

# **Learning with the Irrawaddy 4**

## **To accompany July 2005 Issue of Irrawaddy Magazine**

### **Teacher's Notes**

Here's the fourth issue of 'Learning with the Irrawaddy', a monthly educational supplement to the Irrawaddy Magazine. It is designed for reading, English or social studies classes in Post-10 schools on the Burma border.

With each issue of Irrawaddy magazine, we select one article and design some learning activities for it. We recommend that you use these exercises with students who have an Intermediate level of English. You don't need to use all activities suggested here – choose those that are most appropriate for your students.

In this issue we have included:

- this teacher's guide
- some copies of Irrawaddy magazine
- a class set of photocopies of the article
- a class set of worksheets.

Selected article: *Where It's Needed Most*, page 26

## Activities to do Before Reading

### Activity 1

**What do you know?**

**What do you think you know?**

**What do you want to know?**

- a) Tell students they are going to read an article about Dr Cynthia Maung, who runs a medical clinic for people from Burma, in Mae Sot. Copy the chart onto the board, and get a few students' ideas.
- *Things they know* are facts that they are quite sure about, (e.g. Dr Cynthia is a woman.)
  - *Things they think they know* are things they are unsure of.
  - *Things they want to know* are things they are interested in finding out.

Dr Cynthia Maung		
Things I know	Things I think I know	Things I want to know

- b) In groups, or individually, students fill in the chart:  
There are no right or wrong answers in this activity.

### Activity 2

**Prediction: True or False**

- a) Do students think these sentences are true or false? Students guess.
1. Four women from Burma have been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.
  2. Dr Cynthia's clinic started with 70 medical staff.
  3. Malaria is the biggest health problem in Mae Sot.
  4. Dr Cynthia's clinic is going to relocate to a refugee camp.
  5. Most clinic staff have documents to live and work in Thailand.
  6. There are no international health NGOs along the border areas of Burma.
  7. People in border villages often go to clinics.

- b) Students read the article, and check whether they are right or wrong. If the sentence is false, students write the correct information.

**Answers.**

1. *True*
2. *False – the clinic started with six staff.*
3. *True*
4. *False – they want to work with IDPs and migrant workers.*
5. *False – they don't have documentation. This makes their work more risky.*
6. *True*
7. *False – they only seek medical attention when they are really sick.*

## Activities to do During Reading

### Activity 3

#### Words from context

Here are some excerpts from the article. Students locate the phrase in the text, and choose the best synonym or definition for the underlined words.

1. *We still have a lot to do though, to raise awareness about human rights.*  
(answer 1)

a. knowledge	c. information
b. people	d. media
2. *...many cases from Burma are problematic because of late presentation and the threat of arrest and deportation and also the financial constraints.*  
(answer 2)

a. money	c. accounts
b. difficulties	d. arguments
3. *We have been able to build networks with our people and neighbouring countries like Thailand.* (answer 3)

a. internet	c. connections
b. groups	d. hospitals
4. *We continue to work with migrant workers and internally displaced people who cannot access health and other social services.* (answer 4)

a. see	c. discover
b. pay for	d. get to
5. *The clinic can provide a service but travel is difficult.* (answer 5)

a. use	c. doctor
b. assistance	d. operation
6. *At the same time the people in these areas are often faced with food shortages or forced relocation* (answer 6)

a. lacks	c. costs
b. excess	d. theft

**Answers:**

1. *a*   2. *b*   3. *c*   4. *d*   5. *b*   6. *a*

#### Activity 4

#### Rephrasing

Students choose the sentence or phrase that means the same as the sentence or phrase from the article.

