



2023

annual report

INEDFOUNDATION.ORG



our why

The Inclusive Education Foundation (or just “InEd” for short) exists to increase access to and improve the quality of recognized education pathways for migrant and displaced children on the Thai-Myanmar border. Our work is driven by the belief that education is the cornerstone of empowerment, enabling children and youth to build lives marked by hope, dignity, and opportunity.

The education landscape on the border has always been dynamic, and in response, so are we. Our programs are continually adapted based on the evolving needs of children, families, and teachers.

Our research continues to tell us that migrant communities on the border see their long term futures in Thailand. In response, InEd has scaled up our Thai language, public school enrollment, and a bilingual classroom assistant programs. By following-through on our research with direct action, we hold ourselves accountable to the communities we serve.

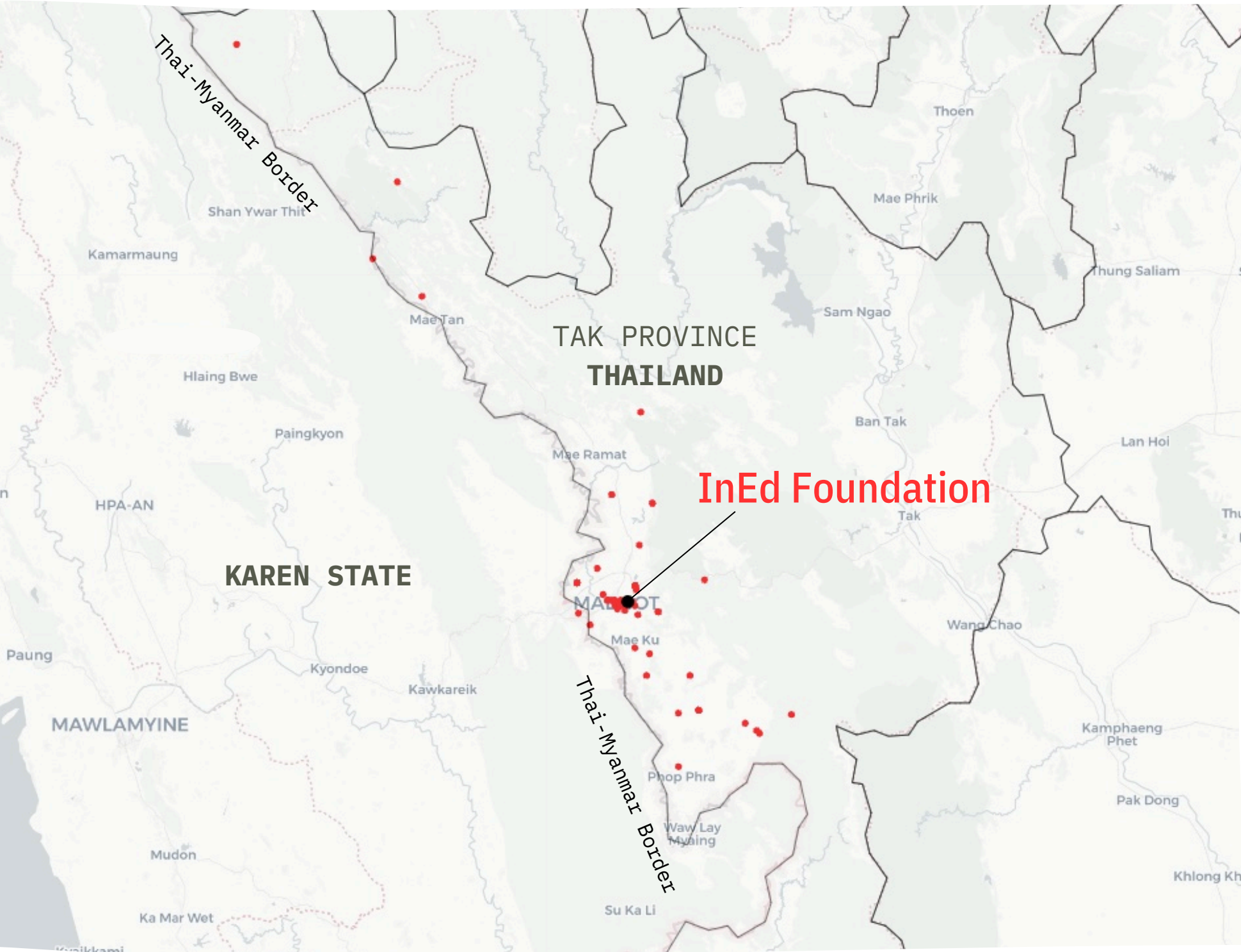
We believe education is the most direct pathway out of poverty and can help safeguard against exploitation and abuse. To that end, we work with families to remove the practical obstacles that stand between children and their education, ensuring they remain engaged in their learning journey. We provide teachers with relevant professional development opportunities and individualized feedback that helps them grow. And we support youth to take active roles in their communities through experiential, service-based learning.

