THAILAND

Suntaree Rangkusone,
Executive Director

Thailand’s economy has not kept pace with its fast-growing neighbors and makes the country the slowest-growing economy in Southeast Asia. This year Thailand experienced floods and the worst drought in 20 years. Spending is weak, investment is low, trade and tourism are shrinking, and there are concerns over high levels of household and small business debt.

These stark financial conditions had a negative impact on the life of Thai people, especially the poor families of children in our program areas. The support from child sponsors through Pearl S. Buck International has made a life changing difference to the children in need and their families who we serve.

In 2017 we provided educational assistance (school fees, lunch fees, transportation fares, uniforms, sport suits, bags, shoes, notebooks, and stationery) to 358 sponsored children while 260 non-sponsored children in our program areas were provided with school supplies. The sponsorship and donations allowed the children to stay in school and lightened the families’ financial burdens—enabling them to buy food and other life necessities. Home visits, educational consultation, family counseling, and healthcare advice also was provided to sponsored children and families.

This year we continued to provide health services (counseling, healthcare, and nutrition advice) for HIV/AIDS-affected children and their families from the Karen Hill Tribe, the Hmong Hill Tribe, Ubon Ratchathani, Mae Ramard, and Phitsanulok. In total, 437 individuals were served.

Physical development education, dental care, and health checkups were provided for 71 Karen Hill Tribe children and 30 mothers. Health checkups, nutrition evaluation, and promotion of children’s development was conducted for 115 Hmong Hill Tribe children.

Exercise is a key to good physical and psycho-social health. This year we provided sports suits for 100 sponsored children in Ubon Ratchathani. Sports competitions were organized for Karen Hill Tribe sponsored children, parents, family members, and others while sports equipment was provided to two schools and sponsored children from the Hmong Hill Tribe.

Psycho-social programs were offered to 1,052 people including 257 sponsored children, 545 other children/family members, and 250 others in need. A life skills experience camp to promote psycho-social development was organized for 50 HIV-affected children in Ubon Ratchathani.

Finally, educational cash gifts provided by generous sponsors enabled two very poor sponsored children to graduate and move on to a higher level in their vocational education that ultimately will enable them to get jobs to support themselves and their poor unhealthy mothers.

Our deepest thanks are sent to all Pearl S. Buck International child sponsors and donors who have impacted so many lives in her Thailand. May the good you do for so many children touch your lives in countless ways this coming year.
This year in Vietnam natural disasters and the widening economic disparity between the rich and poor have increased the number of people needing social support. Additionally, cumbersome procedures for the government’s social assistance programs made it increasingly difficult for individuals and organizations to receive aid.

Despite these challenges, Pearl S. Buck International Vietnam continues its 30-year mission of supporting disadvantaged children from the community. The Child Sponsorship program provides support for seven orphanages—including one new orphanage which joined the program in September.

Because of child sponsors we were able to continue providing vital nutritional and psychosocial support to the children in our orphanages. Monthly cash gifts and letters from sponsors make the children feel wanted, improve their social abilities, and build a bridge of connection between the two sides of the world. In 2017, there were 269 sponsored children and 323 other beneficiaries who received nutrition support and support in special events.

Based on the model of H.E.L.P. (Health, Education, Livelihood and Psychosocial Development) we completed many important projects this year:

- We conducted a training course on rehabilitation education for 72 staff members of the Hanoi Nursing Center for Elderly and Disabled Children.
- We provided support for 11 children to transition from orphanage life to a job and independent life.
- We provided chickens and animal feed for 183 children living in two orphanages.
- We held a sex education training course for over 250 children from 6 orphanages after which the children attended a full day excursion at the Vietnam National Village for Ethnic Culture and Tourism to reinforce their knowledge through fun games and activities.
- The Hanoi Birla Orphanage celebrated its 30th anniversary with a special event supported by a child sponsor which included the gift of 78 new sandals for the children.
- We held a training course on life skills for the HIV-affected children in one of our orphanages.
- We held special celebrations for Lunar New Year, International Children’s Day, Summer Vacation, and the Mid-Autumn Festival to bring joy and a sense of community to our children.

