Cross-checking** from the child's name, address & school  
**Contacting:** MoE, SDSH, provincial, district and sub-district offices, community  
leaders and schools

### 4. LOCATING

After modifying, updating and checking all names and data from the 'Master-List',  
we started to locate the children at their school, community, and home or at the  
institution

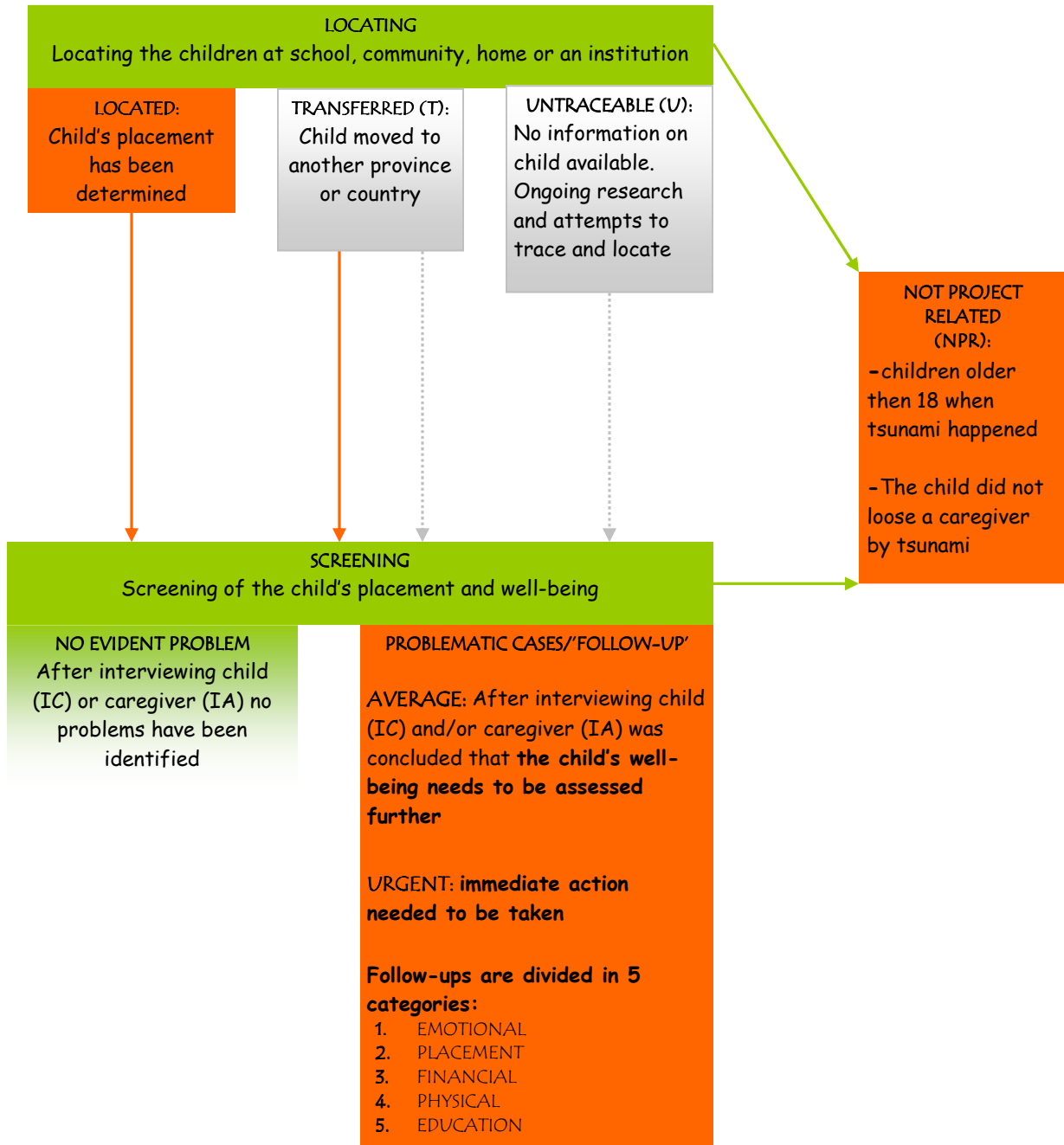
### 5. SCREENING

Once the child's location has been determined and he/she has been found, the  
screening of the child's placement and well-being, by interviewing the child by  
questionnaire or SOK, will take place

