



Relentlessly.  
Resiliently.  
Staying the course.

**“As  
Long  
As It  
Takes.”**

## Letter from the CEO

In a world that moves so quickly, where answers are instant and attention is constantly pulled in a thousand directions, choosing to commit to a vision that reaches beyond our own lifetime can feel countercultural. *When results are not immediate*, it is natural to wonder whether the effort is worth it. This question sits quietly beneath much of our work.

Those we help endure each day beyond the world's attention. Their daily struggles rarely make headlines, yet it is the reality they wake up to again and again.

The most difficult part of what we do is *not* the distance we travel, or the risks involved in reaching communities affected by conflict. It is *not* the cultural complexity of showing up with care and humility. **The hardest part** is standing with people in the long aftermath of war, seeing how deeply it marks families and generations, and choosing every time not to turn away.

After fifteen years of conflict, **Syria** bears deep scars, with **renewed violence** earlier this year once again forcing families from their homes.

In **Myanmar**, where conflict has stretched on for 78 years, many people have never known what peace looks like. Year after year, our teams meet families as they flee, offering

food, shelter, blankets, and medicine. And time and again, we return, when violence rises once more and **displacement begins again**.

It is understandable that I am often asked how long we plan to keep doing this work. My answer is always the same.

As long as it takes.

History teaches us that what lasts is rarely built in haste. **The great structures of our world stand because people committed themselves to a future beyond their own lifetime**, trusting their faithfulness would carry forward. This is the directive that guides our work.

As you read the stories in this magazine, my hope is that you will catch a glimpse of the future we are holding onto for children growing up in war zones, and that your own resolve will be gently renewed.

Some of you have walked this journey with us for many years. Others have joined more recently. Each of you is essential. Each of you is helping to build something that will endure.

**Thank you** for your faithfulness, your generosity, and your willingness to keep showing up.


**Because of you**, families are finding hope today, and **children may yet grow up knowing peace in the years to come**. We are committed to this work for the long road ahead, as long as it takes. We hope you will continue to walk that road with us.

As long as it takes,



Brad Hazlett

Photos: (Cover) A young girl displaced by escalating violence in NE Syria finds shelter in a school, January 2026. (Right) Delivering food and hygiene supplies to a migrant community near Mae Sot, Thailand, February 2026.



“I am often asked how long we plan to keep doing this work. My answer is always the same. **As long as it takes.**”





## How Long?

**When showing up also means staying and asking, *what do you need?***

Written by Hlaing & Karah Brink

**A**s you may have read in the introduction to this magazine, we're often asked by people how long we plan to do this work.

*Our answer?*

**As long as it takes** for kids to know safety and thriving.

As long as it takes for them to know a world where bombs no longer drop on their homes and their rights are no longer taken away because of who they are and where they come from.

*One example of this?* Our journey alongside our Rohingya friends.

When there is a crisis, we show up to help right away. But we don't just leave when the emergency is over. We stay and deepen friendships within the community. We listen and respond, **co-creating solutions** to what the community defines are the most pressing issues.

**In 2012**, the Rohingya in Rakhine State, Myanmar faced horrific ethnic attacks. The crisis was urgent, the heartbreak that happened in those days still keeps us up at night. **Thousands fled to Bangladesh. Our team went with them.** We started mobile clinics in response to a diarrhea outbreak, followed by emergency relief efforts.

This was only the beginning. We stayed and asked, ***"What do you need most?"***

Photo: A young woman walks home after receiving a monthly rice distribution near Sittwe, Myanmar.

## 2015

We met with families in Bangladesh. They told us they needed doctors and medicine. We began the Rohingya Health program.



## 2022

A teacher told us that young girls wanted to be able to learn, too. Because of her idea, we opened a school for women and girls in Bangladesh.

## 2017

Widespread attacks against the Rohingya people erupted in Myanmar, in what is now categorized as a genocide. Even more families fled to Bangladesh, so we worked harder to provide more healthcare and rapid relief. Our hearts broke with our friends.

## 2018

Rohingya children are not allowed to attend school in Bangladesh and education in Cox's Bazar refugee camp is hard to find. At the request of the community, we started supporting Rohingya teachers and schools, so little ones wouldn't miss out on years of education.

## 2023

In Sittwe, we established a Women's Health Center to address women's healthcare needs when gaps in pregnancy care were flagged. Our local staff member supports women through their pregnancies and as they care for their health and family.



