



**Annual Narrative Report**  
**October 2017 – September 2018**  
**Starfish Education Foundation (SEF)**



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# Introductions

In its first complete year of operations, Starfish Education Foundation's team has been able to achieve results that would have made Dr. Haugland ("Dick") incredibly proud.

While we have started to shift our main focus from direct delivery of education services to the broader mission of improving the quality of education for all children attending Thai schools, I am proud to say that the support and care which children attending Starfish schools have received has not diminished one bit.

Visiting the school in Mae Taeng and the other learning centers and demonstration sites always presents me with scenes of happy children who enjoy themselves while learning. The fact that children with marginalized backgrounds have the opportunity to receive such brilliant education in a safe environment has been a pillar of our philosophy since the inception of Starfish Country Home School Foundation and remains unchanged.

The incredible impact that the Starfish Makers have had in such a short period of time over the Thai education system, reaching thousands of children and educators, is a testament to Dick's original vision as well as the talent and commitment of Dr. Seributra and the entire Starfish team who constantly build upon such vision and are making it become more real every day. To them all goes my thank you on behalf of the Board of Directors.

*Francesco Caruso*  
*Executive Chairman*  
*Starfish Education Foundation*

At Starfish Education Foundation, we aim to provide access to quality education to all children through innovative education programmes and technological solutions. We believe that meaningful and relevant education equips children with the necessary tools they need for their personal and professional lives today and for the future.

We need to change the way we provide access to quality education to children, not only for some but as many children as possible. We believe that by doing so, we need to reach out to more stakeholders, communities and policymakers.

In 2017, we transformed our strategic focus to align with our mission to scale our positive impact on all children in Thailand. Some of the crucial milestones are:

- With Starfish Country Home School Foundation, we have opened four Makerspace demonstration sites in Mae Taeng district of Chiang Mai, Chiang Mai city, Chiang Rai and Samut Sakhon. These demonstration sites have served more than 9,345 students and 1,225 teachers.
- The collaboration with more than 64 public schools to setup Makerspaces in the schools with professional development support from our partners.
- The launch of Starfish Labz, a fun and engaging online learning platform for educators and Maker coaches to support professional development in the area of Maker education and Problem Based Learning.

It is a great privilege to be a part of these significant initiatives and work with our partners to make the SEF vision reality. I look forward to continuing the great work next year.

*Dr. Nanthaporn Prae Seributra*  
*CEO*  
*Starfish Education Foundation*

## Organizations Supported by SEF in 2017-2018

To preface the overview of SEF's programs in 2017-2018, it is helpful to have an understanding of the organizations and partners that were supported in order to implement those activities and therefore achieve meaningful outcomes:



**Starfish Country Home School Foundation (SCHSF).** A Thai-registered foundation, SCHSF was established in 2005 by Dr. Richard P. Haugland, whose focus on charitable activities in Southeast Asia also led to the creation of SEF. During the 2017-2018 fiscal year, SCHSF ran a K-6 level school, two early childhood learning centers, a transitional residential center, and social programs. SCHSF is also home to the first Makerspace demonstration sites in Thailand (see the *Starfish Maker* section for more on this).

**Starfish Innovation Co., Ltd. (SI).** SI is a Thai social enterprise that was launched in 2018. It is responsible for the curriculum development, learning management system development, and research arm of SEF's activities in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, and also serves as a training resource for Starfish Maker in the greater Bangkok area.

### The Five Critical Elements to Success

The five elements are the foundation to drive and support this national initiative



*Five components critical to SEF's success that are covered in the following sections*



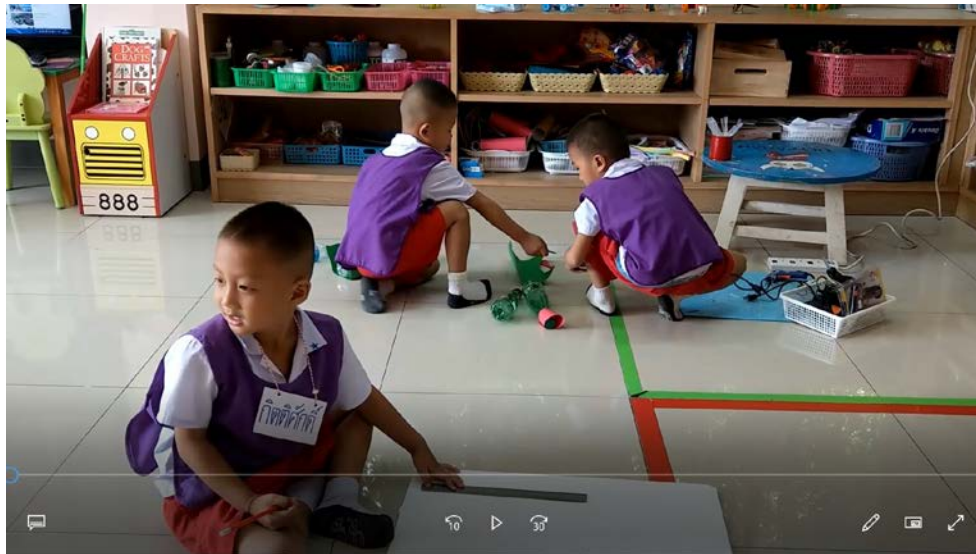
## Overview of SEF Activities in 2017-2018