### 6. DATA COMPILATION

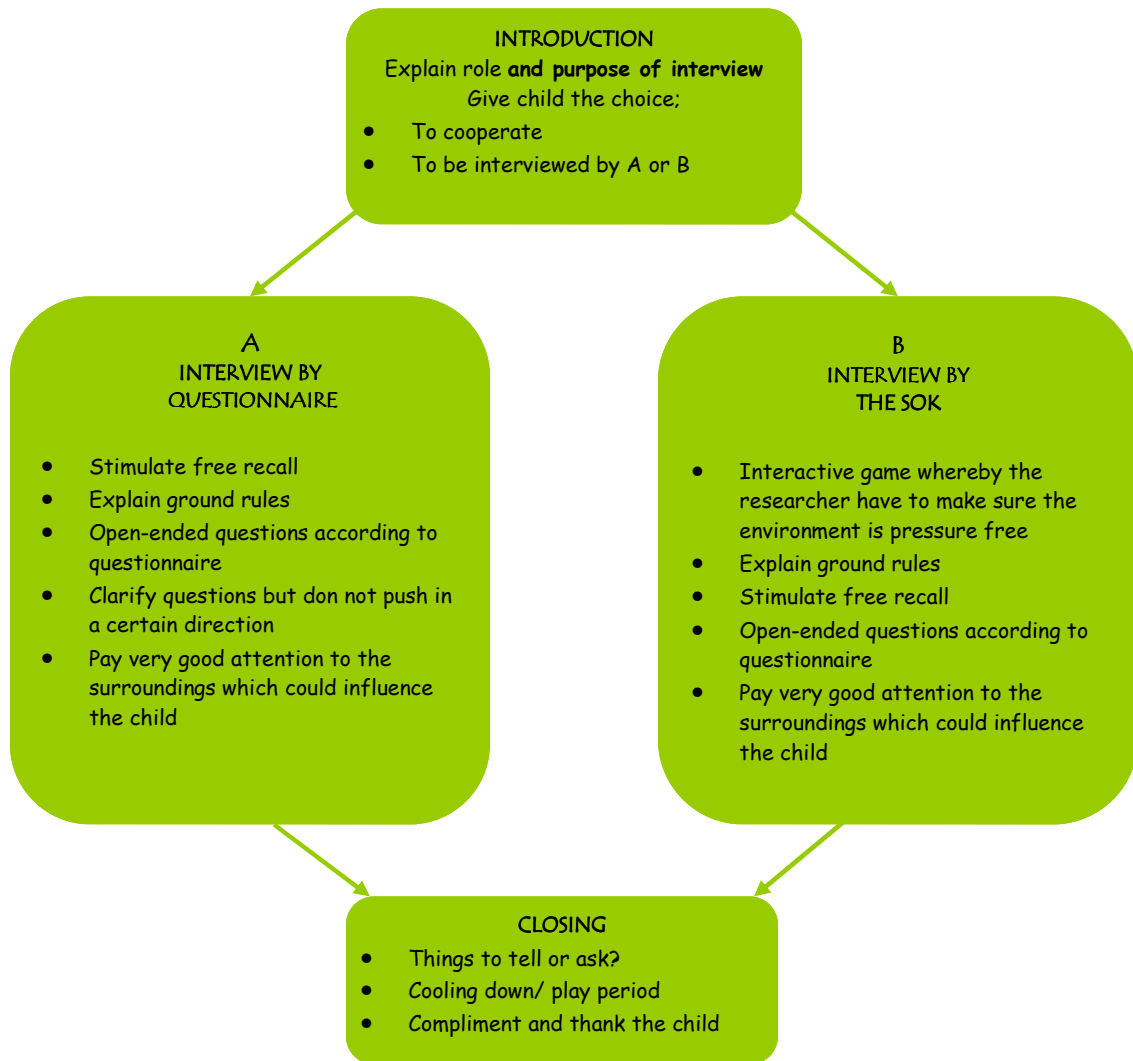
The outcome from the questionnaire and the SOK, as well as any additional  
information will be manually entered to finalize the electronic Master-List

