



Annual Report 2015/16



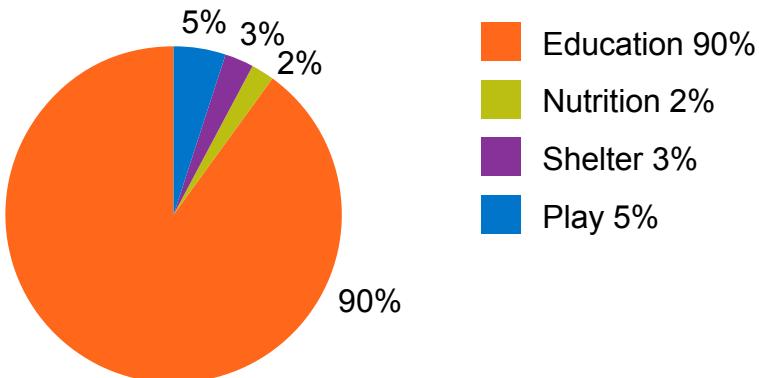
Annual Report 2015/16

SpinningTop's focus for the year was on providing aid to migrant and refugee children in Burma and on the border with Thailand. The area is in a state of flux and, while some positive change is occurring, there is still considerable poverty and risk – especially for children.



Projects

A total of **\$172,618** was spent on projects in 2015-16



Education

Education projects dominated the budget this year and for good reason. With many international donors pulling out of Mae Sot (to focus their efforts inside a safer Burma or new conflict zones), a number of schools were suddenly left with children at the gate but no money to open the doors.



Social Action for Women (SAW) School

We have supported SAW for many years in other areas and were able to step in to support their school this year. The SAW school in Mae Sot was established primarily to provide an education to the children in their care, frequently orphans from Burma or children being sheltered with their mothers. If they have any further spaces available they draw students from migrant families with the greatest need for a free education. As a result of our help this year 229 children, who often have trauma and face considerable barriers in other schools, were able to continue their education in a safe, familiar place.

Help Without Frontiers – Stationery

We were very happy to contribute to providing much-needed stationery to kids at migrant learning centres again this year. Around the Mae Sot (Thailand) area there were 67 centres providing education to 11,804 migrant children this year. Our contribution meant that these children had exercise books and resources to put their learning in to practice, and to take home to share with their families. This is priceless if you haven't had tools for learning before.



StayinSchool – Myawaddy, Burma

This year we were thrilled that two years of talking and planning saw the opening of an alternative education centre in Myawaddy, Burma. SpinningTop and StayinSchool opened the centre to provide a place for young people outside the formal education system to learn. Many children in Myawaddy leave school around 12 years of age or younger and begin working. Often they head to dangerous jobs like forestry or construction where they earn very little money for very hard work. SIS champions child-centred learning and works hard to keep young people in learning for their own immediate safety and to build their future opportunities.



Photo courtesy: Poekoko Hteemoopoe Chitmain (TMK)

Thoo Mwee Khee (TMK) Learning Centre

TMK is our flagship school in Thailand, an hour south of Mae Sot, which we have been supporting for ten years. Since that time it has grown from a roll of 50 children from Burma to over 600 children and young people, receiving education from kindergarten through to tertiary. This year we supported the school with seven months of operational funding, rounding out their own fundraising efforts.

We are still working hard with TMK to expand their supporter base and develop self-financing initiatives. We are proud of the amazing graduates of TMK and the great things they will do in the world.

Htee Ther Leh School (HTL) School

HTL school now has a roll of 250 children that are drawn to this remote village in eastern Burma, from this and even more isolated jungle villages. They are loving the new school building that we funded in 2014 and this year we helped out with some top up funding for teacher salaries.





Oo Hue Hta (OOH) School

OOH has had a great year. This really small village school in Burma is led by Kunu, a graduate student from TMK. 35 local children received an education here at Kunu's school and around ten were cared for in the dormitory, which is the safer option for them when family are away working or you live too far away.

Additional funds we provided for income generation were used to establish a weaving business which is receiving orders and now employs local women, with profits going back to the school costs.

Nutrition

The majority of the requests to SpinningTop this year were for educational support and we made just three grants related to nutrition.

Thoo Mwee Khee (TMK) Learning Centre, Thailand

We once again provided a small grant to maintain TMK's agriculture project to cover seeds, equipment and maintenance costs relating to this great source of nutrition for the school and dormitory (which is home to 350 children during the school year).



Oo Hue Hta school, Burma

A small grant was extended to the OOH school for rice for the school and dorm children during the year.

OXFAM – Nepal earthquake emergency funds

During The Good Guys comedy shows in 2015, we raised an additional \$1,000 in spare change from our generous attendees giving at the half-time break of the two shows. We donated this amount to Oxfam for their emergency food and aid packages to Nepalese survivors of the horrific April and May earthquakes there, which killed over 8,000 people.



Photo: Pablo Tosco / Oxfam

Shelter

Oo Hue Hta School, Burma

This year we gave OOH some funds to extend their growing school and dormitory. The need for more children to be cared for on site during the school year has increased as villagers' appreciation for the benefits of education has grown. Many also now recognise that it is safer for their children not to be working too young, left alone or in other potentially at-risk situations.



Photo courtesy Irawaddy News

Mae Tao Clinic

There was severe flooding in Burma between July and September this year which displaced over 1 million people. The incredible Mae Tao Clinic coordinated efforts to produce and dispatch thousands of emergency aid packs to five of the 14 states that they were able to reach. We were pleased to be able to donate funds from our emergency budget to give to the Clinic for this aid effort.

