UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR AND OPPRESSED

AZEECON

Annual Report 2016

LWF MYANMAR PROGRAM

THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION

actalliance

UPHOLD THE RIGHTS OF THE POOR AND OPPRESSED

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David H. Mueller
Representative
LWF World Service
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FOREWORD

First of all, I would like to thank all of our supports for your continued and steadfast partnership with the LWF Myanmar Program. Your contributions and close partnership is most appreciated. With the support and team work of the members of the Lutheran World Federation, and other donor partners the LWF Myanmar Program has grown from a 500,000 Euro response to the devastating results of Cyclone Nargis in 2008 to a 5.4 million Euro Humanitarian, Development and Advocacy organization with a team of 166 staff in four regions and states assisting 99,746 people in 133 village and 8 IDP camps in 2016.

Secondly, it is my pleasure to share with you, through this report, some stories and photos of LWF Myanmar's successes in 2016.

Myanmar has continued its political transition towards democracy while at the same time working through a complex national peace process. At the same time the opening of the economy to the region and the world has continued at a faster pace.

LWF, through our rights based empowerment approach, has adopted to the gradually shifting context to facilitate positive engagement between the government (primary duty bearers) and the people in the poorest and most marginalized communities (rights holders) of the Delta, Kayin, Chin and Rakhine States. We have in 2016 strengthened our partnerships with all of our stakeholders at the household, village, township, state and national levels. After 8 years of rights based empowerment facilitation, 35 villages in the Delta were able to graduate to the stage where they are now able to manage their own development processes. Empowering capacity and confidence building support to vulnerable groups of women, youth, children and poor rural farmers continues in our remaining target communities.

In the meantime we are pushing forward with our inclusive, conflict sensitive, people centered rights based empowerment and advocacy work in support of over 43,000 internally displaced people in 8 camps in Rakhine and supporting more than 25,000 students in the camps and surrounding communities.

I hope you enjoy this Annual Report that reflects the great work we have done together. Together we can still do more to uphold the rights of the poor and oppressed! Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

David H. Mueller
Representative
LWF World Service
Laos & Myanmar Programs

ABOUT LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION WORLD SERVICE

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is a global communion of Lutheran churches, with 145 member churches in 98 countries. It was founded in 1947 in Lund, Sweden, after the end of the Second World War. LWF World Service was set up as its relief and development arm to serve all people irrespective of ethnicity, gender, religion, race or political conviction.

The LWF - World Service is committed to working in an open and responsible way that builds the trust and respect of all stakeholders. The LWF World Service's Accountability Framework ensures transparency in program administration, governance and implementation. It is a signatory of the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and Non-Government Organizations in Disaster Relief. Our humanitarian response follows the Principles of Partnership endorsed by the Global Partnership Program. The Lutheran World Federation is one of the founding members of ACT (Action by Churches Together) Alliance, which brings together over 130 churches and church related organizations working in development, humanitarian assistance, and advocacy. The alliance provides the ecumenical movement with structures to mobilize rapidly in response to disasters – and to improve collaboration on development and advocacy issues. LWF is often a leading ACT member on the ground in emergency and humanitarian response, and helps provide leadership through the ACT governance.

ABOUT THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION MYANMAR COUNTRY PROGRAM (LWF MYANMAR)

In 2008, LWF began working in Myanmar as part of an ACT Appeal to respond to the devastation of Cyclone Nargis. LWF is legally registered as an INGO with the Ministry of Home Affairs and has MoUs with Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and the Ministry of Border Affairs.

LWF Myanmar promotes access to quality health, WASH, education, and other social services through rights based awareness, advocacy and strengthening linkages with government departments by collaborating with government institutions.

Currently LWF Myanmar is implementing humanitarian and development programs and projects in 164villagetracts/villages/ camps in Delta, Chin, Kayin and Rakhine states. Interventions in Rakhine are centered on IDPs and host communities.
In 2015, the program extended to Ann Township with a a Rights Based Empowerment Project similar to the work conducted in the Delta, Chin and Kayin States.

VISION
"People of Myanmar living in a just society, in peace and dignity, united in diversity, and empowered to achieve their universal rights to meet basic needs and quality of life".

MISSION
"Inspired by God's love for humanity, the LWF Myanmar program responds to and challenges the causes and consequences of human suffering and poverty by facilitating the empowerment of people to achieve their rights".

OVERALL GOAL
"To contribute to the alleviation of poverty in Myanmar through rights based empowerment for sustainable development".

CORE VALUES
- Dignity and Justice,
- Inclusion and Participation,
- Accountability and Transparency,
- Compassion and commitment
- Respect and appreciation for diversity

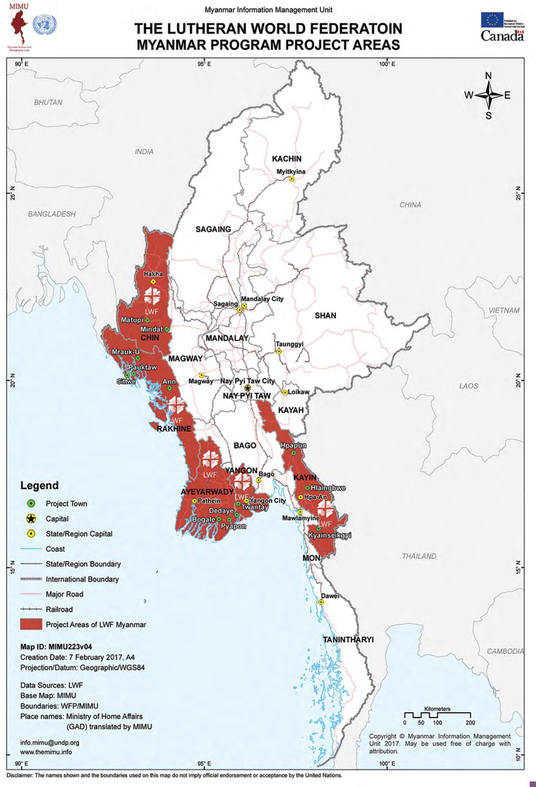
STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS
LWF Myanmar works in three strategic priority areas which bring positive changes and impacts to the lives of the targeted groups.