## Method of Categorization



### The screening Model

During this project, ChildTRAC was having a particular system of interviewing the children. After the child was located, a screening took place to determine the child's situation and to categorize the urgency of the case. A child was interviewed by option A or B, (FIGURE 4; THE SCREENING MODEL) depending on the child's age and decision if he or she wanted to cooperate or not;



In general the following dividing in ages was used:

- 0-6 years old: we interviewed the caregiver (IA), often the child was too young to interview (CIC)
- 6-12 years old: we interviewed the caregiver by A (IA) and child (IC) by B
- 12-18 years old: we IC by A and, IA by A

### **Interview by Questionnaire**

An interview by a questionnaire is a screening instrument designed to understand the living arrangement of the child. When a child is too young (approximately under 6) to be interviewed, the information is collected from the relevant adult (parent, caregiver or teacher). Children over the age of 12 will have the opportunity to answer the questionnaire by themselves. However, it was beneficial to have the caregiver's perspective as well so we tried to interview as many caregivers as possible.

### **Interview by Speak Out Kit (SOK)**

The SOK is a screening instrument designed to assist the orphans in communicating. The SOK is a kit composed of foam figures representing people, places, activities and emotions. As the SOK resembles a game, *it distracts the child from the traditional intimidating nature of an interview.* The SOK is used to help determine the child's living arrangements, well-being and needs by allowing the child to 'speak out' about their personal situation, their placement, living environment and family circumstances. Through this interactive kit, the child is able to express his/her feelings about the current state of affairs and their relationship with the adult caregiver in order to get a better idea of the mental, physical and emotional well-being of the child. The instrument appeared most effective for children between the ages of 6 to 12. For children under and above this age group, the SOK is not the appropriate tool to get insight into the child's situation. Children under 6 often do not understand the meaning of the instrument; therefore, it cannot reflect the child's actual situation. Children over 12 find it too childish to play with. The SOK will always be carried out in a private environment. This is done to ensure that the answers given are the child's and without any outside influence or peer pressure likely to distort the truth.

## How the SOK works

It starts, with ChildTRAC researchers asking the child to place on a board the figures representing the places and people in their community. Once the child finishes the layout of their community, we will ask them to place an emotion they may experience when at a particular place or emotions they see on the members of their community's faces.



PICTURE OF THE SOK IN USE DURING A PILOT ( Kuraburi, 2007)

THE SOK CONTAINS A VARIETY OF COLOURED FIGURES REPRESENTING:

- Certain places in the community, placement and the environment (child's own home, neighbour's home, school, temple, mosque, church, police station etc).
- People in their community (father, mother, sister, grandmother, aunt, stepbrother, stepfather etc).
- Well-being (happy, sad, angry and neutral expressions).

# THE SOK BOX



father พ่อ	mother แม่	child's own house บ้านของเด็ก
brother พี่ชาย / น้องชาย	sister พี่สาว / น้องสาว	neighbors เพื่อนบ้าน
grandfather ปู่ / ตา	grandmother ย่า / ยาย	temple วัด
stepfather พ่อเลี้ยง	stepmother แม่เลี้ยง	mosque มัสยิด
stepbrother พี่เลี้ยง / น้องเลี้ยง	stepsister พี่เลี้ยง / น้องเลี้ยง	church โบสถ์
uncle ลุง / น้า mother side / ฝ่ายแม่	aunt ป้า / น้า mother side / ฝ่ายแม่	school โรงเรียน
uncle ลุง / อา father side / ฝ่ายพ่อ	aunt ป้า / อา father side / ฝ่ายพ่อ	police station สถานีตำรวจ
other อื่น ๆ	other อื่น ๆ	hospital โรงพยาบาล
friends เพื่อน	friends เพื่อน	friends เพื่อน
road ถนน	bed เตียง	community center ศูนย์ชุมชน
toys ของเล่น	book หนังสือ	library ห้องสมุด
institution สถานสงเคราะห์	playground สนามเด็กเล่น	beach ชายหาด

Using *two* questionnaire forms (one for children and another for adults), we were able to cross-reference the orphan's critical information by comparing the latter's with their parent/caregiver/teacher ('s).