Across our research and advocacy work, we prioritize participatory approaches that directly engage communities, teachers, and youth. We believe local actors are best positioned to guide research and advocacy dialogue on issues that affect them – particularly for youth who often have the most at stake and the least voice represented.

If you graph [school enrollment on the border by grade](#), the shape looks like a triangle. The lower grades have a high level of enrollment that quickly decreases until only 1 in 5 children actually complete their education. InEd decided to make the triangle our logo as a constant reminder of why we are here: **to turn the triangle into a square.**



our context. = Migrant Learning Centers



“We’ve been in a state of emergency for over 30 years. For teachers, emergency is the normal, and they are the first responders.”

- Naing Win, Director of Migrant Education Programs




Following the twin crises of the COVID-19 global pandemic and ongoing conflict in Myanmar, our context evolved from “quiet crisis” to outright emergency. By the end of 2021, migrant education stakeholders had shifted their focus to **meeting basic human needs before facilitating learning**. Migrant Learning Centers (MLCs) became a second and often last-chance for thousands of children who had had their education disrupted.

In 2023, we again saw the migrant education landscape shift to rebuilding towards a focus on both needs and learning outcomes; towards Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs *and* Bloom’s Taxonomy. However, once-established and recognized education pathways have become more precarious and politicized. Returning to Myanmar to sit for the matriculation exam entails significant personal risk for students wishing to continue their studies, and the existing conduits to post-10 education have received record-breaking applications from students.

Against this backdrop, InEd doubled-down on a collaborative and inclusive approach to supporting educators. We believe that teachers will drive the largest gains in learning outcomes, and so in 2023, we asked ourselves: “*What can we do to ensure teachers can lead the way towards a brighter future for children at the fringe?*”

 **200,000+**

children remain out of school in Thailand (Harkins et. al., 2019)

 **64** Migrant Learning Centers provide a second-chance to children to complete a basic education. **In 2023, all of them were full.**

our impact *in numbers*



In this photo, one of our community-based Thai tutors works with school-aged children to prepare them for enrollment into a Royal Thai Government public school. Basic Thai is often a requirement for Kindergarten and Grade 1 students.



19 educators and staff

speaking a combined 8 languages worked shoulder-to-shoulder with teachers, helped parents enroll their child into school for the first time, and coordinated transportation for children in remote communities to get to school.

Reflecting on 2023, it was a year of significant growth for InEd as an organization. We increased our total staff (including bus drivers, Thai language tutors, and digital school teachers) from 38 to 67, rented two new office spaces, and offered our first university-accredited course to migrant teachers. While we believe education is a transformative experience measured in lifelong learning and livelihood opportunities, we're proud of the ambitious targets our teams set for themselves this year.

output-level indicators

- 517 children** were provided the wrap-around support necessary to enroll in Royal Thai Government schools
- 120 hours** of community-based Thai language tutoring was provided to 34 out-of-school children so they could meet enrollment requirements
- 103 OOSC** (out-of-school children) were enrolled in school for the first time in 2023
- 134 teachers** attended in-service professional development opportunities, spanning between 16 to 273 hours of coursework
- 10 teacher leaders** graduated from InEd's intensive teacher leadership program to help train new teachers at their own schools
- 262 videos** averaging just over 10 minutes in length were uploaded to UNESCO Bangkok's LearnBig platform to reach children at risk of educational exclusion
- 111 teachers** received laptops and participated in digital literacy workshops to learn new teaching modalities and discover online teaching resources
- 10 youth champions** led their own research-action projects over a 6-month period with a total of 24 high school co-researchers, engaging in 368 hours of instruction, mentorship, research, and advocacy
- 7 research products** were developed collaboratively with local CSOs and educators to identify key challenges and opportunities in migrant and refugee education
- 13 presentations** and advocacy events were either facilitated or attended by InEd to use community-based research to spotlight key issues

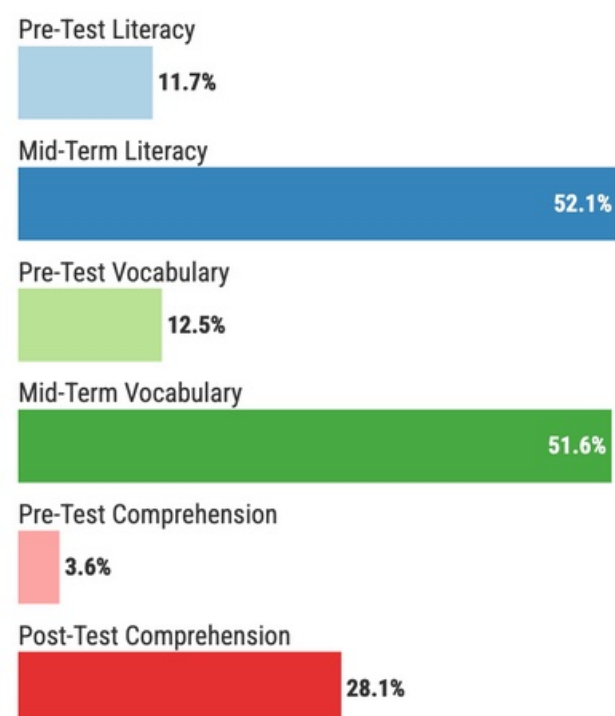
Out-of-School Children Enrollment **TaskFORCE**

Starting in 2020 as a small team of enrollment officers, the Out-of-School Children (OOSC) TaskFORCE has grown to a total of 19 staff employing an additional 11 school bus drivers. We know from [collaborative research efforts](#) that when families are given the choice, they prefer to send their children to Thai public schools, which provide a recognized pathway to higher education, the prospect of legal documentation, and functional literacy in Thai language.

