



**A FREE MIND CANNOT BE DESTROYED**



## Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Education

**INFORMATION SHEET**

**DARE Network** is a grassroots community run organisation that provides culturally appropriate drug and alcohol addiction treatment and prevention education to the displaced peoples of Burma on both sides of the Thai-Burma border.

### Background

DARE is the first and remains the only organisation, that comprehensively addresses substance abuse within the refugee, migrant and village populations along the border. Operating since 2000, DARE currently runs centers in 5 camps and 1 migrant village along the border.

DARE reaches 20,000 people a year through its prevention education, treatment and community support programs.

DARE is run by the community, it has treated over 3000 people for addiction with an average 61% non-relapse rate.

### The Situation

Trauma, stress, loss of opportunity and freedom are the root causes of drug and alcohol abuse for the persecuted ethnic minorities of Burma.

The 2012 ceasefire has opened up drug trafficking routes in Karen State that increase the presence of drugs in small villages. Many of these villages have

never before heard of addiction or know that recovery is possible.

Rates of drug use, especially Yaba (methamphetamines) are up to 80% in some villages. Even children eat the readily available pills that are wrapped to look like candy.

Addiction tears communities apart, exacerbating entrenched poverty, illness and a lack of education that systemically ruin a community's ability to develop and grow independently.

### Step Back to Burma

DARE's expansion to rural Karen State begins to tackle these problems.

In early 2015, DARE will work with 20 villages to provide addiction education workshops and train local leaders to conduct addiction prevention education and small treatment programs. Our five year goal is to be present in over 60 villages across Hpa'an, Mutraw and Khler Lwe Thu provinces.

In the early stages our community based model will focus on the careful transfer of knowledge from our highly skilled camp staff to local village leaders.

DARE combats the harmful effects of addiction on the people and the community by ensuring access to treatment. It protects the communities through education and community involvement in support, treatment and prevention programs.

### Our Program

- **Treatment** – 3 month residential or 6 week non-residential, ongoing support groups
- **Prevention Education** – Teens for Kids, Men Working with Men for Happy Families, Home Visits
- **Training** – We train local people to become addiction workers and master trainers, to strengthen community resilience.



*Client receives Acudetox treatment*

Our treatment is non-medical and culturally appropriate. Similar to the prevention education programs, treatment is community focused. Neither prevention, nor recovery, ends when someone leaves DARE treatment or an education session. We work with community members and leaders, families, other community based organisations and ethnic leadership to provide the best ongoing community driven support to prevent and treat substance addiction.

# On the Ground

## Impact and Results

DARE Network is passionate. It ensures adequate treatment and prevention services to the ethnic minorities of Burma. Each year we look for new ways to expand our programs and analyse the current environment. Whilst the big issue, namely supply of drugs and alcohol is out of our hands, we do the best we can with the resources available to us to assist those affected by the trade.

This a snapshot of the annual results:

- **300 clients** treated in the residential and non-residential programs
- **61% non-relapse rate.** This is significantly higher than many western treatment programs, and a consistent yearly figure
- **269 prevention education sessions** reached over **18,000 people**
- **1,700 participants** in our DARE for All community programs
- **62 camp based staff, 98% local staff from Burma**
- **297 volunteers** for our DARE for All programs
- **24,000 people visited and given support** through our home visiting program



### TEENS FOR KIDS – ULTIMATE FRISBEE (ABOVE)

DARE runs a Teens for Kids program, where youth run their own Ultimate Frisbee competition alongside prevention education.

The youth involved learn new skills, gender equality and conflict resolution.

To prevent drug and alcohol abuse, the program develops healthy social skills and increases self-esteem.

## Client Story

### Long Term Recovery Client

"I started to use drugs & alcohol when I was a teenager. When I followed my friends somewhere, they would force me to use it; if you did what we said, you could follow us and enjoy with us. I spent my time using with my friends every time I was with them.

"I started to become addicted step by step until without drugs & alcohol I couldn't do anything. Therefore I became under the control of drugs & alcohol.

"During my addiction, local authorities came and encouraged me to stop using. Moreover they let me know about the DARE treatment program for my recovery. After that I agreed



with them and went to the DARE treatment center.

"I felt happy while I was in the treatment center. The addiction workers showed good support to us. They gave us good knowledge and activities during the treatment period. I was satisfied with the addiction workers, who didn't ignore me and had a good relationship with me. Therefore I am eager to change my mind and became a valuable person again.

"After treatment I had to face many problems. Mostly people who lived around me were addicted people. I remember while we were in treatment period, the addiction worker spent their time to give us

education to become a good person, so I could control my mind and try to avoid it easily. I wanted to inform all of the people who lived in the community; using drugs & alcohol were not a good thing. It will damage you and will destroy your people for the future."

*(Refugee client story after 3 month residential treatment program, translated. Identity concealed for protection. Picture of herbal sauna detox treatment, not of quoted client.)*

### CONTACT DARE NETWORK THAILAND

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