2017 was a year of success for Pearl S. Buck International Vietnam, thanks to support from sponsors, donors and staff. Thank you for what you have brought to our disadvantaged children living in the orphanages in Vietnam. Happy New Year of the Dog! Chúc Mừng Năm Mới!
Wishing a love-filled New Year to you from the staff, Board of Trustees, sponsored families, and partners of the Pearl S. Buck Foundation-Philippines!

2017 was a year of growth for our foundation. We expanded collaborations with the private sector, public sector, and institutions while increasing our number of in-country sponsors.

A highlight of the year was the Cultural Tour to the Philippines. The tour group included child sponsors and Pearl S. Buck International Board members and staff. The children and families we served enjoyed meeting everyone, and the trip attracted the attention of the national media in the Philippines.

This year we continued our regular efforts of providing school tuition and supplies to our sponsored children in addition to an array of programs to support the psychosocial development of the children. In addition, we were able to launch new projects with great results:

- 100% of our sponsored children advanced to the next grade level and 35% of them achieved honor and outstanding standing.

- A water tank and a deep well was installed to provide water for the 1,000 elementary students of Managvaca Elementary School in Olongapo, thanks to the generous support of Pearl S. Buck International’s Board Chairman Fredrick Schea and his wife, Taffy.

- Our tutorial programs benefited 250 sponsored children. These programs were conducted in partnership with colleges, public schools, and other institutions including Muzon Pabahay Elementary School, Muzon Harmony Hills High School, Gordon College, Eastern Visayas University, and RE Cares (the Corporate Social Responsibility arm of Reed Elsevier).

- Thanks to an endowment from Major Brickner, three of our Robert Brickner College Scholars graduated and are now employed in their respective fields.

- Harvests from the Backyard Gardening Project, which launched in 2015, provided nutrition for sponsored children’s families and supplemental income from sales at market.

In the final quarter of 2017, two of our staff and three of our board members participated in the Global Conference at Pearl S. Buck International in Pennsylvania.

In December a new set of Board officers and members were elected in the Philippines. Two board members returned after more than three years off the Board.

We are grateful to all the generous sponsors, donors, and partners (both local and international) who have been involved in our noble vision and mission for children in need. Thank you and best wishes for a happy, healthy 2018.
In 2017 the Pearl S. Buck Foundation Korea continued to assist multicultural families, largely made up of disadvantaged immigrant migrant women and their children, to help them transition into Korean culture and society and enhance the lives of the children through health, education, livelihood and psychosocial support. The number of multicultural family members in Korea has exceeded 8.2 million people, as Korean society rapidly changes into a multicultural society.

Health services provided to children this year included emergency medical care and support to children with rare incurable diseases, while livelihood programs included donations of food, winter coats, school uniforms, and personal care supplies. Education programs included our ongoing after-school program, bilingual classes, history lessons about Korea, performance classes, and technology classes such as Internet, cell training and robotics. Psychosocial programs included a variety of events and activities for the children, most notably a multicultural family camp, walkathon and a family empowerment program called, “My Story”.

An especially moving event this year was the reunion of former professional football player, Hines Ward, with sponsored children (now adults) who participated in our Pearl S. Buck International Fatherland Tour to the U.S years ago. CNN International taped the reunion which documented the life-changing impact of the program. The show aired for several days in December, giving our program and Pearl Buck’s legacy international visibility.

In mid-December, we held our 5th Thanksgiving and Fundraising Night. At the event, over 200 attendees from companies and multicultural families enjoyed multicultural performances. A delicious dinner was enjoyed by all, thanks to generous corporate sponsorship. More and more, the reputation of our foundation has expanded in Korea, as we engage with the local community and support such initiatives such as the “Pearl S. Buck Annual Festival” in Bucheon City.