In collaboration with the [Migrant Education Coordination Center](#) (MECC), the Enrollment TaskFORCE worked with 26 Thai public schools in 2023 to enroll a total 513 migrant children. However, this represents a fraction of the need: since the TaskFORCE began conducting school enrollment drives in 2020, over 1,000 families who requested support to enroll their children into school fell outside of our capacity. **We are far from meeting the need.**

In addition to enrollment, the TaskFORCE also works with parents and guardians to build a safe and productive home learning environment to support student retention. Using the Norwegian Refugee Council's [Better Learning Program](#), 208 families were engaged in multi-layered activities focusing on social-emotional support and well-being in 2023.

Improvement in Test Scores from Community-based Thai Tutoring, 2023



After completing 6 hours of Thai language tutoring per week over a 5 month period, out-of-school children are ready to pass the entrance requirements to enroll in Royal Thai Government schools. Results from 2023 represent the mid-point outcome (10 weeks), where we'll expect to see scores exceed 70% in all three domains.



Nan Mu Ta Loung leads the OOSC Taskforce, herself a beneficiary of efforts to enroll children into Thai public schools.



Photo of the enrollment team visiting a community in Mae Sot district in March 2023 during the Royal Thai Government student enrollment period.



40 communities were engaged in the 2023 enrollment process



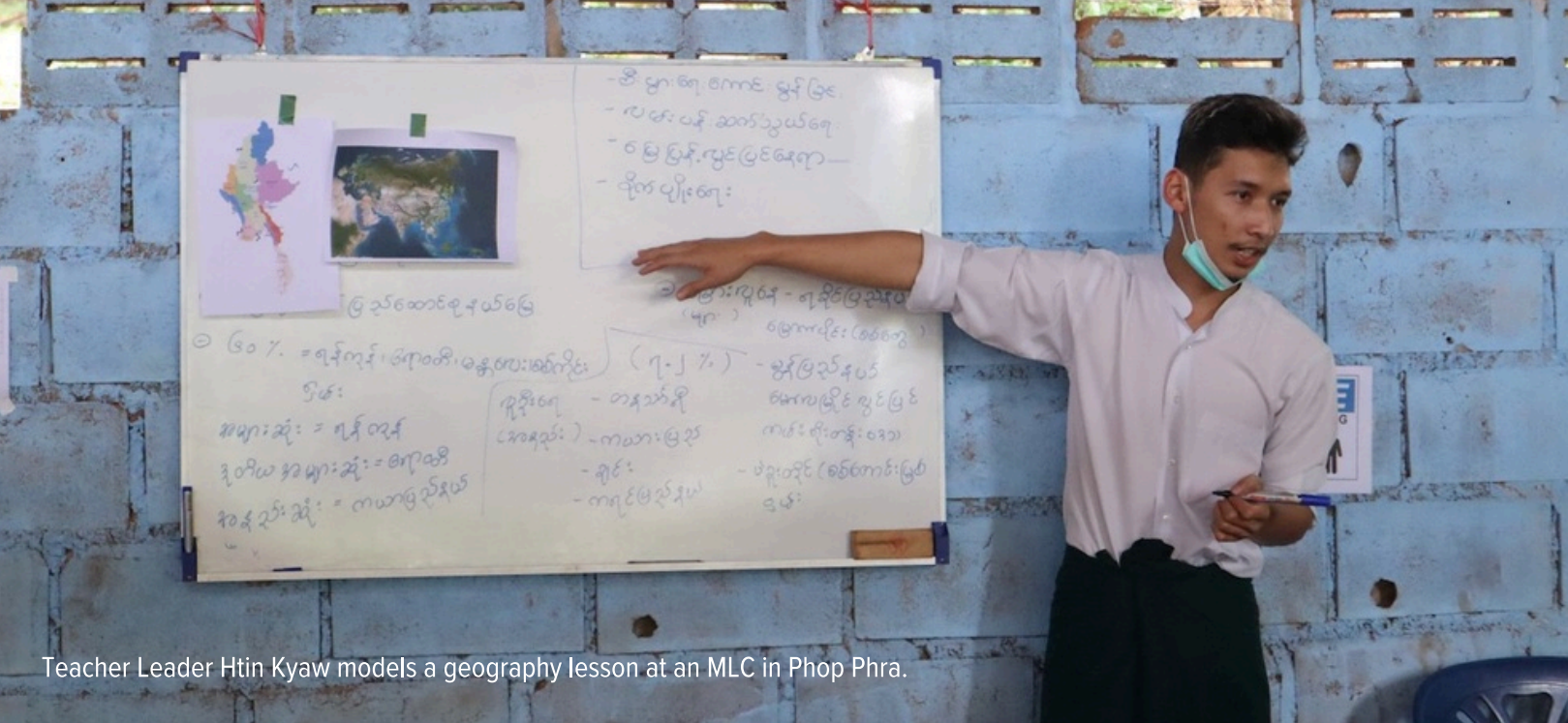
513 school enrollment contracts were signed with parents to co-support education costs