We examined both questionnaire forms and looked for significant inconsistencies in their perspectives, because this appeared to be a very important indicator for getting a clear picture about the child's placement and well-being.

## **The Purpose of screening**

By screening with the questionnaire and/or SOK, our researchers tried to obtain the following information:

- **PERSONAL:** Name, sex, age, date of birth, address of the orphan, family composition (present and prior to the tsunami), previous placements and identity verification (birth registration, birth certificate, ID card or passport).
- **WHO IS HIS/ HER CAREGIVER:** Their relationship to the child, legal status of that relationship and their observations of the child's well-being.
- **SCHOOL/ INSTITUTION INFORMATION:** Address, school/institution type and level.
- **AID:** What type of assistance, if any, does the child receive from the government or any other organization?
- **CHILD'S WELL-BEING:** how is the child doing?

The child was screened in five dimensions: emotional, placement, financial, physical and education;

WELL-BEING DIMENSIONS	QUESTIONS FOR THE CHILDREN	QUESTIONS FOR THE CAREGIVERS	FOLLOW-UP CODE
1. EMOTIONAL	<p>-Who is your best friend?</p> <p>-Do you have any other friends?</p> <p>-What do you do with your friends?</p> <hr/> <p>How would you describe your feeling now?</p> <p>What is the best thing that happened to you in the last years?</p> <p>What is the worst things that happened to you in the last years?</p>	<p>-Does the child have a best friend?</p> <p>-Does the child have other friends?</p> <p>-Does the child play with others, is the child socially active?</p> <hr/> <p>-Can you describe the child's feelings (how does it feel now?</p> <p>What is the best thing that happened to the child in the last years?</p> <p>What is the worst thing that happened to the child in the last year?</p>	<b>Emotional</b>
2. PLACEMENT	<p>- Who is currently taking care of you?</p> <p>- Are they your blood relatives? And, if yes, which side of the family are they from? How do you feel about them?</p> <p>Which caretakers did you lost?</p> <p>-Where have you lived in the past years?</p> <p>Who are you living with?</p> <p>Do you like where you are living? And Why?</p> <p>Do you feel you get the same treatment as your siblings?</p>	<p>-Who is currently taking care of the child?</p> <p>- Are they blood relatives of the child?</p> <p>- If yes, which side from the family are they from?</p> <p>-Which caretaker did the child lost?</p> <p>-How many placements has the child had in the past two years?</p> <p>-Please indicate all the people living in the household?</p>	<b>Placement</b>
3. FINANCIAL	<p>- Are you receiving any outside assistance?</p> <p>-Did someone visit you and your family, if yes- which organization?</p>	<p>-Is the child receiving any outside assistance?</p> <p>-Did someone visit the child or family, if yes- which organization?</p>	<b>Financial</b>
4. PHYSICAL	<p>-Have you been sick in the last years and what happened?</p> <p>If yes, what kind of help did you receive when you're sick?</p>	<p>-Has the child been sick in the last years, what happened?</p> <p>-When the child is sick what do you do?</p>	<b>Physical</b>
5. EDUCATION	<p>- Do you enjoy going to school?</p> <p>-How are your results at school?</p>	<p>-does the child enjoy going to school?</p> <p>-How is the child's school performance?</p>	<b>Education</b>

## PROJECT OUTCOME

### Number of Orphans in the six provinces

By the end of November 2007, ChildTRAC located and screened the orphans in the 6 affected areas. The outcome of this research can be found in this total overview;

Province	Status สถานะ								Total
	IA	IC	CIC	T	U	F	D	NPR	
	Ranong	25	72	4	6	7	7	3	
Krabi	135	100	10	59	14	15	24	16	238
Trang	26	20	2	2	2	2	7	6	41
Satun	4	4	3	6	1	0	0	3	17
Phuket	111	90	6	29	16	26	7	11	185
Phang-Nga	626	384	99	106	33	179	86	258	1145
<b>Total/Cases</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>670</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>1729</b>

### Tsunami Orphans in the 70 other provinces

ChildTRAC located tsunami orphans who are currently living outside the six affected provinces in the other remaining 70 Thai provinces. This number of children is currently **580**.