We rely on the wisdom and insight of our Rohingya friends to shift and respond to the ever-changing needs. We don't have the answers, but they do. We rely on this **love-in-action community** that sees and stays, so we can keep walking towards the vision of free, full lives for Rohingya children.

Today, the Rohingya crisis has reached a critical stage, with conditions continuing to deteriorate in Rakhine State, Myanmar due to armed conflict, displacement, movement restrictions, and the collapse of livelihoods. Families in Sittwe and surrounding areas face **severe food shortages** as fishing bans, road closures, and conflict disrupt access to food and work.

Abdur Rahaman, 48, from a remote fishing village in Sittwe, lost his livelihood after fishing was banned. In the past month, his family went to bed hungry ten times. **"Our children were crying and asking for food,"** he said. **"We told them we could not prepare rice and asked them to be patient until morning."**

When possible, the family borrows rice from neighbors or stretches small portions by cooking rice with extra water so everyone can eat. His words remind us - this is why our work matters for this community. Abdur's family is one of thousands who are facing the same hardship.

Because emergency relief remains the most urgent need in Sittwe, we are prioritizing scaling up emergency food assistance in Sittwe by increasing **rice distributions** to the most vulnerable households. This is not a static emergency—**it is a deepening crisis** that requires constant adaptation and sustained commitment. Things this community does best.

In our 14 years of supporting our Rohingya friends who are bold in their care for each other, fueling hope has taken many forms. But one thing remains constant.

**We will stay,**  
**as long as it takes.**



# Relentless

Women and girls are **risking everything** to pursue an education.

Written by Rebecca



**H**ow do you hope when you see no path forward? **How do you study when studying is outlawed?** How do you learn when learning is a crime? And who will teach, if no one has been educated? Who will fill the gap?

Ten young women sit at old wooden desks, bundled in winter coats, eager faces framed by strands of beautiful dark hair escaping their loosely wrapped head coverings.

Two days earlier, a blizzard had prevented them from reaching the learning center. But now they are ready to tentatively rekindle the hope that was tucked away for the last four years.

Even though they are eager to

learn, their excitement is mixed with apprehension. **They have not sat in a classroom for four years since the Taliban took over the country.** They are afraid they have forgotten everything that they had learned before they were forced out of school in 6th grade. And there is so much they never had the opportunity to learn. So many doors closed in their faces.

Who will give them the key to open those doors and slowly push against them, allowing in that glimmer of hope that can slowly grow?

Through teaching in varying circumstances, I have come to realize that often half the effort of learning is believing that you can learn, believing that it is worth the

Photo: These young women are back in the classroom at the new Partners-supported learning center in Afghanistan, pursuing an education currently denied to so many.



“...girls have been told...there is no reason to learn... we believe that they can and should study.”

effort. Students need someone who believes in them and believes that they are worth it, that there is a reason to learn. For the last four years, these girls have been told by the leaders of their country that they are not worth it, that there is no reason to learn, and that they have no future.

Now it is our turn to tell them, even when the headlines fade, they are not forgotten. We see them, we believe that they are bright, and we believe that they can and should study.

**At the end of 2025**, we launched a girls' education program in partnership with local friends in Afghanistan. We've been asking them the question for months, nearly

years, how can we help girls access education? How do we answer the call of the hundreds of girls our team has met who have justly claimed that education is their right? Online and international programs rose to the surface as potential solutions, and a partnership was born.

With the opening of a new learning center, **over 150 girls and around 30 boys now have access to English classes, with computer courses soon to follow. We are also trialing a GED education pilot** with 10 young women—a program that has already opened the path for dozens of students from Myanmar to attend university, now scaled to meet the needs of young women facing oppression in Afghanistan.

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Our local partners' relationships with community leaders and their knowledge of the security situation enable them to operate under the flexibility of a local leader willing to allow the most basic education for girls. With wisdom and care, they keep one ear to the ground for any shifts.

Much remains unknown. We're creating the path as we go, a constant reality of working in conflict zones.

With your help, we are determined to find a path forward for these brave young women, ***however long it takes.***

**Their determination fuels ours.**

A child peeks from the doorway of a mountainside cave where their family lives. Afghanistan, February 2025.



## Still Here

How one team member is *staying the course* with no end to the work in sight.

Interview with Thaw Shee Wah, Written by Dave Ellem.

***“Recently I saw the photo and heard the news from one of our project areas of a child that died from a bombing....Her head is blown....”***

The air feels heavy as Thaw Shee Wah pauses for a moment, tears welling around her eyes.