A total of 16.1%, or THB 59,195 of school-related costs, were supported by parents in 2023. While this marks an important milestone for the TaskFORCE's goal of long-term sustainability, it demonstrates the significant education financing gap for border communities. Research has shown the [hidden costs of education to exceed THB 5,000 \(USD 142\) per child.](#)

TeacherFOCUS

In border communities, teaching is primarily seen as an act of community service rather than a profession or livelihood. Most teachers acquire their skills through hands-on experience and often have considerable responsibilities beyond their educational duties. In 2023, teachers endured significant challenges: over 28% began their first year of teaching, and a significant number were profoundly affected by displacement and conflict. This created diverse needs within the teaching community.

TeacherFOCUS strives to meet these needs by working with teachers as peers. Our theory of change is threefold. We engage teachers as our most important partner in driving long-term improvement in learning outcomes. We offer professional development and teaching accreditation to improve teacher livelihood. And lastly, we support local education governance to align teaching standards with the [ASEAN education quality framework](#).



Teacher Leader Htin Kyaw models a geography lesson at an MLC in Phop Phra.



708

teachers made education possible for 15,139 students



134

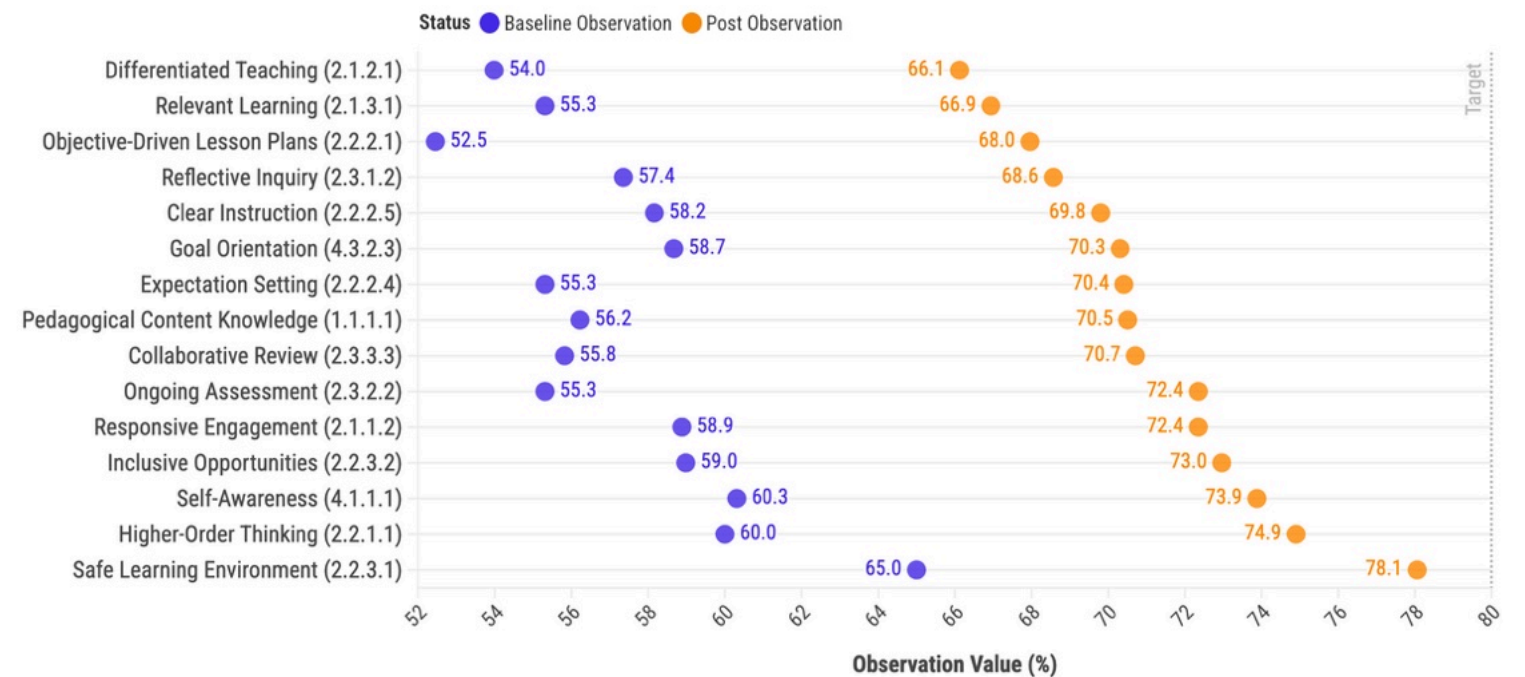
attended a TeacherFOCUS in-service program in 2023

In 2023, a total of 10 teachers from 8 different schools participated in the Teacher Leader program. Through a training of trainers approach, the program aims to embed experienced teachers in schools to provide mentorship and on-the-job support to other teachers at their school. Each Teacher Leader then supported 3 additional teachers at their school, for a combined 30 teachers.