These children may have re-located else where over the past few years or perhaps they never actually lived in one of the six tsunami-affected provinces but their caretakers did. Still, they were orphaned by the tsunami, and in the future ChildTRAC endeavours to track them down.

## FOLLOW UP RECOMMENDATIONS

PROVINCES	CASES
RANONG	7
TRANG	2
SATUN	0
KRABI	16
PHUKET	25
PHANG NGA	179
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>229</b>

TRANG			
EMOTIONAL	1		
PLACEMENT	0		
FINANCIAL	1		
PHYSICAL	0		
EDUCATION	2	URGENT	1
		AVERAGE	1

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

KRABI			
EMOTIONAL	8		
PLACEMENT	8		
FINANCIAL	3		
PHYSICAL	3		
EDUCATION	2	URGENT	4
		AVERAGE	12

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

SATUN			
EMOTIONAL	0		
PLACEMENT	0		
FINANCIAL	0		
PHYSICAL	0		
EDUCATION	0	URGENT	0
		AVERAGE	0

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

PHUKET			
EMOTIONAL	12		
PLACEMENT	8		
FINANCIAL	5		
PHYSICAL	7		
EDUCATION	9	URGENT	8
		AVERAGE	17

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

PHANG NGA			
EMOTIONAL	64		
PLACEMENT	50		
FINANCIAL	37		
PHYSICAL	56		
EDUCATION	57	URGENT	40
		AVERAGE	139

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

RANONG			
EMOTIONAL	6		
PLACEMENT	1		
FINANCIAL	4		
PHYSICAL	2		
EDUCATION	2	URGENT	1
		AVERAGE	6

\*Please note: it is possible that a child has been indicated for a follow-up in more than one well-being area

## NOT PROJECT RELATED CASES

PROVINCE	TOTAL NUMBER OF ORPHANS	NPR CASES
RANONG	103	4
KRABI	238	16
TRANG	41	6
SATUN	17	3
PHUKET	185	11
PHANG NGA	1145	258
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1729</b>	<b>298</b>

During our research interviews, and while analyzing our data, we encountered 298 cases who were not eligible for this particular research project, but do were on the list of our resources.

In several sources we found 'gaps' and 'mistakes' as;

- 1: The child was over eighteen years old when the tsunami happened
- 2: The child died itself
- 3: The caregivers broke up and moved away before the tsunami
- 4: One or both caregivers died, but not because of the tsunami
- 5: The child lost no one
- 6: caregivers or people who are living at the locating never heard of the child's name

### RANONG

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/">www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/</a></li> <li>• The office of Social Development and Social Security</li> </ul>
NPR 2	0	
NPR 3	0	
NPR 4	0	
NPR 5	2	
NPR 6	0	

\*Please note: it is possible that a NPR can be for more then one reason

### KRABI

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/">www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/</a></li> <li>• Unicef</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.inspec.moe.go.th">www.inspec.moe.go.th</a></li> </ul>
NPR 2	0	
NPR 3	0	
NPR 4	3	
NPR 5	11	
NPR 6	0	

\*Please note: it is possible that a NPR can be for more then one reason

### TRANG

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/</li> <li>• UNICEF</li> </ul>
NPR 2	0	
NPR 3	1	
NPR 4	0	
NPR 5	3	
NPR 6	0	

\*Please note: it is possible that one NPR can have more than one reason

### SATUN

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• www.mis12.moe.go.th/tsunami2/</li> <li>• The General Educational Department of Satun</li> </ul>
NPR 2	0	
NPR 3	0	
NPR 4	0	
NPR 5	4	
NPR 6	0	