We are excited about the Winter Olympics being in Korea this year, which provides another opportunity for people to learn about Korea and how it is changing. We remain grateful to be able to continue the legacy of such an amazing woman here in Korea. We thank you for your strong support making the dreams of children come true in Korea and wish you a happy and healthy new year.
It was an exciting year of amazing accomplishments in Zhenjiang, Jiangsu, Province, the city where Pearl Buck lived 18 years of her life. During the year, great effort went into finishing the new Pearl S. Buck Cultural Park.

In September, everything was completed and a large grand ceremony was held introducing the park. Inside the four-acre park, there are gardens and the Pearl S. Buck Square with sculptures and monuments memorializing Pearl S. Buck. In addition, three brand new buildings stand, including a two-story Pearl S. Buck Memorial Museum, the Pearl S. Buck Bookstore and offices for the Pearl S. Buck Research Center.

A delegation of 24 people from Pearl S. Buck International attended the grand opening ceremony. At the same time, in coordination with Jiangsu University, a Pearl S. Buck Symposium was held, providing scholars and researchers around the world with the opportunity to evaluate and discuss the work of Pearl S. Buck. Needless to say, Pearl S. Buck continues to be revered and remembered in our beloved city.

At the same time, we are happy that the Chongshi Girls’ School continues to work with Pearl S. Buck International ensuring that students from low-income families attend high school. With the support of generous sponsors, 55 students were served this past year, and 91% of the girls who graduated were admitted to universities.

The Chongshi Girls’ School aims to cultivate excellent women, like Pearl S. Buck. In this respect, the city, school and Pearl S. Buck International all share similar goals, continuing the legacy of Pearl S. Buck by helping students rise above disadvantages and finish their high school education.

As we prepare to celebrate the Lunar New Year, we send our best wishes to all child sponsors and donors and invite you to visit our city sometime soon.
In 2017 the Pearl S. Buck Foundation Taipei-Taiwan continued to provide vital economic and psychosocial support services to financially vulnerable immigrant children and their families while offering some new and innovative programs.

On September 17 we held our first Southeast Asian Picnic Activity for the public featuring Southeast Asian-themed recreational activities, games, performances, and food. The goal of this event was to recruit sponsors and to promote intercultural communication and understanding. Total attendance for the picnic was 710, including 287 from families supported by the Foundation and 81 volunteers.

As part of our New Immigrant Empowerment Services, we continued our Financial Empowerment Project, first launched in 2013. By end of year 2017 this financial management course, administered in cooperation with 43 organizations (including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and community civic groups), was completed by 911 individuals. Plans for the future include broadening these services to include parent-child financial management and training social workers to share financial knowledge and skills with financially vulnerable families.

Another important service offered to new immigrants is the Training Community Translators program, first launched in 2002. This program, staffed by volunteers with foreign language proficiency and cultural training, helps new immigrants bridge the gap between their original culture/language and their new one. Additionally, it trains community translators in languages such as Vietnamese, Indonesian, Thai, English, and more. It has provided more than 500 hours of training in translation to 200 translators, who have provided services to more than 370,000 people.

Since 2015 the foundation has provided interpreters for young children from new immigrant families as part of its School Interpreter Services. This service provides assistance for children, generally from single parent families of mixed nationality with financial challenges. These children have spent their early years being raised by a grandparent in Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, or another country then returned to Taiwan for their education.

It is no small challenge for a child from a disadvantaged background to adjust and succeed in a new country with a different culture and language. Because of this, we continue to raise funds to provide and increase the reach of ongoing vital programs. We see immigrant children in a positive light as the important power who will push Taiwan forward in the future!

We were happy to attend the Global Conference in the fall of 2017, held at Pearl S. Buck International, which brought all Pearl S. Buck programs throughout Asia together to share best practices and learn from each other. By working together in 2018, we will continue the quality services started by our founder Pearl S. Buck, helping children and families who face obstacles because of discrimination and the circumstances of their birth.