Teacher Leader Zar Zar teaching an English language class at an MLC in Mae Sot.

Improvement in Teaching Competencies from Classroom Observation Data, 2023



Through in-service, pre-service, and other longitudinal training modalities, we work with teachers' busy schedules to advance key areas of teacher competency. As part of our shared commitment to improving learning outcomes, TeacherFOCUS conducts baseline and endline classroom observations to assess teaching competencies against the [Multilingual Education Teacher Competency Framework](#). In 2023, a total of 99 teachers observed at both baseline and endline improved an average of 13.6 percentage points, making significant gains to achieving a target goal of >80% across all categories of the framework.

Child Safeguarding and Two Short Stories

A community-based effort to protect children

In September 2020, InEd joined forces with 10 local community-based organizations for a vital mission: to ensure every child in our border communities learns in safety. This partnership, known simply as the CSG Taskforce, brings together experts and organizations dedicated to child well-being. **In 2023, the network handled a total of 34 cases, including 16 cases involving sexual abuse.**

Through rigorous training and policy implementation, we're not just aiming for compliance but are nurturing a culture where children's safety is paramount. This effort brings parents and community leaders to the table as integral parts of the taskforce's referral network, which ensures cases are handled by the appropriate authorities in a timely manner.

Representing InEd's contribution to the network, Naw Th Blay Moo acts as one of several Child Protection Specialists. She has worked on child protection cases in Mae Sot since 2009.



Nurturing futures in Mae Sot

Ni Ni Win's family moved to Thailand when she was just 9 years old. She was the oldest child of three. They worked together planting corn and caring for sugar cane fields. When the community saw that Ni Ni Win was not in school, one of the elders called Naw Th Blay Moo, who made a visit to their home. Unfamiliar with the school enrollment options, she was able to convince Ni Ni Win's parents to enroll her in a nearby Thai public school.

Ni Ni Win completed her Grade 5 education, dropping out to then help her parents with work and caring for her younger siblings. However, she was now literate in Thai, and could communicate with Thai



Ni Ni Win (also known by her Thai name Nam Kang) holding her 11 month old baby, joined by her father and youngest brother.

employers and local authorities. When she began working at a nearby clothing factory, her Thai language skills helped her get promoted to a managerial role, where she can now support her family and siblings.

Seeing the benefit of education, her youngest brother, now 8 years old, has started studying in the same Thai school, and her parents plan to support him to complete at least Grade 8 (middle school). Her parents now regularly volunteer at the school, cooking Burmese noodles during special events and holidays.


Creating safe spaces for students

In 2023, two elementary school teachers requested a CSG workshop to help them recognize and respond to signs of sexual abuse among students. They had recently been approached by a concerned parent, whose daughter, a first grader, had been inappropriately touched by a classmate.

Following the workshop, the teachers decided to organize an assembly for the school's 200 students, educating them on the concept of personal boundaries and encouraging them to speak up if they saw inappropriate behavior. In the following week, five students would approach the teachers with concerns. The teachers were able to provide the students with a safe space and to educate offenders about the seriousness of their actions.

The following month, they introduced a suggestion box, which became an eye-opening channel for student feedback, revealing the students' apprehension towards certain disciplinary methods. The feedback led to a more student-centered approach to classroom management, and several teachers had noted significant changes in their own behavior in a follow-up monitoring visit.

 **363** teachers and school staff were engaged in CSG network activities in 2023

 **43** schools participated in CSG monitoring visits and received feedback to improve child safeguarding practices

Youth Champions

From our own beginnings in a small garage in Mae Sot, we've grown to depend on the lived experiences of youth in their communities as the first place to start an appreciative inquiry process when we begin doing research or designing a new program. That's why in 2020, the Youth Champions program was launched to cultivate the next generation of changemakers.

In 2023, our third cohort of 10 youth led their own action research projects over 11 months, recruiting 24 high school students as co-researchers and managing a budget of THB 25,000 (USD \$700). Hands-on projects allowed them to apply developing proficiencies in digital literacy, research methods, data analysis, and project management to real community contexts.