\*Please note: it is possible that a NPR can be for more than one reason

### PHUKET

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The office of Educational Service Area</li> <li>• UNICEF</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.inspec.moe.go.th/inspec10/">www.inspec.moe.go.th/inspec10/</a> office of Educational Inspector Regional No.10</li> <li>• Swedish Red cross</li> </ul>
NPR 2	1	
NPR 3	0	
NPR 4	0	
NPR 5	3	
NPR 6	0	

\*Please note: it is possible that a NPR can be for more than one reason

### PHANG NGA

REASON	CASES	Resources:
NPR 1	31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The office of Educational Service Area</li> <li>• UNICEF</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.inspec.moe.go.th/inspec10/">www.inspec.moe.go.th/inspec10/</a> office of Educational Inspector Regional No.10</li> <li>• We love Thailand</li> <li>• Sub district Administration Office</li> <li>• Ministry of Social Development and Human Security</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Yo Little hands</li> <li>• Mercy foundation</li> <li>• District Offices</li> <li>• Khao Lak Camp</li> </ul>
NPR 2	13	
NPR 3	83	
NPR 4	62	
NPR 5	52	
NPR 6	11	

\*Please note: it is possible that a NPR can be for more than one reason

## LESSONS LEARNT

- **NO REGISTRATION SYSTEM AFTER THE DISASTER**

- Information regarding the orphans was gathered by mainly schools and later on by GO's & NGO's which provided children assistance.

*No immediate registration took place within the temporarily camps, the first registration activities took place in February 2005 within the schools.*

- **NO COORDINATION AMONGST THE DIFFERENT MINISTRIES**

- Differences between figures from the central government and the provincial governments.

- Different standards for gathering information, Ministry of education only from an educational perspective, The Ministry of SDHS only for children between 0-5 years old.

*A lot of children were missed out, not registered with the Ministry of MOE or the Ministry of SDHS (both on central and provincial level)*

- **LACK OF STANDARDS IN DOCUMENTING INFORMATION**

- The information regarding tsunami orphans was rarely updated

- The information was not checked or cross-checked

- No general information available to the general public where to turn for assistance or help

*The number of identified orphans by ChildTRAC is much higher as the number of identified orphans initially identified and published by the Ministry of MOE. ChildTRAC also identified those who were not eligible for assistance.*

- **LACK OF LONG-TERM AND SUSTAINABLE RELIEF BY GO's AND NGO's**

- The negative effect of temporary financial help

- No after care for most of the projects, no follow up was initiated

*This resulted in a lot of separations within families, children being abandoned/neglected and the increase of institutions and orphanages.*

- **DISCOVERING INVISIBLE CHILDREN**

- Children without a birth registration

- Illegal children, migrant children

*Lack of registration makes these children invisible, invisible children are more vulnerable to any kind of violence and often don't have access to basic facilities like health care, clean water and education.*

- **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE CONCERNING Child PROTECTION AND Child's RIGHTS**

- The confidentiality of children's information is rarely respected.

- The level of knowledge concerning child protection issues within government's offices, organizations and institutions is worrying.

- No public awareness about Child protection or the rights of children.

*Neglect, abandonment and any kind of violence against children is accepted within the Thai society.*

- **LACK OF SUPPORT AND COOPERATION**

- The support & cooperation amongst those bodies responsible for Child Protection issues is shortcoming.

- No or little cooperation in providing children follow up assistance and help

*The need for Follow up actions was already identified, addressed and discussed in the first months of the project. No follow up project has been initiated after several requests and ChildTRAC has taken responsibility for several cases to ensure children are provided with assistance.*

## PROJECT ANALYSIS

- **MAXIMUM OF TWO RESEARCHERS PER CHILD**

When interviewing a child, there should be a maximum of three researchers per child and preferably two to avoid intimidating the child. Some children perceived the researcher as a stranger and it was our job to create an environment conducive to their comfort.

Furthermore, many of the children visited have been very shy and a large number of observers made them only more reluctant to communicate.

- **INTERVIEWING THE CHILD AND ADULT IN PRIVACY**

The caregiver or teacher should not be close to the child as the screening takes place. Some tried to assist the child in understanding the SOK or with filling in the questionnaire. This might hamper the openness of the child and it will increase the probability of the children providing socially desirable answers, particularly, in regard to their school situation.