### Starfish Maker

Starfish Maker is a program that began under SCHSF in 2017. It aims to disseminate knowledge and develop capacity for educators and learners through a system known as Makerspace. This is achieved by providing academic services, providing professional development for educators and consultation services, and opening spaces for children, schools, communities, and families to use free of charge. Starfish Maker's goal is to provide the opportunity for all children in Thailand to have access to quality education.

View an introductory video to Starfish Maker by clicking on the picture below:



The primary components of the Starfish Maker program this year were:

- The continued operation of four Makerspace demonstration sites.
- Professional development and assistance in the setup of Makerspaces in over 60 government schools, per an agreement with schools under supervision of the Thai Ministry of Education.
- Professional development and training for external groups.
- Promotional opportunities in preparation for expansion in the following year.
- A research project that helps to define and collect data that assists us to measure the developmental outcomes of Starfish Maker for children and youth.

**Demonstration sites** were set up and run at four SCHSF locations during the year – Chiang Mai, Mae Taeng, Chiang Rai and Samut Sakhon. In addition to hosting students in SCHSF programs such as their school in Mae Taeng and learning centers in Chiang Mai and Samut Sakhon, these sites were also open to the public. Government and private schools alike reserved specific dates and times throughout the school year to utilize the demonstration sites, while SCHSF provided the staffing and equipment needed for day-to-day operations.

A major driver of SEF's goal to expand Starfish Maker's impact in 2018 is collaboration with the Education Services Area Offices, Thai Ministry of Education to roll out the Makerspace concept on a large scale, so that as many students as possible can benefit in Thailand.

With this in mind, several memorandum of agreements were signed between SEF and educational entities at the provincial government level to begin work on **teacher professional development and implementation for new Makerspace sites** at Thai public schools. As of September 2018, work has begun to set up Makerspaces at 50 schools in Chiang Mai province, 4 schools in Chiang Rai province, and 10 schools in the greater Bangkok area.



*Participants of MOU signing ceremony to expand Starfish Maker to government schools in Chiang Mai, Thailand. August 2018*

During these program activities, SEF has been collaborating with a professional learning partner, Silanukprach. They have been assisting in professional development for not only internal SCHSF staff, but also staff of public schools that have received Makerspace training and setup.

SEF also made agreements with the Education Services Area Offices Thai Ministry of Education to provide **professional development and training** for school teachers and directors. These “education management” trainings took place in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai provinces.

Out of the 189 schools in attendance, 48 have shown interest in using Starfish Maker activities within their teaching plans by setting up Makerspace areas in their schools in the future.

Education Management Trainings of Thai Government Schools, 2017-2018		
Educational Office Area	Number of Participating Schools	Number of Participating Educators
Region 1 – Chiang Mai	22	72
Region 2 – Chiang Mai	13	69
Region 3 – Chiang Mai	73	153
Region 4 – Chiang Mai	17	64
Region 5 – Chiang Mai	23	85
Region 6 – Chiang Mai	22	40
Region 1 – Chiang Rai	19	44
<b>Totals</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>527</b>



*EDUCA attendees visiting the Starfish Maker display in October of 2017*

Another component of project activities for Starfish Maker in the 2017-2018 fiscal year involved **promotional events and exhibitions** that aimed to raise awareness among schools and organizations that had not yet heard of the Makerspace concept. This is integral to expanding training and development to more schools, educators and students in the upcoming year.

During October 2017, SEF ran a Starfish Maker display at EDUCA, a major event in Bangkok, Thailand that combines students, educators, administrators, policy makers and the general public in a forum that encourages the sharing of experiences, ideas and programs. In February of 2018, SEF also ran a Starfish



Maker display at the annual Private School Conference in Chiang Mai. This conference draws educators and students from private schools all around Northern Thailand.



*Starfish Maker Kits that are distributed to exhibition participants*

The remaining piece of SEF activities during this year is a **research project** to define more clearly the outcomes of Starfish Maker in Thailand. Beginning in August 2018, preliminary steps were being taken to begin the process of survey tool design and testing. This project is on target to continue through 2019.