1. DRR, Emergency Preparedness and Response: Villages are able to manage disaster risks while applying environmentally friendly measures.

2. Sustainable Livelihoods: Households have sustainable diversified means of livelihood and food security. Increased access to primary health care and WASH facilities. All girls and boys of school age have access to quality basic education.

3. Community-led Action for Justice and Peace: Right holders are active in own household and village development. Empowered, effective coalition or alliance, reflecting LWF priorities, is working at national level.

4. Quality and Sustainable Practices and Programs: Resources are managed and used responsibly for their intended purposes. Staffs are supported to do their job effectively, and are treated fairly and equitably.



OUR APPROACH

LWF Myanmar focuses on remote and rural communities with the challenges of accessing community based management structures, practices and limited social services from government. LWF Myanmar understands the importance of strengthening engagement between rights holders and duty bearers to narrow the gaps.

At the State, Regional and Township levels, LWF Myanmar is working closely with the various government departments and Ministries. These Departments and Ministries include the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Border Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs- Police Department, Fire Services Department and General Administration Department, Ministry of Transport- Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry- Forest Department.

LWF works in the Delta, Chin, Kayin and Rakhine States, Where it has adopted the principle of targeting an entire Village Tract and possibly Township instead of targeting scattered villages. This type of geo-political targeting fits in to the Government bureaucratic structures, creates sufficient scale among the rights holders and duty bearers, and makes it easier to apply the integrated rights-based empowerment approach for meaningful impacts.

LWF Myanmar is an active member of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) coordinated by the government with engagement from UN agencies and INGOs. We continue strengthening its membership and active participation in the INGO forum, Shelter/CCCM/NFI Cluster, Education in Emergency (EiE) Sector and other clusters/sectors as appropriate. In 2016, LWF Myanmar was selected as a steering committee member of Food Security Working Group (FSWG). There are several thematic groups such as ALWG, DRRWG, GEN, NCRWG, HACG, INGO Forum, HCT, Admin & HRWG of which LWF Myanmar is a member and benefits through cross learning.

(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

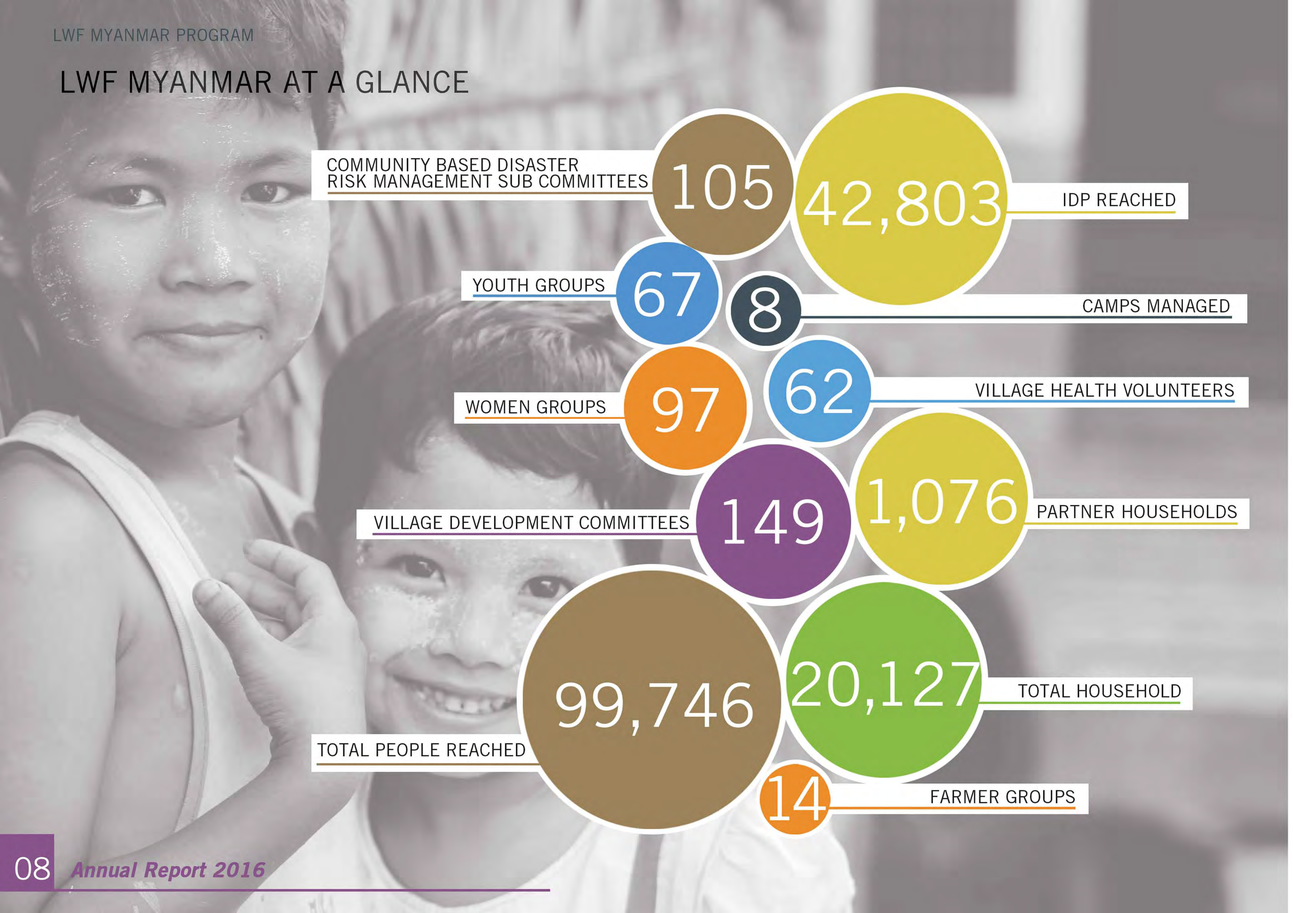
LWF Myanmar is a member of ACTAlliance and the current member of the Steering Committee and implementing partner of the ACT Myanmar Forum's Joint Project in Kayin State. ACT Myanmar Forum jointly explore other bi-lateral and multi-lateral funding opportunities such as EU, DIPECHO, LIFT and others. Partnership among ACT Myanmar Forum members, includes sharing of expertise. In addition, LWF engages with the ACT Alliance European eight (E-8) on its Getting Our ACT Together (GOAT) initiative.