Four teams of youth chose to center their projects around three distinct topics in 2023:

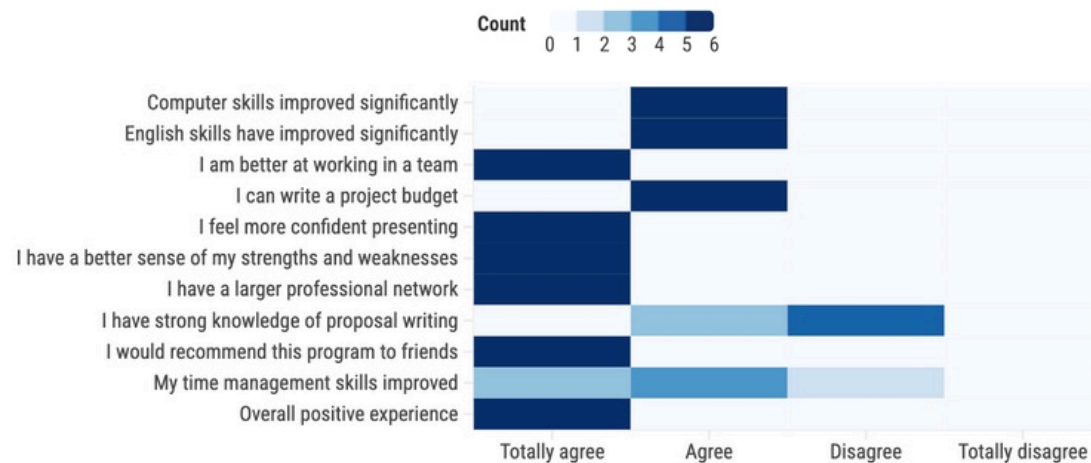
1. The barriers to social-emotional wellbeing of displaced and undocumented youth
2. Legal documentation as a barrier to migrant youth civic and economic engagement
3. Spreading awareness about the pathways to higher education for migrant youth

Youth were then tasked with identifying and developing a strong working relationship with a local Thai organization to either conduct research or support an action project in their community. Their projects culminated in InEd's first in-person Youth Summit, a day-long youth-led forum to share out their project findings and lead fun and engaging activities with high school students.



Saw Samson (left) and Naw Nay Yu Paw (right) lead the Youth Champions program. They draw upon their combined experience as educators and youth mentors to co-develop the Youth Champion program with youth, local CSOs, and MLCs.

Youth Champion Feedback Statements, 2023 Cohort



Over the course of the program, biweekly reflections made it possible to adjust the curriculum and pacing to better meet youths' learning interests and needs. Quarterly meetings with their supervisors allowed us to gain insights on their professional development in the workplace.



The 2023 Youth Summit brought together four migrant learning center high schools and was attended by over 200 youth.

Digital School



The 2023 Digital School team acting completely natural for a group photo.

In 2022, InEd's Digital School project was piloted under [UNESCO Bangkok's LearnBig platform](#) with the goal of reaching Burmese-speaking learners at risk of educational exclusion. After a successful pilot phase, the project was scaled up in 2023 to include 4 full-time online teachers and 2 additional video editors.

From seasoned teachers who bring the depth of classroom experience to content creation, to former YouTube sensations who have adeptly pivoted their skills, the Digital School team is defined by diverse talents. Together, they make learning fun and engaging for thousands of Burmese mother tongue learners.



67,389

views across of 215 videos that were uploaded to the LearnBig YouTube channel in 2023.



71,375

views across 115 videos uploaded on the LearnBig Facebook channel



Working closely with [Joy House](#), a community-based organization in Mae Sot, Digital School has shifted to providing supplementary online resources for teachers in Myanmar and Thailand. Teachers use these resources to reinforce key lesson objectives and create interactive digital classrooms when teaching remotely.



<https://www.youtube.com/@learnbig2004>

Bridging the digital divide in migrant education

Across MLCs in Mae Sot and Tak Province, few have access to reliable internet and even fewer are able to provide laptops to teachers and school staff. And while most migrant families will have access to at least one mobile device, fewer than 2% ([Save the Children 2022](#)) have a laptop at home. This has created a significant digital divide across migrant education, resulting in low levels of digital literacy **even among high school students**. Digital School works to bridge the digital divide by providing intensive in-service computer and ICT training throughout the school year. Working with UNESCO Bangkok, the team has also been able to provide 111 laptop devices to teachers alongside these workshops.



Using a laptop from one of InEd's ICT training workshops, an MLC teacher uses free online English resources to provide native speaker pronunciation of different word compounds.

research *for* advocacy

As 2023 came into focus, InEd set its sights on using its existing research to advocate for more durable solutions in migrant education and to advance mother tongue-based multilingual education. In October, InEd attended the [7th International Conference on Language and Education](#), launching our [Stepping Stones research](#) and sharing out early results from our Thai classroom assistant program. A total of 13 of our staff presented or moderated panels at the conference.

InEd also presented at the [Foreign Correspondents' Club of Thailand](#), joined by education partners [Help Without Frontiers](#) and [Youth Connect Foundation](#), to spotlight key issues and emerging trends in migrant education. Shortly after the team returned to Mae Sot, they began preparing for the third [Education Everywhere Conference](#), an online forum for educators from across Myanmar and Thailand to participate in a community of practice.



Layi Chan supports cross-cutting research efforts and teaches research methods to our staff and partners. He graduated from Rangsit University in 2023 and brings fluency in English, Thai, Mon, and Burmese to our research.

See our new research page: <https://www.inedfoundation.org/research>



The InEd team at the 7th International Conference on Language and Education in Bangkok, October 2023.