1. *Gradually the service we provide has extended, as has the target area..* (answer 2)
  - a. We have got bigger, and need more money.
  - b. Now we have more programs in more places.
  - c. We now have more staff and bigger offices.
  - d. At the moment, we have many more clinics than before.
2. *It is difficult to monitor progress, especially in IDP areas where we cannot set up TB programs.* (answer 2)
  - a. People in IDP areas have difficulties to get TB treatment.
  - b. TB is becoming a bigger problem in IDP areas because people can't get treatment.
  - c. We have programs in IDP areas, but we have many problems treating TB in these areas.
  - d. We cannot easily get information if our TB treatment is effective in IDP areas, because we don't have programs there.
3. *We have never planned to move to a refugee camp because the program, the service we are providing, is for the most needy people.* (answer 3)
  - a. We are not moving to a camp because we want to work with people who need us the most.
  - b. We want to move to a camp, but people don't need us there.
  - c. We don't need to move to a camp, as our programs are easier to run in Mae Sot.
  - d. We don't want to move to a camp because our programs are not appropriate for refugees.
4. *In remote villages, and along the border area and in ethnic areas, the health service is very poor and there are no international NGOs or government services.* (answer 6)
  - a. Some areas of Burma have more health services than other areas.
  - b. Some parts of Burma don't have access to good health care as there are no NGO or government services.
  - c. Some border villages have NGOs providing health services, and some have government health services.
  - d. In some border areas, people don't have enough money to pay for health care.

**Answers:**

1. *b*   2. *d*   3. *a*   4. *b*

## Activity 5

### Comprehension questions

Students answer these questions. If the answer is not in the text, they write 'don't know'.

1. How many people are nominated for the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize?
2. What types of training programs does the clinic have?
3. Why is TB less problematic in Mae Sot than IDP areas?
4. Why do people from Burma often die from malaria?
5. Does the Thai health system give money to help Dr Cynthia's programs?
6. In what ways do international NGOs co-operate with Dr Cynthia?
7. Why is it difficult to travel to meetings?
8. Do the hospitals in Burma offer good quality services?

#### Answers:

1. *Don't know – the article says 1000 women, but we don't know how many men.*
2. *Initial (pre-service) training for new medics, and ongoing (in-service) training for working medics.*
3. *In Mae Sot an NGO, Medicins Sans Frontiers, already has a TB program.*
4. *Because people don't seek treatment early enough (because they don't have enough money, or because they are afraid of arrest if they travel to the clinic)*
5. *Don't know – the article says the Thai system supports Dr Cynthia's programs, but it does not if this support involves money.*
6. *They work together to train medics to work in the camps.*
7. *Because many staff don't have documents, and they could be arrested and deported.*
8. *Don't know.*

## Activity 6

### Cause and Effect

- a) As a class, brainstorm a list of problems the clinic has. Some can come from the text, but encourage students to think of other problems.
- b) Students match the causes with the effects. (Problems with the consequences)
1. Patients are always moving from place to place.
  2. Patients don't come to the clinic until they are very sick.
  3. Clinic staff don't have official documents.
  4. In Burma, there is a lot of inequality between rich and poor people.
- a. *it is sometimes too late to treat them.*
  - b. *it is difficult to monitor treatment.*
  - c. *they can get arrested and deported.*
  - d. *they can't finish their treatments.*
  - e. *health services are only available to people with money.*
  - f. *there are no health services in border and ethnic areas.*
  - g. *it is hard for them to travel to meetings.*
  - h. *clinic staff cannot make an early diagnosis.*
  - i. *it is difficult for them to travel to other provinces.*

- c) They make sentences using *so* with the matched problems and consequences.

#### Answers:

*Patients are always moving from place to place, so it is difficult to monitor treatment.*

*Patients are always moving from place to place, so they can't finish their treatments.*

*Patients don't come to the clinic until they are very sick, so it is sometimes too late to treat them.*

*Patients don't come to the clinic until they are very sick, so clinic staff cannot make an early diagnosis.*

*Clinic staff don't have official documents, so they can get arrested and deported.*

*Clinic staff don't have official documents, so it is hard for them to travel to meetings.*

*Clinic staff don't have official documents, so it is difficult for them to travel to other provinces.*

*In Burma, there is a lot of inequality between rich and poor people, so health services are only available to people with money.*

*In Burma, there is a lot of inequality between rich and poor people, so there are no health services in border and ethnic areas.*

- d) Students think of each of these four problems, and think of some more consequences. Make class lists on the board.