Additionally, LWF Myanmar coordinates with LWF/DMD-Mekong Mission Forum (MMF), LWF/Department for Theology and Public Witness (DTPW), ACT Alliance, and Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance (EAA), and benefits from LWF/DWS Emergency Hub in Nepal and AZEECON.Through smooth and fruitful collaborations, LWF Myanmar has effectively implemented its Right Based Empowerment approach, focusing on disaster risk reduction, community development planning, climate change adaption, health risks reduction, education, child, youth, gender development, livelihood and food security and emergency response including support to IDPs within the country in line with the policies of Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

We understand how to encourage the poorest, most marginalized and vulnerable households, individuals or groups to join in the affairs of the village, and to enhance their rights based and sustainable development planning, advocacy, practical implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes. We strengthen this practice in the village by assigning Community Empowerment Facilitators in host communities.

LWF Myanmar ensures that people and their communities are central in all our activities. We also encourage the communities to consult and active participate in all stages of decision making process. Meanwhile, LWF Myanmar works directly with the communities to strengthen their risk management capacities and build their overall resilience. In response to natural or manmade disasters, LWF Myanmar, through ACT alliance/ACT Forum or other appropriate consortia, engage actively in emergency response and subsequently in rehabilitation and longer-term development.

LWF MYANMAR AT A GLANCE



COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT SUB COMMITTEES **105**

42,803 IDP REACHED

YOUTH GROUPS **67**

8 CAMPS MANAGED

WOMEN GROUPS **97**

62 VILLAGE HEALTH VOLUNTEERS

VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES **149**

1,076 PARTNER HOUSEHOLDS

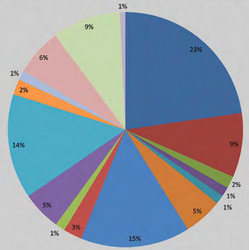
99,746 TOTAL PEOPLE REACHED

20,127 TOTAL HOUSEHOLD

14 FARMER GROUPS

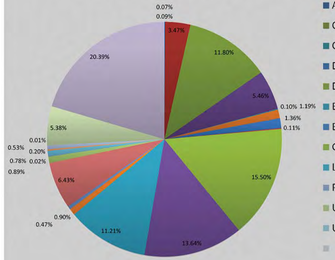
FINANCIAL STATEMENT 2016

MATRIX OF INCOME BY PROJECT



Myanmar Rights Based Empowerment Project	1,022,616	22.71%
ACT Appeal MMR151 - Myanmar Flood Response	399,149	8.87%
ELCA: Establishing Food Resilient Communities Project	74,387	1.65%
ELCA: Diaconal Project Support w/Churches	59,125	1.31%
BftW: Qualification of Programs and Strengthening of Partner	54,366	1.21%
UNHCR: Rakhine IDP Support Project - USD	240,259	5.34%
UNHCR: Rakhine IDP Suport Project - MMK	677,781	15.05%
FCA: Project for Improving Women's Livelihood	115,343	2.56%
Assistance to IDPs in Rakhine State	61,451	1.36%
Quality Basic Education and Non Formal Education (NFE)	242,226	5.38%
Education Assistant to Child in Rakhine State	649,386	14.42%
UPR Myanmar - Achieving Impact	96,099	2.13%
BftW: Rakhine Rights Based Empowerment Project	59,583	1.32%
Improvement of livelihood and relations of IDPs, host and neighbouring communities in Rakhine state in Myanmar	291,784	6.48%
Improvement of Living Conditions and Stregthen Peaceful Co-e	425,868	9.46%
ACT Joint Project	33,060	0.73%
Total income	4,502,483	100.00%

MATRIX OF INCOME BY DONORS



Australian Lutheran World Service	4,070	(0.09%)
Church of Sweden	531,505	(11.80%)
Community Contribution	4,663	(0.10%)
Diakonia ECCB - Center of Relief and Development	61,451	(1.36%)
Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe	697,806	(15.50%)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America	504,689	(11.21%)
Exchange Gain	20,972	(0.47%)
German National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation	40,001	(0.89%)
LWF Staff & Other Donors	878	(0.02%)
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	8,804	(0.20%)
United Church of Canada	481	(0.01%)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	918,040	(20.39%)
Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service	156,436	(3.47%)
Church of Sweden/SIDA	245,633	(5.46%)
DanChurchAid	53,753	(1.19%)
Diakonia	4,777	(0.11%)
European Commission	614,276	(13.64%)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria	40,595	(0.90%)
Finn Church Aid	289,318	(6.43%)
Norwegian Church Aid	35,074	(0.78%)
Swiss Embassy	24,000	(0.53%)
United Nations Children's Fund	242,226	(5.38%)
Uniting World, Australia	3,034	(0.07%)
Total income	4,502,483	(100.00%)

