

**For more information: please contact Jeana Harley-
Executive Director U.S.,
at jharley@grow-worldwide.com,
(330) 465-9617 or**



Faa in Thailand at fsumitra@grow-worldwide.com.

Website and Online Store: www.grow-worldwide.com

**You may contribute by sending checks to G.R.O.W. at
P.O. Box 1862, Wooster, Ohio 44691 or via our website.**



*God's
FAAbulous
Story*



This is the
incredible but true
story of God's miraculous
hand on the life of Sumitra "Faa"

Choemue. Faa is the co-founder and country director of Grace Refuge Outreach Worldwide (G.R.O.W.), a foundation that rescues abused and at-risk children in northern Thailand.

"My name is Sumitra 'Faa' Choemue. I was born into a poor family, the youngest of twelve, in a small village in the northern mountains of Thailand. Growing up there was no hospitals, electricity, or running water. I am from the Akha Hill Tribe, an ethnic minority in Thailand."

The Akha Hill Tribe, like many other minority groups, fell into a class

ty of God's people.

Although nearly all the children experienced severe abuse, they are now safe and slowly being transformed by the love of Christ as exemplified by Faa, Ning, and the dedicated G.R.O.W. staff. During college, Faa went through the difficult process of learning to forgive her father. This led to her father's salvation, life-change, and restored the relationship with Faa and the rest of his family. Her past allows her to help her kids learn to forgive their abusers, often family members, freeing them from much built-up anger and bondage.

Faa's love for God is infectious. Everyone she meets is immediately impacted by the supernatural elements of her story. Her knowledge of the language, cultural experiences, passion for the children, and unshakeable faith in God makes her a natural missionary to her own people.




With God's help, I graduated from high school at the top of my class. Afterward, I had to leave the orphanage. Without money or a home, I had one goal in mind – college. God placed people along the way to help me. I worked hard, and by God's grace, I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Marketing."

During her senior year in 2004, Faa found a full-time job and volunteer position with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that ministered on the streets of Chiang Mai. Her job exposed her to stories about children who sold flowers to tourists on the streets of Chiang Mai and were at risk of becoming sex slaves.

"I felt like I needed to do something to help the children. I began to spend time with the children, and every time I did, I cried and cried. I couldn't stop crying even when my eyes were open. My heart was broken for them because their story was very much like mine. I started asking God to help me know how to help. I wanted so much for the children to have a safe place. I couldn't stop thinking about it."

"Then, one day, something happened that convinced me that my time had come. I was in one of the worst neighborhoods in Chiang Mai where I met a little, homeless orphan forced to work selling flowers to tourists at street corners. He was six-years-old, very small and thin, no shorts, wearing only a long, dirty t-shirt. When I looked at this little boy, I saw myself. His body bore the markings of many beatings from bamboo sticks. I looked at him and thought he was only three. Because he spoke my language, he opened his heart to me and, with



"My heart was broken for them because their story was very much like mine. I started asking God to help me know how to help."

many tears, told me how much he wanted to go to school but couldn't because of his miserable situation.

From that time on, I prayed more earnestly and asked God to help me learn whatever I could to be able to help the street children. And God answered my prayer. By God's grace, even though I had little money to support myself and my family in the mountains, I was able to financially support four children while I was in college, including that little boy."

For several years, Faa dedicatedly worked in Chiang Mai to rescue children sold for sexual pleasure by unscrupulous thugs. She moved in with her sister, Ning, in 2007 who also worked with NGOs in the area. Bolstered by a remarkable faith in God, Faa's unparalleled love and dedication to the children became obvious to everyone in the city.

"While working with street children, my heart was broken for them. I



*I felt
God was confirming
my calling.*

*saw the need to provide them a home
where I could take care of them and invest my life in their lives
like a normal family would do. I prayed that God would let me
start a children's home.*

*God answered my prayers again and gave us [Faa and Ning] the
first two children in our home. I felt God was confirming my calling. I
kept jumping out and trusting God to provide. It was difficult to help
these children without any support from anyone else."*

By 2009 Faa and Ning had four children in their apartment. During a trip to the U.S. later that year, Faa, with the help of Pastor Ivanildo Trindade, founded G.R.O.W. It was a natural extension to the work she had begun with Ning. Since its inception, God has richly blessed G.R.O.W. with over 36 rescued children. Today, the children live with Faa and Ning and in small cottages built with the generosi-

despised and rejected by the majority population. Life was difficult for them. Before she was even born, five of Faa's siblings died. Destined to a life of suppression, abuse, and hopelessness without the possibility of redemption, Faa and her sister, Ning, were forced to sell drugs in the village for her father before her third birthday. Twice, young Faa faced possible death: once in a house fire, and once when a family acquaintance took Faa from her home and abandoned her in the jungle.

At five years old, Faa remembers her drunken father talking to a stranger while crouched on the dirt floor with a cigarette and bottle of alcohol in his hands. Though she didn't fully understand it at the time, the man was offering to buy her for \$10. By God's grace, she escaped being sold as a sex slave when her father refused to sell her even in his drunken stupor.

*Though she didn't
fully understand it
at the time, the
man was offering
her father around
\$10 to buy her.*

When Faa was around 10, her mother passed away.

"My father became abusive, beating me repeatedly. Being the youngest and smallest of my family, it was easiest for my father to catch me when in one of his drunken rages. One beating was so severe, it landed me in the hospital. I knew I had to flee my home. Through a friend, I ended up in a Christian orphanage called the 'Christian Children's Home.' Even though they couldn't fully help someone with my history of being abused, they introduced me to Jesus Christ. For the first time, I knew what it meant to be a part of a real family. At age 15, I trusted in Jesus as my Lord and Savior. I am very grateful for my time and family at the Christian Children's Home.