***“I know the people from one of our Village Health Worker areas. Some of them lost their family members from the jet strikes.”***

It’s a deep and ever present pain that all of our staff working along the Thai-Myanmar border share. A few days earlier, while visiting Partners projects in the area, another of our Karen team members shared this same news about a baby that had died in an airstrike. ***“We hear the bombings from our office nearly every day.”*** In an area where attacks like this are happening daily, it’s

striking to me that this news isn’t so normalized that it rolls off them like water on a duck’s back. Where one would expect hearts to be hardened by such a common tragedy, the reality is they have not grown cold and indifferent. They feel every loss like it is one of their own.

As I asked what her assessment of the situation in Myanmar is right now, she answered simply, ***“Overall, it’s very bad.”***

With gentleness and heart, Thaw Shee Wah has been leading our health projects in Karen State, Myanmar for 6 years. It’s no walk in the park doing so in a nation ranked second globally for conflict intensity and the fourth most dangerous country for civilians, with more than half of the population exposed to conflict. With a deadly combination of daily airstrikes and limited access to



healthcare in rural areas, the clinics and health workers she oversees have become a vital lifeline for many families facing illness and injury.

For Thaw Shee Wah though, it's more than just simply providing health assistance. *"Our job is not only providing material things, but also to provide education. And the most important thing is we also give them hope and show them we care.*

*When we reach out to families, we visit them, we listen to their stories. So even though we cannot give as much as they want—they need—we can give hope and love."*

Having grown up in a larger town in Karen State, Thaw Shee Wah is deeply connected to the suffering experienced by so many in both her community and in the more isolated, mountainous regions beyond. After studying to become a nurse, an opportunity arose to gain further experience working in a refugee camp on the Thai side of the border. It's here that she met her husband who is also a nurse and their three children were born.

Unlike many, **Thaw Shee Wah had a pathway out of a life defined by conflict**; an education, children born in Thailand and therefore able to attend Thai schools and the opportunity to go abroad.

***Yet, she is still here.***

For over a decade, on the front lines of rural healthcare in communities grappling with the heavy toll that decades of conflict bring, and the daily terrors it continues to unleash on the innocent.

Which begs the question, how has she maintained the hope required to keep going, day-after-day, against a seemingly relentless tide of oppression?

***"The main thing that keeps me working is faith and trust in God. Because when we see our surroundings—the world's situation—even though we cannot fix all the things, God helps us and as an organization we can help people better than I can as an individual."***

Photos: (Above) Village Health Workers and the Partners health team. (Right) Thaw Shee Wah leading a Village Health Worker training in Karen State, Myanmar.

It's a resiliency that we see time and time again in our local staff and the communities we walk alongside in Myanmar who face compounding challenges with little hope in sight for an end to their suffering.

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*“Sometimes I feel tired, depressed, also hopeless. Sometimes I feel that our help is not much or that communities don't get what they need. But something's better than nothing, right? So even if I can help a little and I can see their face, reach them, be with them, talk with them, that means a lot to them.”*

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In a world where we have almost unknowingly surrendered grit and long-suffering for instant gratification, the tenacity of humanitarians like Thaw Shee Wah is, honestly, confronting. Yet more so deeply inspiring. **So often it's in humility and quietness that we find the greatest strength and perseverance.**



# 15 Years

From uprooted childhoods to the hope of belonging.

Written by Scott Brindle

## It feels like *déjà vu*.

This time last year, tens of thousands of people were fleeing during the rapid takeover by Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), which ultimately formed Syria's new government. It marked the beginning of what many called a "new Syria", as Bashar al-Assad and his regime were finally toppled. For some it was a new life, an end to decades of a ruthless dictatorship.

**But even in the midst of celebration, another displacement was unfolding.** Ethnic minorities, the majority of them Kurdish, were being forced into Northeast Syria, which was under the control of the Kurdish Autonomous Administration. The same tactics once used to dismantle the regime were now being turned against the Kurds.

For nearly fifteen years, **Syria has endured war, division, terrorism, shifting governments, and the forced displacement of its people.** No matter where you look, children and families are trapped in the crossfire, confronted with impossible choices, to flee, to stay, or to leave their country behind.

Sixteen years ago, children witnessed the first sparks of the Arab Spring. A year later, they watched civil war unfold before their eyes, clinging to education and the promise of safety their parents offered through every hug and whispered reassurance, **"Everything is going to be okay."** Today, those same children are adults, now forced to repeat those very words to their own children, even as they face their third, fourth, or fifth displacement.