Church of Sweden · Evangelical Lutheran Church in America God's work. Our hands. · German humanitarian assistance · actalliance · AZEECON · Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra · Embassy of Switzerland in Myanmar · FINN CHURCH AID actalliance · UNHCR The UN Refugee Agency · Brot für die Welt · DANCHURCHAID DENMARK · LUTHERISCHER WELTBUND DEUTSCHES NATIONALKOMITEE · Diaconia Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren Center of Humanitarian and Development Aid · Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe Member of actalliance

ADVANCING HUMAN RIGHTS IN MYANMAR, a non-confrontational, conflict sensitive, evidence-based and solution-focused approach

The most important part in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process is the Follow-up. In the phase following the announcement of the 166 accepted recommendations of the Government of Myanmar it was important to come together in country as members of civil society, academics and other stakeholders, such as lawyers, religious leaders as well as government departments in order to reshape advocacy plans reflecting the new position of the government in relations to the 166 government commitments.

"It is important to jointly follow-up on these commitments and be in contact with government institutions at different levels in the process of implementation,"

Francesca P Traglia.

In 2016 LWF Myanmar worked to expand the pool of human rights defenders that are regularly engaging at the national and international level with the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mechanisms, as well as in policy dialogue with the government at national level. Five Myanmar human rights defenders that have been advancing topics on the protection of human rights defenders, religious freedom, women's rights and land rights in a non-confrontational modus operandi travelled to Geneva to advocate on the advancement of policies required to advance sensitive human rights concerns in Myanmar. It is rewarding to see that these individuals have now broadened their networks and have more confidence to engage more concretely in policy dialogue with the government in Myanmar.

Through 7 seminars and workshops at national, regional and township level LWF Myanmar continues to promote, through its networks, a Non-Confrontational, Conflict Sensitive, Solutions-Focused, Evidence-Based Engagement to all human rights advocacy which follows do no harm principles, allowing for increased numbers of rights holders and duty bearers to engage in dialogue to advance human rights in any country.

Another important achievement this year has been the development of a strategic partnership with the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC). LWF Myanmar and MNHRC held a meeting at Parliament and Ministry level[1] in order to concretely discuss steps the government intended to take in order to start implementing the 166 accepted UPR recommendations. (Nay Pyi Taw, August 2016) A concrete commitment from the government to set up an inter-ministerial committee that drafts an Action Plan for the implementation of the recommendations that we, as civil society can use as the roadmap for holding the government accountable for the 166 accepted recommendations was the key outcome from the meeting.

In collaboration with (MNHRC) LWF is raising awareness among duty bearers at village and township level regarding the government commitments to the 166 accepted recommendations, allowing for debates to take place between villagers and Township Medical Offices, Township Authority office, Education department, Relief and Resettlement offices as well as other township level relevant government offices.

This approach has the potential to ensure commitment of government officials to follow-up implementation of recommendations they themselves formulated. It has the potential to achieve real change for the communities recommending focused changes and lastly has the potential to support the development of civil society actors that value the importance of constructive, non-confrontational, conflict sensitive, evidence-based solution focused policy dialogue. For these reasons LWF Myanmar is committed to continue to work with and support likeminded organizations and individuals in order to ensure sustainable advancements in human rights in the country.

[1] *National Level Workshop in Nay Pyi Taw 9-10 August 2016*

A participant raising question on the agreed recommendation during workshop at Nay Pyi Taw (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY LED-ACTION

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(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

Bo Kone Village is an LWF Myanmar partner village located near Bogalay Township, Ayeyawady Division. It has 116 households and a total population of 564. Based on LWF Myanmar's people-centered, integrated and rights-based empowerment approach, LWF supported for the formation and strengthening of community based organizations within the village and equipped and encouraged them to advocate for pro-poor policies with Government entities at all levels.

A Village Development Committee's Former Chair-Person and Standing Patron U Aung Thein Naing (44) described the villages development as follows: "In the past we didn't know how to collaborate with the government ministries for implementing village development, as we had no systematic group like the Village Development Committee., We therefore experienced a lot difficulty and delays while trying to get things done. When LWF Myanmar arrived, they introduced the systematic forming of the Village Development Committee and also conducted trainings for the community empowerment processes. As a result, we have developed a strong working relationship with the government departments and ministries and manage to implement many developments in our village"

The collective outcome of community members having increased knowledge of governance and development, and VDCs and community based groups being functional and capable of leading and coordinating community development work, they can now manage the empowerment processes needed for the community to reach their development goals.

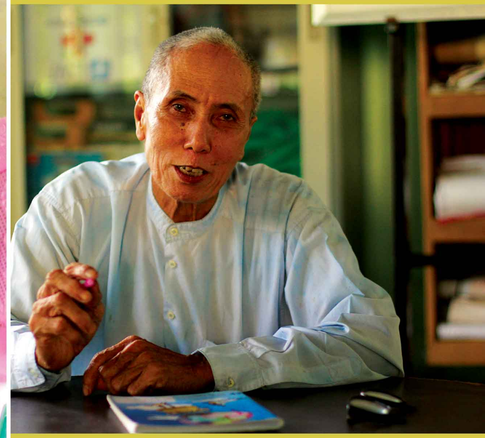
"We have become more transparent than in the past. And we now know how to advocate for our village's needs and rights to the government ministries after we have discussed and planned by ourselves by using Empowerment Tools introduced by LWF. We already have assigned focal persons based on their capability for making coordination with the respective sectors for village's education, health, economic and development affairs" he continued.