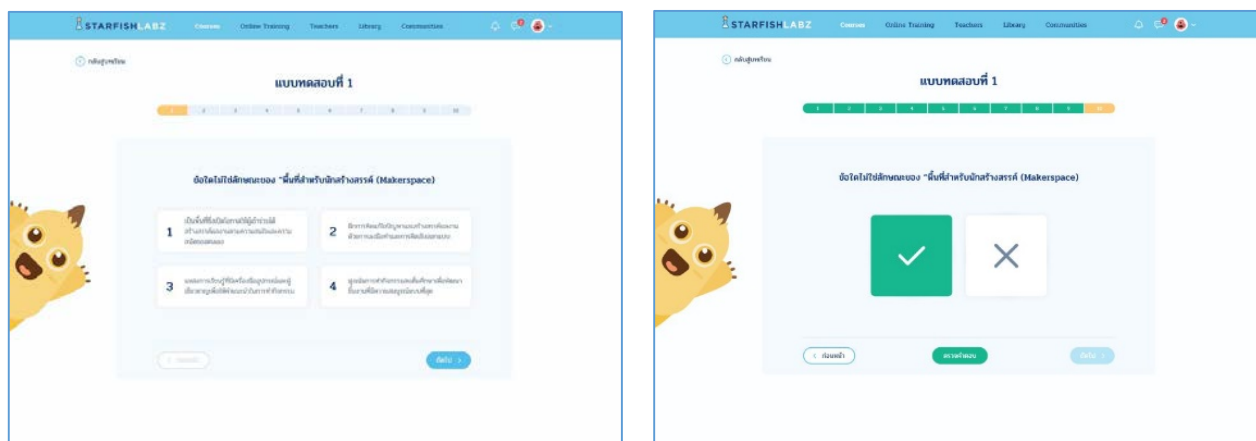
## Starfish Labz

Starfish Labz is a professional learning platform for educators that is tailored specifically for use with Starfish Maker coaches and staff. By improving the quality and relevancy of training for teachers and educators in Thailand, the impact is that better education will be provided to children in Thailand.

It is an online learning platform, intended for use by the Makerspace sites set up with Thai government schools, as well as for Starfish Maker demonstration sites being run by SCHSF. However, it is also intended to be open for use by the public, so that relevant groups and sectors can benefit as well.

Development of the content and instructional design of the learning management system has been a priority for Starfish Innovation this year, with collaboration from Silanukprach. We are happy to share that the platform is going live in mid-October 2018 for Maker coaches in Thai public schools that have had Makerspaces set up via Starfish Maker.





Examples of the interactive display for Starfish Labz

Also on the future agenda is Bloomlabz, a broader professional learning platform. While Starfish Labz is customized specifically for Starfish Maker, Bloomlabz is a learning management system that can be tailored and localized for other programs or needs.

Work on Bloomlabz will begin after Starfish Labz has more solid grounding in regards to rollout and coverage for existing Thai government schools in the Starfish Maker community.

## Other Thailand Programs Supported by SEF

### Starfish Country Home School

The Starfish Country Home School is a major program of SCHSF, and provides early childhood and primary level education from kindergarten to grade 6. It is located in Mae Taeng district, approximately 27 miles north of Chiang Mai city.

The goal of the Country Home School program is much along the lines of the foundation's overall mission – to provide its students with an exceptional education, life skills and opportunities to succeed in future academic or personal situations.

During the 2017-2018 school year, which runs from May to March in Thailand, the student enrollment figures were as follows:

Grade Level	Number of Students, 2017-2018 School Year		
	Male	Female	Subtotals
Kindergarten	24	55	79
Primary (Grades 1-6)	13	45	58
<b>Totals</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>137</b>

In regards to the 2018-2019 school year beginning this May, foundation leadership identified children coming from vulnerable and marginalized families in the Mae Taeng area as a new focus for school

enrollment. This includes children from families with one or more parents in prison, families with extremely low or infrequent levels of income or single parent families. In addition, a new level of kindergarten classes was opened for children.

For the 2018-2019 school year, school enrollment figures were as follows:

Grade Level	Number of Students, 2018-2019 School Year		
	Male	Female	Subtotals
Kindergarten	36	40	76
Primary (Grades 1-6)	19	58	77
<b>Totals</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>153</b>

The school held a number of student activities beyond traditional schooling. The primary and most frequent activity was Starfish Maker, which took place several days each week and is expanded upon in the Starfish Maker section in this report.