**"How long can this go on?"** we ask ourselves, watching reality unfold through screens that project suffering into our minds. We tend to look away from the hardship, but the reality is children in Syria



Responding to displaced families in Northeast Syria, January 2026.





are looking at it face on. The conversations no parent ever wants to have with their child are the ones being had: ***‘Danger is here, we have to leave. Grab your coat and your shoes.’***

With a new government now in place and the integration of Syrian Kurds into the political framework, there is cautious hope that families and communities may once again return to their homes and reunite. Yet this moment is fragile. Trust is

***“We had to leave, we can’t live with the extremists. People have been killed and beheaded for being Kurdish.”***



We visit classrooms that have been converted into makeshift homes. Cold marble floors. Damp breeze block walls. Single pane windows and a door that won’t quite shut, breathing with the winter wind as it moves through the corridor like the ghost of what this building once was, a place of learning.

deeply fractured, and rebuilding it may be the greatest challenge of all.

Families and children most recently displaced by the Syrian government’s offensive to retake Kurdish territory in Northeast Syria have fled their homes in Raqqa, Tabqa, and Hasakah, driven out by conflict and fears of extremist groups targeting Kurds.

Even in that cold room, children adapt. They accept what is given. They make do with less, sometimes with nothing. Resilience becomes instinct.

***“We had to leave, we can’t live with the extremists. People have been killed and beheaded for being Kurdish.”***

Children living in Northeast Syria are not sheltered from the realities of conflict. Their schools have closed and turned into shelters. Churches and mosques have become distribution points for donated clothes, medicine, and food.

Within Hasakah itself, the Serekaniye Internally Displaced Persons camp has become divided. Half the camp is Arab, the other Kurdish, communities displaced together, sharing trauma and hardship, now face tensions of their own.

***“We need to return home. This is the most important thing for us. We are tired of being displaced. We were first displaced in 2019, and now in 2026 we have been displaced again, for the fifth time, to Dirbasiyah. I hope my next displacement is my last, and that it will be back to my hometown.”***

***“We left Serekaniye camp because the Arabs who lived amongst us and in the surrounding villages threatened us, they said once the Syrian Democratic Forces leave, we will kill you and rape your girls. We had to flee to protect our little girls.”***



For years, **Partners Relief & Development** has worked in Serekaniye camp providing **food, water, sanitation, and shelter**. We have sat in tents listening to stories of shared suffering and neighborly solidarity. But today, many Kurdish families who fled again speak not only of loss, but of heartbreak. They are fearful that one day they may be forced to return to the camp and live beside those who recently threatened their lives.

But fear is not the only threat. Schools turned into **shelters are breeding disease** due to a lack of sanitation and water. **Freezing temperatures** have increased the risk of colds, flu, and in some cases, hypothermia. In response, **community members have come together**, offering spare mattresses, blankets and when possible, heaters. In some schools, **local volunteers cook** two meals a day, sustaining families until humanitarian aid arrives.

And still, children cling fiercely to their childhood. Some are painfully aware of their reality, others numbed by years of instability. Yet their desire to simply be children remains unbroken.

***“Thank you for the food, but when are you going to deliver us toys. We need toys to play.”***

Amid all the chaos, what continues to strike me most is the quiet strength of people who have endured the unimaginable and yet keep moving forward. Beneath the exhaustion, there is a cautious optimism beginning to surface. Integration has started, and for many Syrians, this moment holds the possibility of a united Syria, like the one that existed before the war.

Syria's children have grown up on the move, between territories, shelters, and moments of borrowed safety.

Yet their resilience continues to outpace the violence that shaped them. This moment, uncertain and delicate, offers more than an end to displacement. It offers the possibility of return, of repair and of trust slowly rebuilt. Whether that hope takes root will depend on what comes next, on protection, accountability and the collective will to ensure that no child has to inherit a war they did not choose.

**For Syria to truly  
heal, its children  
must finally be  
allowed to stand still.**



Children leaving a relief distribution in Northeast Syria, February 2026.



**Are you in this with us**

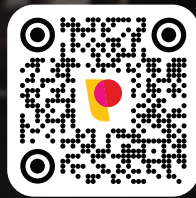
**as long as it takes?**

For **every child** now sleeping near the warmth of a heater. Every daughter who can continue education despite political opposition. **Every baby** who gets a fair start in life through infant nutrition. All the weary **parents** who have hope reignited.

This is the future we're holding on to for kids growing up in some of the darkest places in the world.

**But we can't do it without you.**

**Please make a donation today using the enclosed envelope or QR code below, and help us ensure these children can live free, full lives.**



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