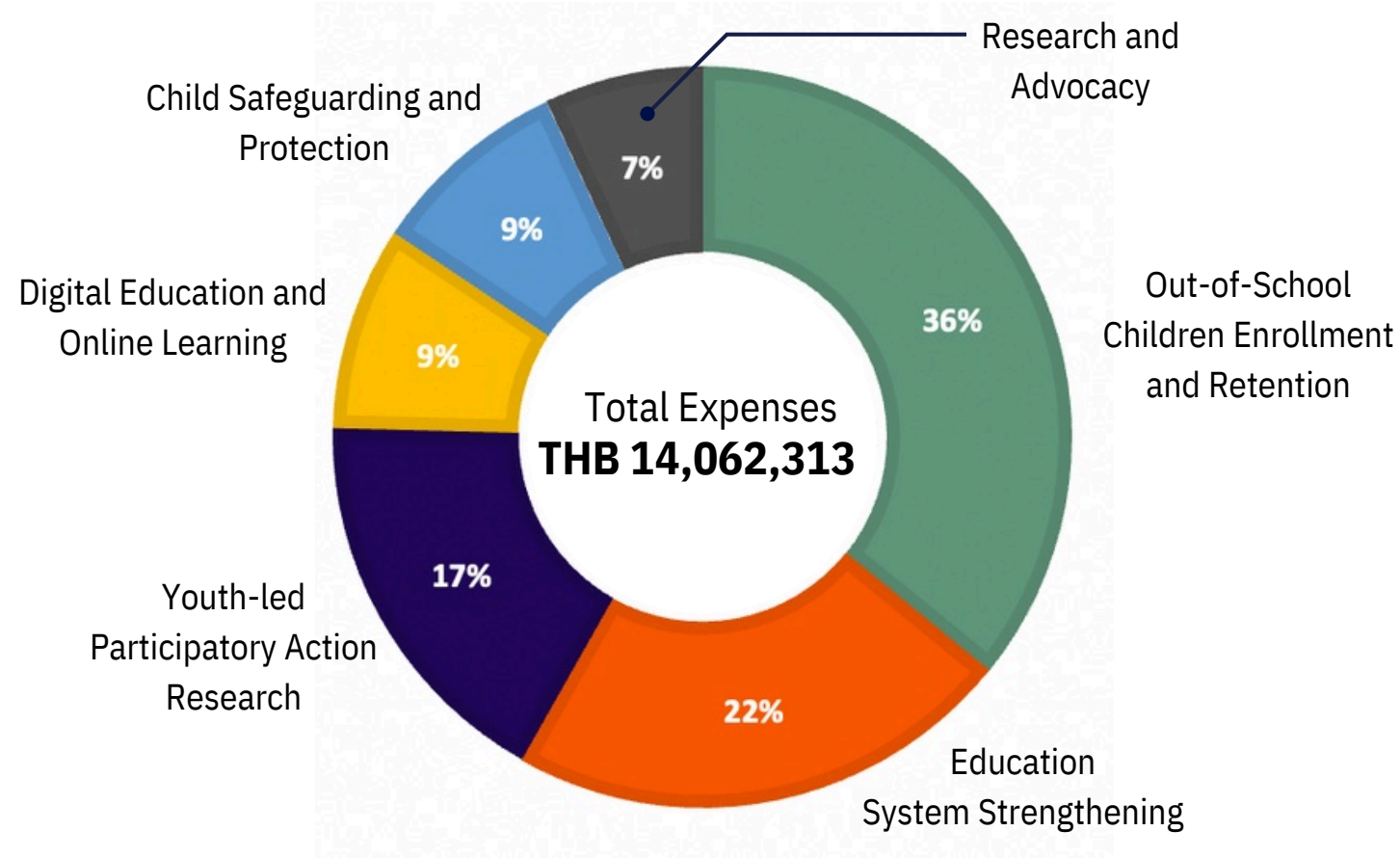
Why we focus on participatory research

InEd's adoption of Participatory Action Research (PAR) is grounded in the belief that research should be a collaborative and empowering process, particularly when it involves the socio-economic development of migrant and displaced children on the Thai-Myanmar border. At its core, PAR is characterized by its broad inclusiveness, akin to a "big tent" philosophy, which welcomes a diversity of methodologies and approaches within its fold. This flexibility is instrumental in enabling InEd to tailor its research methods to fit the complex realities and needs of border communities.

By emphasizing the active participation of those affected by educational challenges, PAR fosters a shared process of knowledge creation. To be sure, this makes our research process take longer and feel more 'messy' at the start. We begin research with an appreciative inquiry process that draws on the existing knowledge and strengths of communities to inform research design. That often entails weeks of exploratory meetings and consensus-building before final research questions are developed. However, we've seen that when research is led by participants, knowledge production becomes deeply reflective of their lived realities and much more likely to lead to actionable findings.