In terms of academic results, a focus on core subjects (Thai, Mathematics, Science and English) resulted in positive progress for students in attendance at SCHSF school. For standardized testing, Grade 6 students from SCHSF significantly outperformed the national average for all testing areas:

O-Net Test Results at SCHSF School, Grade 6			
Topic	Number of SCHSF Students	SCHSF Student Average	National Average, 2017-2018 School Year*
Thai	5	57.3	49.25
Mathematics	5	50.0	24.53
Science	5	40.8	29.37
English	5	74.5	28.31
*Source: National Institute of Education Testing Service, Thailand			

## Learning Centers

SCHSF had two learning centers in operation during the 2017-2018 fiscal year – the Starfish Learning Center in Chiang Mai, and the Life Prep Learning Center in Samut Sakhon.

The Starfish Learning Center was an early childhood education program located in Chiang Mai proper. It was established to provide preschool and kindergarten level education to children aged 3-6 who come from families with low levels of income.

2017-2018 was the final year of operations for the Learning Center. This change in focus was due to a new emphasis on the usage of the Starfish Maker demonstration site at the Learning Center building, the ability to host students from existing government/private schools in the Chiang Mai area, as well as the capability to train teachers and staff from those external schools and then assist them with setting up their own Makerspace sites. The learning center was officially closed in late February 2018.



*Graduation ceremony for the final class to attend Starfish Learning Center*

Meanwhile, the LifePrep program's main focus was to provide education and protection for migrant children and other marginalized groups in the factory area of Mahachai, where large numbers of economic migrants both live and work.

During the 2017-2018 school year, Life Prep ran its daycare program, and consistently had over 100 children in attendance. Due to the non-permanent nature of work for economic migrants, the number of children in attendance would change on a weekly and sometimes daily basis.

The daycare program included basic education subjects such as Thai language and mathematics, with Burmese language classes also being incorporated this year. Additionally, children used Project Based Learning curriculum in their classrooms on a weekly basis.



*Children from the local community participate in weekend activities at Life Prep*



The Life Prep program also assisted children in the community, via mobile learning activities, medical and dental support for urgent cases, as well as weekend classes for children who were not enrolled in school.

### **Transitional Residential Program**

The SCHSF residential program shrunk considerably during the 2017-2018 year. This was due to a focus on having children live a healthy and productive life with their families, rather than living in residential institutions.

Prior to the May 2017 term, the residential programs at SCHSF's Mae Taeng and Chiang Rai locations had been closed, and the children in those programs for the most part were able to return home to their families. A number of children who were not yet ready to do so were relocated to the foundation's remaining residential program in Chiang Mai. The overall student numbers there were as follows:

<b>Residential Program Figures, 2017-2018</b>		
<b>Age Group</b>	<b># of Children, May 2017</b>	<b># of Children, May 2018</b>
Kindergarten Aged Children	21	1
Primary Aged Children	15	8
High School Aged Children	35	16
<b>Total</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>25</b>

The goal for the residential program this year was to work on skills and behaviors that would prepare children to transition into life outside of an institution. Therefore, life skills, behaviors needed for independent living, and academics were priorities for helping these children this year.

At the same time, evaluations were undertaken of the student's families and their situations in regards to safety, security, access to education, and income. For the cases in which the situation was deemed safe and reasonable, SCHSF helped thirteen children return home in October of 2017. Following that, an additional sixteen children returned home in March of 2018.

At the present time, the residential program has 25 students and is based in Mae Taeng. This location change allows SCHSF to run a program that incorporates a family-style living environment to better prepare the children for their lives in the future.

### **Social Work Program**

The social work program expanded its activities this year to support children who had recently returned home from boarding houses to live with their families. This, in combination with in-school support for children attending the SCHSF School and Learning Center, comprised the bulk of the social program's activities for the year.

As mentioned in the Residential Program section, the Chiang Rai and Mae Taeng residential programs were closed prior to May 2017, after evaluations determined that many families were ready to take care of their children independently. Therefore, over 70 children are living with their families once again. SCHSF then set up a case management project to follow up on these families, evaluate the situations case-by-case, identify any problems or issues that may cause constraints for the safety and quality-of-life of the child, and then work to resolve those problems.

After visits and evaluations for those families, case managers were able to complete nine cases whose families proved to be resilient, safe and ideal for the child to be a part of. The remaining cases are still being worked on, with the goal of assisting families with their existing constraints.

## Learn More About SEF

In addition to the activities and events mentioned in this report, there are many other stories, pictures, videos and examples of SEF's vision and work that can be found at our websites, which have been launched over the past year.

**Starfish Education Foundation** – <https://www.starfishedu.org>

**Starfish Maker Program** – <https://www.starfishmaker.org>

In closing, thank you for your interest in SEF and our mission to improve education in Thailand. Take a look at the video below to see an example of what a confident, creative and innovative generation of children can do now and in the future.