Depending on the capacity of the village and the availability of resources, and the viability of the planned activities, LWF Myanmar's Project Team selects the activities of the Village Development Plan to support financially, technically, or by assisting in networking-coordination and facilitation. The organization arranges an opportunities to meet with the responsible persons from government departments to have stronger communication and collaboration. By working together rights holders and duty bearers are mutually empowered.

Village level organizational and infrastructure improvements thus lead to dignified and sustainable lives and livelihoods with villager's rights respected, protected and fulfilled through their active participation and networking with the duty bearers.

Village Development Committee members working together for developing village development plan at Bo Kone Village, Bogalay Township, Delta (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

U Tin Win, Chair-Person of Village Development Committee of Thae Eaint Chaung Su village also added, "Once, our village's main road was so muddy that it made transportation very difficult, but that situation has changed. We can now transport with car and motorbike within our village. LWF Myanmar strengthened our coordination with the government departments as well. These are very good changes of the village and also the legacy we could give to the next generation to follow."



U Tin Win, VDC Chair-Person from Thae Eaint Chaung Su village sharing the improvement of the village. (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

LWF Myanmar promotes the improvement of food security of the poor through agriculture and other livelihood options connected to income, food, shelter, education, health, clean drinking water and others as described in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). While implementing the projects, we support for both vertical and horizontal networking between stake holders by creating space for meetings and discussions on the issues and to strengthen cooperation among them.

In realizing that livelihoods and food security are the main challenge for rural populations, especially within the LWF working area, LWF Myanmar focuses on increasing sustainable and diversified means of livelihood and food security in target communities.

In 2016, LWF Myanmar and The Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department together conducted trainings on Livestock Breeding and Animal Health Care for the Delta, Kayin and Chin which were funded by the Project for Improved Womens' Livelihood (PIWL), Rights Based Empowered Project (RBEP), Establishing Food Resilience Communities (EFRC) and ACT Joint Project. The training for Delta was designed for 11 days in Yangon with a 5-day refresher training in Pyapon. In total, 13 Women from Dedaye, 11 women from Pyapon, 6 women from Bogalay benefitted from the trainings. In Chin, the training was provided twice, in Mindat and Matupi. 51 participants (Male 45, Female 9) participated and 45 households were supported for pig raising. The same training was also provided three times in Kayin, in Hpa-pon, HlaingBwe and Kyar Inn Seik Gyi townships.A total of 58 members of partner households (18 female and 40 males) benefitted from the training. These Partner Households learned to raise pigs, goats, chickens and cows. In addition, these trainings were also intended to encourage better relationships between villagers and government line departments.

LWF also supported 3-days training on long-term tree growing supported by 617 tree seedlings for 60 women in the Delta. Soap and Shampoo making training was organized in Mindat for 27 women from 13 villages. Grape and Strawberry growing training also held in Mindat and Matupi where 80 people received technical support and 76 people received quality seeds for planting. As Chin state is located in a hilly area, and the host communities were happy to receive vegetable planting training, LWF Myanmar provided vegetable growing training 5 times in Mindat and Matupi, benefitting 110 persons (male 92 and female 18). Additionally, 14 youth from 14 villages in Matupi received motorbike repairing training.

In the collaboration with the Department of Social Welfare, LWF Myanmar organized a one-month sewing and tailoring training for young women from the Delta. The training was provided with the expectation of strengthening vocational opportunity for rural communities. A total of 12 women benefitted from the training in 2016.

(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

Daw Lein explaining how she plants elephant yam foot in her farm, Tha Yet Kone village, Mindat Township.
(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

Elephant Foot Yam Plantation

Tha Yet Kone village is located in Mindat Township, Chin State and the main source of livelihood is shifting cultivation. Through the support of LWF Myanmar, 36 years old Daw Lin Leing started cultivating elephant foot yams in 2015. She is a widow who is nurturing her three years old son, while working on her farm and serving as treasurer of the Village Development Committee.

Although Daw Lin Leing wanted to work for gardening many years ago, financial difficulty delayed her plans. However, she overcame the difficulties with the support of LWF Myanmar's livelihood development program. And she started her Elephant Foot Yam Cultivation Business with money borrowed from the Saving and Loan Schemes organized by LWF Myanmar.

"I really wanted to work in gardening but I couldn't because I didn't have enough money. But when LWF Myanmar arrived, the savings and loan schemes in the village allowed me to borrow 40,000 Kyat to start my business. I bought one thousand pieces of Elephant Foot Yam and planted half an acre in my farm."

After one year's growth, Daw Lin Leing is expecting to get more than 100,000 Kyat from the harvest, She plans to use the profits to extend her cultivation by more than one acre.. Additionally, with technical support and materials from LWF Myanmar, Daw Lin Leing has manage her family business and in the process she has also become more skillful in her accounting knowledge, which helps her in her role as village treasurer. . Like Daw Lin Leing, other beneficiaries are now improving not only in their livelihood but also in the roles of decision making processes within community.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY HEALTH THROUGH VILLAGE BASED VOLUNTEERS

LWF Myanmar is working with communities and relevant government departments to increase access for target communities to primary health care, WASH facilities, and improved quality basic health education. It's expected that this will significantly address the challenges that the target communities face.

In 2016, LWF Myanmar provided WASH kits to (53) partner households in Matupi Township. By collaborating with the Township Health Department, LWF Myanmar organized a Refresher Training on Primary Health Care for 20 health volunteers (Male – 13, Female – 7) in Mindat and 28 health volunteers in Matupi from 20 villages. Currently, two health volunteers were assigned for each village in Chin. Moreover, township level Personal Hygiene and WASH related trainings were conducted 3 times in three townships in Kayin State by coordinating with the Township Medical Officers. A total of 69 participants received the training (male 24 and female 45). Latrine support reached 6 villages in Kayin State, benefiting 132 households.