The child's behaviour might be affected by the Pygmalion effect (when the child behaves according to his/her teacher's perspectives and expectations, either positive or negative).

- **INTERVIEWING CHILDREN OF SAME GENDER**

During one visit at a Muslim school, one boy did not want to be interviewed. We considered the fact that only female interviewers were involved. It is possible that the boy did not want to be interviewed by a woman. In the Muslim tradition, men are often taken more seriously by other men. Taking this gender difference into account during the screening procedure, we started after this incident, by only letting male researchers screen the boys and female researchers screen the girls in Muslim settings.

- **CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

Working in a multi-cultural team implies that differences in opinions and perceptions exist between the different members of the team. For instance, psychological views on the development of children or didactical methods can differ in the Asian and western culture. On the one hand, this provides a richness of information and point of views, which contributed to 'completing the picture' of the situation of a child. On the other hand, this created disagreements and consequently, influence the decision on whether a child is going will receive a follow up assessment. We considered controversy as an indicator for concern, the child's situation is therefore be re assessed and the child will automatically be scheduled for a follow up visit.

- **FUTURE**

As a result of ChildTRAC's gained knowledge, experience and developed methodologies, we were able to conduct a desk research tracing tsunami orphans outside the six tsunami affected provinces. 576 children's current placement has been located within the 70 remaining provinces in Thailand, 4 children moved abroad (total is 580) But based on our experience the number will grow the moment our field researchers will be conducted in these regions. ChildTRAC hopes to start in the near future...

## CONCLUSION

In cooperation with UNICEF, SDHS and other partners ChildTRAC traced, located and screened the placement and well-being of the tsunami orphans living within the six tsunami-affected provinces.

The assessment was carried out by interviewing each child and their current caregiver; so we could research whether or not a child required any further attention or help.

'Our understanding' can be summarized in the following key facts and numbers:

- 1729 CASE FILES IN THE SIX AFFECTED PROVINCES
- 229 FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS
- 298 NPR's BECAUSE OF OUTDATED AND "WRONG" INFORMATION
- MANY PROBLEMS BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF A PROPER REGISTRATION SYSTEM OF CHILDREN
- LACK OF KNOWLEDGE REGARDING CHILD PROTECTION AND CHILD RIGHTS
- 73 ORPHANS WHO ARE UNTREACABLE
- A WORRYING AMOUNT OF ILLEGAL AND MIGRANT CHILDREN WE ENOCUNTERED THROUGH THE RESEARCH

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide a Standardized Disaster & Action plan to each provincial government office

1. Develop and maintain a nationwide registration and monitor system for all children
2. Appoint a responsible body or organisation to control and guide the provincial offices on all child protection related issues
3. Establish a response system that takes action and has trained and knowledgeable employees and officials
4. Provide and encourage sustainable and long term support
5. Acknowledgement of the importance of Follow up actions
6. Cooperation, coordination and communication amongst the different Ministries
7. Cooperation, coordination and communication between the Central and Provincial level
8. Cooperation and support for NGO/GO activities by the Ministries
9. Create public awareness about Child Protection and Child Rights

## DEFINITIONS

**Orphan:** 'A child whose parents (both mother and father or either one) or guardians are dead or missing' (Thai Government- Summary of Relief Operations to Students Affected by Tsunami).

**Orphan:** 'A child whose father or mother has died, or who has no evidence of parents or whose parents cannot be traced' (Child Protection Act, 2003, article 4).

**Tsunami Orphan:** A child under the age of 18 who lost either one or both of his/her parents or caregivers as a result of the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami (Thai government- Summary of Relief Operations to Students Affected by the Tsunami).

**Caregiver\***: Parents, persons providing care, adopter and guardians according to the Civil and Commercial Code, including step parents, guardian of a child's safety, employer, as well as any other person providing care or shelter to a child.  
(Child Protection Act, 2003, Article 4).

### **Child:**

*International law:* Any person under the age of 18, unless under the (national) law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

(Convention of the Rights of the Child, 2003, Article 1).

*Thai law:* A person below 18 years of age, but this does not include those who have attained majority through marriage.

(Child Protection Act, 2003, Article 4).