This also means that our research is a contextually-anchored endeavor which actively resists the application of externally derived solutions and the extractive tendencies of academic research. Using the iterative action research cycle—planning, acting, observing, and reflecting—our goal is to facilitate a continual learning process that prioritizes responsiveness to the ever-evolving needs of border communities.

expenses in 2023

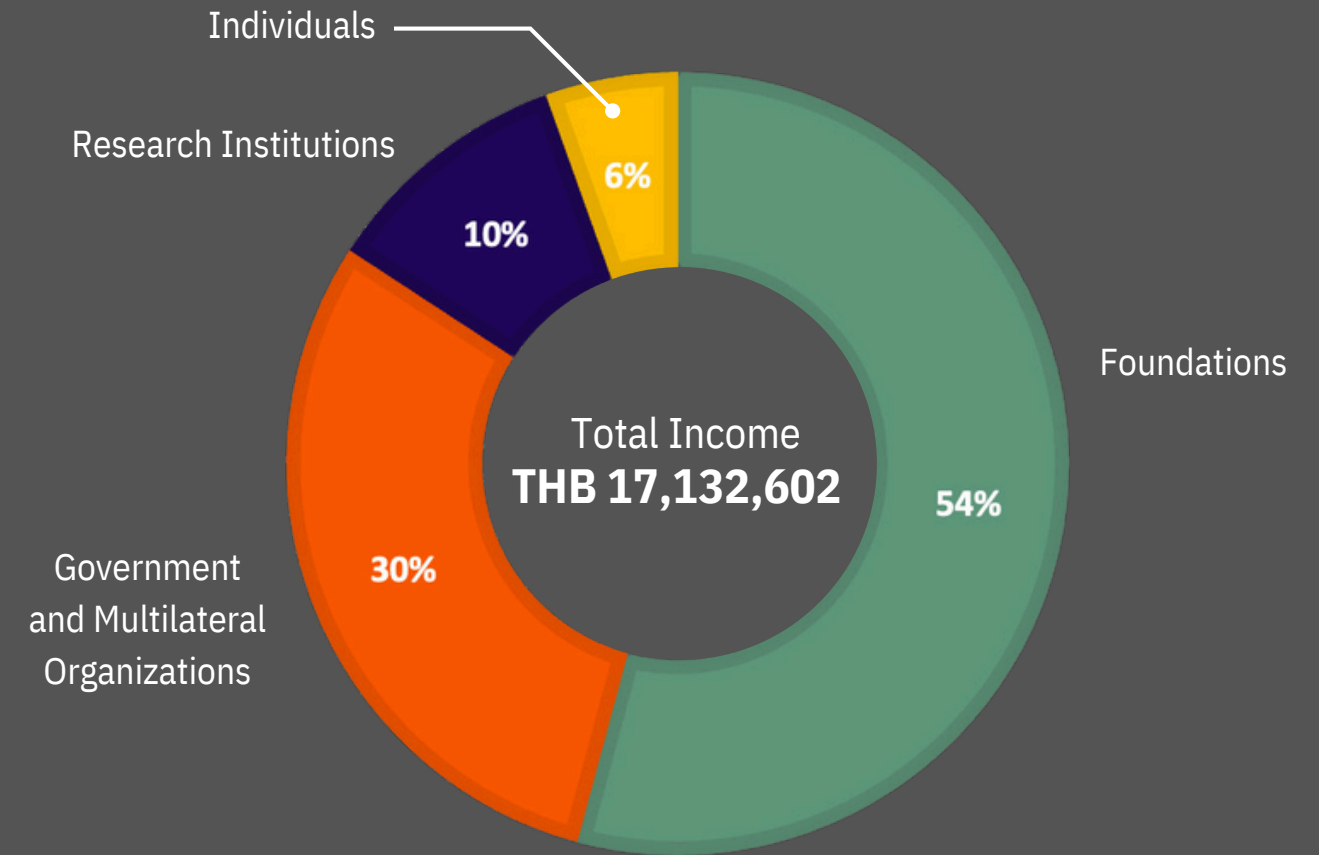


Expenses by Project Area

Out-of-School Children Enrollment & Retention	THB	5,042,529
Education System Strengthening	THB	3,137,858
Youth-led Participatory Action Research	THB	2,423,373
Digital Education and Online Learning	THB	1,257,239
Child Safeguarding and Protection	THB	1,224,863
Research and Advocacy	THB	976,451

Funds committed in FY2024 **THB 3,070,290**

income



Source of Funds

Foundations	THB	9,280,497
Government and Multilateral Organizations	THB	5,145,736
Research Institutions	THB	1,772,290
Individuals	THB	934,079

our partners

Collaborating with and learning from other organizations is essential to our work. While we wish we could mention every single partner that stands with us to bridge the education gap for border communities in Thailand, there just isn't enough space. However, we give a big shout-out to the organizations we're in touch with every day, those we plan programs with, and those who share our dream of making education for all possible. We're thankful for their continued dedication, and together, we believe we can make a difference.



Migrant Education Coordination Center (MECC)

University Partnerships



Mahidol University





The Inclusive Education Foundation
11 Soi Ruamrang, Samaksapphakarn Road
Mae Sot, Tak 63110
inedfoundation.org

  info@inedfoundation.org