Village Health Volunteer Daw Shwe San (25) is living in Amswe (B) village with her husband U Van Bawi (26) and her two sons Bawi San Htan (5), Maung Wine Kyaw Nay San (5). There are 86 households in a total population of 378 populations (male 175 and female 203). The village is located 12 miles from Matupi, the township center. Depending on the season, it take about 1.5 to 2 hours to Matupi by motorbike.

Daw Shwe San is keen to learn new things and works actively in the village. She keeps a small shop and serves the community as a part of the village health development committee. She happily shared her experience. "Before I worked as a Village Health Volunteer, I had no idea even how to use oral rehydration salts. But, I came to know about basic health care after I joined a five days primary health care training at Matupi in November, 2015."

Because the village is located in a remote and hilly area, dengue fever, diarrhea, and tuberculosis are the most common diseases.

" The good practice of preventing mosquito bites by using nets and draining mosquito breeding areas has been adopted by the community. I am really happy to see their improvement. "

Daw Shwe San explained how to reduce these health risks. "In the past and according to usual old behaviors, some people preferred not to use latrines. I therefore raised awareness about personal hygiene, dengue, infection of diarrhea and tuberculosis to older people during regular meetings and taking sessions for the children at school. Sometime, I took time to share about reproductive health and infectious diseases and how to prevent infections with Partner Households (PHs) . Now, people from our village know about using safe drinking water, they started to keep boiled drinking water pots as a regular habit. Children also cut their nails regularly. If they can't cut themselves, I also help them after sharing sessions at school. The good practice of preventing mosquito bites by using nets and draining mosquito breeding areas has been adopted by the community. I am really happy to see their improvement."

LWF Myanmar provided training on basic health care, annually refresher trainings and pamphlets for raising awareness under great collaboration of Township Health Department.

Daw Shwe San concluded sharing her experiences by saying, "I learned mostly about prevention in previous trainings. Now I am committed to learn more about how to deliver treatments. Thank you LWF Myanmar for providing training, refresher trainings and pamphlets for us."

Village Health Volunteer Daw Shwe San cutting nail for strengthening personal hygiene in Awnwe (B) Village, Matipi Township, Chin State.
(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT IN RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES AND MANAGING RISK

Myanmar is prone to natural disasters caused by flood, earthquake, tsunami, landslide, storm surge, drought, and fire. Through the Disaster Risk Reduction, Emergency Preparedness and Response components under Right Based Empowerment Program, LWF Myanmar formed (105) Community Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) Sub Committees and (5) Task Force Groups in targeted villages of Delta, Chin and Kayin based projects. The program also provided technical support for implementing plans for disaster mitigation and response, climate change adaptation and natural resource management. CBDRM training, made sure the Disaster Risk Management committees and all partner household members and the whole communities were well aware on CBDRM practice. The training strengthened communities' understanding on participatory disaster risk. CBDRM Sub Committees and partner household developed action plans to mitigate disaster risk and to develop emergency preparedness plans based on vulnerability and capacity analysis. In addition, LWF Myanmar also facilitated first aid, and search and rescue training to task force groups.

(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

LWF Myanmar was actively involved in networking, coordination, and collaboration with the government's Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD), which is the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) focal department of Myanmar as well as DRR Working Group of Myanmar in pre-monsoon mock drill exercises during the 100 days plan of Myanmar New Government. LWF Myanmar also contributed financially to support the celebration of International Day of Disaster Risk at the District, Regional and National levels. LWF Myanmar also reviewed and revised the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan with ACT alliance partners every quarter.

In August 2016, land erosion occurred in Shwe Hlay Chaung village and Thae Kone village, Twantay Township, damaging 39 houses and leaving 139 people (Male 96, Female 43) homeless, requiring them to take refuge at their relative's houses temporarily. LWF Myanmar provided water storage tanks, food and tarpaulins to the affected people. Meanwhile, LWF Myanmar program initiated a 10 Villages Development Network Group who also contributed 10,000 MMK (7.42 USD) per effected household. VDC and CBDRM Committee members also worked together with the Relief and Resettlement Department, Village Tract Administrator and Fire Brigade Department while responding to the emergency.

U Soe Hlaing is the Deputy Director of Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR). He had worked in Pyapon for more than (5) years, where he makes related management decisions for Pyapon, Bogalay, Dedaye and Kyite Lat Township from his district office.

"Lutheran World Federation (LWF Myanmar) organization was implementing in Pyapon township before I came. As the organization mainly focuses on multi-sector development, it is very good to work with the Lutheran World Federation organization. Among the partner organizations with whom I work, LWF is the organization that I feel most stratified with." he said.

" they become more experienced in disasters risk preparation especially on what they should prepare before a storm and how they should recover after the storm."

"In collaboration with the LWF Myanmar, we conducted annual simulation trainings and strengthened DRR related knowledge through sharing activities to the villagers. Sometimes, we let them practice for the whole simulation by themselves. As a result, they become more experienced in disasters risk preparation especially on what they should prepare before a storm and how they should recover after the storm." he continued.

LWF Myanmar conducted (4) simulations for cyclone and fire in four Townships in Delta in the collaboration with the Department of Relief and Resettlement Department. Totally 524 persons (Male 237, Female 287) from 50 villages actively participated. LWF Myanmar provided 947,800 MMK (703 USD) for 5,540 wind breaking trees in 16 villages in the Delta. With the purpose of raising awareness on cyclones, vinyl posters were also distributed and posted in the public areas in villages and town centers.