Play

KickStart ART

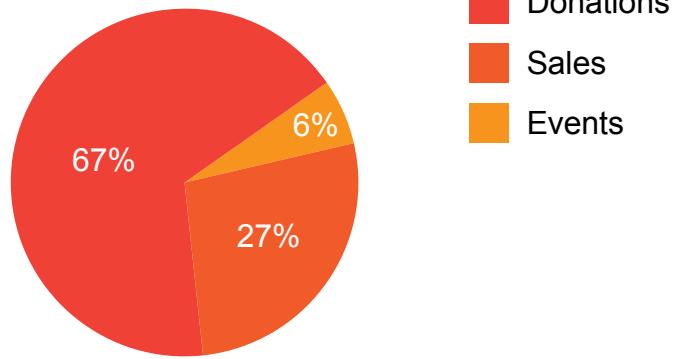
We have been supporting KSA for a few years now and it always makes us happy because it makes so many kids so happy. KSA puts talented Burmese artists with great lesson plans in to migrant learning centres around Mae Sot, Thailand. The kids in these schools have very little to call their own and these art classes each week let them create – giving them something to focus on, inspiring them and bringing hope for better things to come.



Financials

Income

SpinningTop had income of \$212,802 in 2015/16, which was an increase of 4.3% on the previous year. This included donations from The Body Shop NZ to cover SpinningTop's wage costs, allowing the income from our fundraising activities to go directly to the kids that need it the most.



General sales	\$58,502
Donated goods sold	\$464
Corporate donations	\$65,600
Customer donations (mostly ex donation boxes)	\$8,838
Employee giving	\$16,370
Fundraising events	\$11,650
General donations	\$50,201
Interest received	\$1,177
TOTAL	\$212,802

Expenses

SpinningTop had outgoings of \$256,709 in 2015-16 including \$172,618 of project expenditure. The remaining expenditure related to cost of sales, wages and other expenses such as ACC, accounting, bank fees and travel. One trip is made annually to visit our partner projects, verify and monitor progress and prepare budgets for the following year. Wages and other expenses were covered by corporate donations made for that purpose. Other expenses were higher in 2015-16 as we paid for in-country support to help establish the StayinSchool education centre in Myawaddy, Burma.

Education projects	\$155,988
Nutrition projects	\$3,073
Shelter projects	\$5,236
Play projects	\$8,321
Wages	\$50,886
Cost of sales	\$21,334
Other expenses	\$11,871

Cost of sales

Expenses relating to producing products for sale and holding events were 30 percent of the income received. This is at a similar level of the previous year (29%).

Expense	2015-16	2014-15
Stock purchased for sale	\$19,804	\$23,840
Fundraising costs	\$733	\$2,335
Freight & courier	\$91	\$379
Websites	\$706	\$575
TOTAL	\$21,334	\$27,129

Fundraising Events

In 2015, we held two sold-out shows of **The Good Guys** at the NZ Comedy Festival. We had the support of the brilliant San Fran venue again in Wellington and for the first time used the Tuning Fork in Vector Arena in Auckland. Special thanks to the amazing HELL Pizza for covering show expenses, to all our other sponsors and to our generous comedians (pictured). Legends!



Product Sales

\$58,502 was raised through product sales. The majority of our sales income is made possible through our alignment with **The Body Shop NZ** and their generous permission to position some of our products instore. This year they also launched an online store (thebodyshop.co.nz) and invited us to sell our products there.



SpinningTop products include:

Wooden spinning tops

Handmade in New Zealand exclusively for SpinningTop from FSC certified macrocarpa. They epitomise us and our mission, but they are also a darn good “old-school” toy which isn’t made of plastic!



Purses

Handwoven by women sheltered by the amazing organisation Social Action for Women, based in Mae Sot, Thailand. These purses are part of an income generation programme which ensures the women earn a living, and profits raised in New Zealand returned to the area in support of vulnerable children.



Gift Tags

These are a vibrant set of four small gift tags that feature Pat Shepherd photography and inspirational quotes. The images are of children Pat met while visiting our project partners in Burma and Thailand.



Event products

For Mother's Day 2015, the fantastically talented Natasha Vermeulen (www.fromthemill.co.nz) created an original artwork that we turned into a card exclusively for The Body Shop NZ.

For Christmas 2015, we brought back the reindeer after a year’s hiatus. They came back a little more sustainable, made from bamboo, and we sold each of the nine personalities individually or as a full set.



Defender Bags

This is a range of vinyl bags made from billboards around Wellington once their display run is complete. We cut and clean the vinyl and then have them professionally sewn locally. This business has been a good fundraiser for SpinningTop for many years. This year we produced document/book bags, large shopping bags, a slimmer tote style and satchels. We sell via our website defenderbags.org as well as planetgoodness.com and various retail outlets. We completed one large conference order for totes during the year.

The Crew



After 5 years working for SpinningTop, Pat Shepherd is putting on some new shoes: *"In February, I stepped away from my co-manager role and have moved up to join the board of trustees so I can still be a part of the wonderful work SpinningTop does for vulnerable children in this world. Thank you for all your wonderful support of SpinningTop over the years. Stay awesome!" – Pat*



In February, Annie Fischer joined SpinningTop to co-manage with Rachelle. Annie has a strong sense of social justice and brings particular skills around fundraising and marketing.
"Hi I'm Annie – the new Pat! I realise I have very big boots to fill and am excited about helping Rachelle continue the incredible work that Shelly, Pat and Barrie started."



The wonderful Ruth and Paul (and the very photogenic Theo) also came on board during the year rounding out the team for a few hours a week with product development, design, communications and the occasional photoshoot.
Yay, thanks guys!

And to YOU, our amazing regular donors, payroll givers, random donation givers, good vibe and other forms of support givers – the world is now a bit more balanced because of your support.

We couldn't do it without you.

THANK YOU!

