

## STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION | 2009

### Fashioning A Brighter Future In Thailand

Chiang Mai, Thailand



**G**rowing up in poverty in northern Thailand, Bodawn never had a chance to go to school. As a child, she had to work to support her family. At age 14, **Bodawn left home and found help at the New Life Center (NLC) in Chiang Mai, Thailand, an ELCA World Hunger partner.**

When she arrived, she enrolled in school for the first time. At age 21, she is finishing 12th grade. Bodawn says, **“If it hadn’t been for New Life Center, I’d have been married at 15.”** Early marriage for girls and young women often commits them to a life of poverty. Education is a proven strategy to break the cycle of poverty.

**Bodawn is a talented dressmaker, a skill she developed at NLC.** Bodawn supports her family with the money she makes from selling her clothes. She says, “Someday in the future, if you come visit me in my shop, I’ll sell you a really fashionable outfit.”

**With support from the ELCA World Hunger Appeal, NLC works with and for girls and young women like Bodawn,** who are at risk for labor exploitation because they lack citizenship, education, and Thai language skills. Bodawn says, “Living at New Life Center feels very safe and secure. It feels like this is my home.”

**Gifts to ELCA World Hunger Appeal help New Life Center equip young women with valuable skills** and fund sustainable development and livelihood restoration to people around the world and close to home. ELCA World Hunger is a connected, comprehensive, and compassionate program that helps individuals like Bodawn lift themselves out of poverty into self-sufficiency. *Learn more at [www.elca.org/hunger](http://www.elca.org/hunger).*

For more Stories of Faith in Action, visit [www.elca.org/stories](http://www.elca.org/stories).  
Do you have a story to share? E-mail us at [stories@elca.org](mailto:stories@elca.org).



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God’s work. Our hands.

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