U Soe Hlaing - Deputy Director of RRD, Pyapon said, "As LWF focuse on multi-development, it is very good to work with them." (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

U Myint Soe, the Village Administrator from Ohn Pin village also shared, "We learned how to put out the fire properly from the fire brigade. RRD officials also taught us how to save people when their boat capsizes in the strong wind, does and don't and how it is necessary to safeguard some important documents and secure medicine during a storm. So as a result of the trainings and simulations, we and the whole village gained allot of valuable knowledge and experience on disaster risk management."

Through the project activities of LWF Myanmar, the village has now built a strong relationship with the government ministries. Moreover, people have become more confident in talking with the government ministries and improved their capacity as well.

STUDENT AND TEACHER KITS ALLOW CONTINUED EDUCATION AFTER FLOODS IN RAKHINE

The LWF Myanmar supported schools and children affected by Cyclone Komen and resultant flood in 2015 in the Rakhine State. The Cyclone and flood displaced at least 200,000 people, among whom 30,000 people including 11,000 children are severely affected across the State. Cyclone Komen also affected LWF supported IDP camps in Sittwe and Pauktaw. Schools in camps are vulnerable to disasters like fire, floods and cyclones. School going children need support of learning materials, first aid kits, DRR awareness and knowledge.

In early 2016, LWF Myanmar provided teaching and learning kits in Ponnakyun and Mrauk U in the coordination with Township Education Officer (TEO), School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Association (PTAs) and related Township/Village Authorities. In a total, 2,291 (46% Girls) students and 103 (67% Females) teachers of 20 formal schools received teaching and learning kits. Distribution of teaching and learning kits to student and teacher of formal schools of Cyclone Komen and Flood affected schools during education year 2015-2016 was widely appreciated by TEO, teachers, students, parents and Village Leaders as it allowed education to continue with little interruption.

CHILD FRIENDLY SPACES

Maung Zaw Myo Oo (4 yrs) says, I am so happy to play games here with my friends.
(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

In 2016, LWF Myanmar supported a total of 20 Child Friendly Spaces for internally displaced children in 5 camps of Sittwe and Pauktaw Townships and 4 villages of Mrauk U Township, in Rakhine State. Totally, 1,959 children under five years old (44% girls) were benefited through the program. LWF Myanmar hired and trained 52 Community Teachers (65% are female) for 20 CFSs in cooperation witt the State Education Department Periodic repairs are done to ensure that the structures are safe, child friendly, disability friendly, and waterproof. Each TLS is equipped with a first aid kit, learning materials, games and toys and safe drinking water facilities. They are replenished as necessary.

There are 3 LWF trained CFS Animators to support the children in each CFS. To understand the psychological situation of IDP Children, Animators receive 3-days community based training on psychosocial first aid and child protection. Refresher training is organized at least once a year.

Daw Oo Saw Nwe (37) is a teacher who works at the child friendly space in Ywar Ma Ni village, Myauk U Township, Rakhine State. Ywar Ma Ni village is located 5 miles away from Myauk U and has 220 households with a population of 1,230. 10 households among them were displaced by ethnic and religious conflicts.

As most families struggle for daily food as farm laborers, supporting their children in higher education is a big challenge. Sometime they have to take their children to work, causing them to miss out on their education.

Regarding with these challenges, Daw Oo Saw Nwe shared, “Before LWF Myanmar came here, we had to pay a monthly fee to send our children to the pre-school. Some poor families faced difficulties to pay. If a parent left their children at home, they worried all the time because of their children playing where they shouldn't and getting into trouble or injured. Once, one of the children was kicked by a cow while the parents were away at work.”

In 2015, LWF Myanmar provided (67) lakhs (5,000 USD) to construct a "child friendly space" (18ft x 36ft). The construction was finished in February, 2016. The space is now bringing many changes in the village.

“After we have got the new Child Friendly Space, all parents didn’t need to worry any more. They can go to work without concern. As the children have already joined the program, their educational results in primary school have improved. Moreover, they got good practice in team work, building relationship between children, respecting each other and training in morality as well. Thank you so much LWF Myanmar for generously supporting to our community” happily concluded Daw Oo Saw Nwe.

Daw Oo Saw Nwe - Child Friendly Space Animator facilitating in playing creative games at Ywar Ma Ni Village, Mrauk U Township, Rakhine State
(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

APPLYING PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT IN IDP CAMPS AND RESETTLEMENT AREAS IN RAKHINE

LWF Myanmar has provided humanitarian assistance to 11 IDP camps in Rakhine State through Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Shelter, Education and Fire safety activities. Though many INGOs and local NGOs are working in development processes, LWF Myanmar is a unique organization in Myanmar facilitating rights-based empowerment with IDPs and hosted communities.

In 2016, three IDP camps were resettled by the government and LWF phased out CCCM activities. The project team consulted with UNHCR and Government authorities and developed the concept of Community Development Committee (CDC) made up of former Camp Management Committee (CMC) members, and leaders from neighbour and host communities. In the second half of the year, LWF worked with the CDC on some development activities that they had prioritized. Thus a foundation for development is established in the resettled areas.

In the remaining 8 IDP camp locations, the project developed block system and reformed Children Development Group (CDG), Youth Development Group (YDG) and Woman Development Group (WDG) with representation of each block in every camp. It effectively strengthened the Social Groups, making them more participatory, inclusive and integrated. Intotal 354 (52% girls and women) community members were affiliated in social groups, organized meetings and contributed to organize events in the camps. The group members are gradually raising public concerns, developing leadership and participating in public affairs.