## Activities to do After Reading

### Activity 7

#### Extra Reading: What is the Nobel Peace Prize, and who is nominated for it?

This is extra background information on the Nobel Peace Prize. You may want to design some reading activities to go with this information.

#### **The Nobel Peace Prize**

The ways and means to achieve peace are as diverse as the individuals and organizations rewarded with the Nobel Peace Prize. Henry Dunant, founder of the Red Cross, shared the first prize in 1901 with Frédéric Passy, leading international pacifist of the time. Aside from humanitarian work and peace movements, the Prize has been awarded to a wide field of work including advocacy of human rights, mediation of international conflicts and arms control and disarmament.

#### **Nomination**

The process of selecting a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize starts in September, about a year before the prize announcement. At this time, the prize-awarder in Oslo, the Norwegian Nobel Committee, composed of five members selected by the *Storting* (Norwegian Parliament) sends out letters to individuals and organizations qualified to nominate candidates.

The nominations reach the Nobel Committee between September and February.

#### **Selection**

During the spring, the proposals are examined by the Norwegian Nobel Committee with the help of specially appointed permanent advisers.

In October, the Norwegian Nobel Committee makes its choice.

#### **Announcement**

The prize winners are contacted and a press conference is held.

#### **Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony and Nobel Lectures**

In December, the prize winners are invited to Oslo where they take part in the festivities and receive their medal, personal diploma, and a monetary award. In return, they give a lecture

## Four Women from Burma Nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

Charm Tong was born in 1981 in southern Shan State, Burma. When she was young, her family moved to the Thai border. After completing the ninth grade in Chiang Mai, she joined the Shan Herald Agency for News as an intern and worked with various human rights organizations. In 1999, with her colleagues in Chiang Mai, she formed the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN). As a member of the Advocacy Team of SWAN, her responsibilities include fact finding, training, campaigning and advocacy on human rights and democracy in Burma.

Naw Zipporah Sein was born in 1955 at Saw Kar Der Village, Kler Lweh Htoo District, Karen State, Burma. She was home educated by her mother before she went to school in the conflict zone in Karen State where she completed her teacher education. For safety reasons, she sought refuge in Thailand in 1995 where she promoted education for Karen women in refugee camps. In 1998, Zipporah moved on to work for the Central Committee of the Karen Women's Organization (KWO) as coordinator and executive secretary.

Paw Lu Lu was born in 1948 in Taungoo, Burma. Although she only completed primary school, she trained as a nurse when she went to live in Karen state. She fled to the Thai border when the repression in Burma worsened and has since been taking care of patients in the Sangklaburi district of Kanchanaburi province. She runs the Baan Plod-Phai (Safe-House) there.

Cynthia Maung (born 1959), a doctor from Karen State in Burma, fled to Thailand in 1988 and set up the Mae Tao Clinic. Every year the clinic saves the lives of thousands of refugees and migrant workers. It supports remote field clinics in Burma serving internally displaced persons and sponsors women's organizations and health education. It trains medics to provide health care throughout the Thai-Burma border. Dr Cynthia has set up an orphanage, and supports schools and boarding houses.



**Activity 8****More questions**

In groups or as a class, students brainstorm a list of questions they would like to ask Dr Cynthia.

**Activity 9****Roleplay an interview**

Students work in pairs. One partner is the interviewer, and the other is Dr Cynthia. Students ask and answer the new questions from Activity 8.

**Activity 10****Write to the Nobel Prize Committee**

Do you think Dr Cynthia, Charm Tong, Naw Zipporah Sien or Naw Paw Lu Lu should win the Nobel Prize? Why? Choose one of these women, and write a letter to the Nobel Prize Committee explaining why you think they should receive the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize.

If students want to send their letters, post it to:

Nobel Prize Committee,  
PO Box 5232,  
SE-102 45,  
Stockholm,  
Sweden