As a part of recreational events for psycho social stress management, LWF Myanmar conducted 4 events (2 indoor and 2 outdoor) in each camp through the Youth Development Group in consultation with Camp Management Committee. Outdoor events such as volleyball, football, tug of war and Hto Shi Hto (Myanmar traditional game) were organized for 2,599 (49% of women and girls) who actively participated. Indoor events included art, beauty care and weaving competitions for 1,881 (55% of women and girls).

As all the shelters in IDP camps were constructed in 2012-13, using bamboo and soft/hard wood, by 2016 age and Cyclone Comen, and normal wear and tear had left many shelter in urgently need of maintenance, repair or replacement.

LWF Myanmar repaired 320 rooms in Ah Nauk Ywe, 386 room in Khaung Doke Khar - 1, and 1,922 rooms in Ohn Taw Gyi South. In total 2,636 families received repaired and reconstructed safe shelter. LWF Myanmar maintained fire points by replacing some of the damages and missing items, disseminate IEC materials, and organized mass awareness campaigns, in order to ensure fire safety and disaster risk reduction within camps,. Fire safety bill boards, visibility kits and trained fire safety volunteers and were provided in all camps in close cooperation with fire safety department.

LWF supported for smooth transportation in Camp, Set Yone Su (3), Sittwe Township, Rakhine State

U Lone Maw, Camp Management Mobilizer sharing how they collaborate with LWF Myanmar at Set Yone Su (3), Sittwe Township. (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

U Lone Maw (58) is a Mobilizer of the Camp Management Committee of Set Yone Su - 3, which is 2 miles away from Sittwe. A total of 151 households with 666 people (Male – 312, Female – 354) live in the camp. It is one of the camps that the Government officially resettled in 2016.

He shared his previous experiences, “While living in Set Yone Su - 3 Si Than Yet, we stayed in a very small 8’x8’ room. All students had to join a nearby school as there was no school in our camp.”

“We have now resettled near the old camp location and LWF Myanmar has supported us with many things. When we had insufficient water, they contributed earthen jars to store water. Furthermore, they constructed the village main road, a bridge and a Youth Center as well. Now, we have a 17ft x 18ft house. Apart from the infrastructures, they provided trainings on primary health care, DRR, fire safety and how to communicate with the government. The Government constructed a new school and the students no longer need to go to another village for their primary education.”

ENHANCING QUALITY EDUCATION IN MYANMAR

LWF is working with the poorest households and villages help them become more aware of the value of education and to organize for more access to better education opportunities.

In 2016, LWF Myanmar contributed to education development in Rakhine State through projects funded by European Union (EU), Church of Sweden, AA-DKH and Diaconia ECCB. In collaboration with the State Education Department, Social Welfare Department, District Education Offices and Township Education Offices, five Government schools were constructed and 11 schools were renovated in Sittwe, Mrauk U, Pauk Taw and Ann townships. 4,629 students (49% girls) and 190 teachers (72% female) benefitted from improved access to quality education through these LWF interventions.

Inclusive of the 11 Government schools and 11 IDP camps in Rakhine State, that LWF has assisted, 23,850 children (47% female) between the ages of 3-17 years benefitted from Formal Schools, Child Friendly Space (CFS), Temporary Learning Space (TLS) and Non-Formal Education (NFE). Moreover, the total of 52 CFS Animators (65% female), 156 Community Teachers (26% female) and 30 Non-Formal Education Facilitators (83% female) also benefitted.

In Chin state, LWF Myanmar constructed two new schools in Mindat and two new schools for Matupi, which reached a total of 221 students (54% of female). While LWF Myanmar provided more than 39 million MMK (36,388 USD) towards these schools, the community also contributed 9,478,000 MMK (7,030 USD) of their own funds, labor and other materials.

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In addition, LWF Myanmar provided school furniture to 4 schools in Chin State based on their needs. Other teaching aids such as cupboards, white boards, desks and chairs for teachers were also provided to four schools in Matupi and one in Mindat Townships, benefiting 253 birls and 226 boys.

In a collaboration of Township Education Department and local governments in Kayin State, two schools were constructed in Hpa Pun and Kyarinnseik Gyi townships and 6 schools were renovated in 2016. Additionally, tables, pots and water tanks donation also reached eight formal schools. In a total 1,486 students (male 716, female 770) benefitted.

Yay Lae Ywar Haung village is located 12 miles from Kyarinnseik Gyi Township, Kayin State. It could be said that it is an under developed villages especially in terms of education. The insufficiency of teachers and lack of school facilities were the main challenges of the hosted community.

Daw Wutt Yi, a teacher with seven years experiences of teaching at the school shared, "As our previous school was two attached wooden buildings, whenever the students from upstairs make noises, we cannot concentrate in teaching at down stair because the ceiling is too low. And also there is no separate room so that four teachers were teaching 150 students at the same time in the same hall."

In a collaboration with the Township Education Department and local government, LWF Myanmar provided 33 million MMK (24,473 USD) to build a new school in the village. As a result, many students become more regular in attending school and also they become more interested in their studies.

A Grade 7 student named Mg Hla Myo share his thoughts about the new school building, "My dream is to become an engineer and come back to serve my community. So I study hard every day. As I am studying in the new and very comfortable school, I feel so fresh to go to school every day. I feel so much more enthusiastic to do my studies now than in the past."

The village Administrator U Mee (54) also said, "When LWF Myanmar start supporting the school building in our village, the whole communities was so happy and they also collaborated with the labor force to carrying bricks, sand and others. this is the first building we made in partnership with an NGO. We are really happy to see it here. LWF Myanmar brought out the best in us and together we now have this important education facility. Now we could expect many improvements will come in the future. Thank you so much LWF."

Mg Hla Myo says, "I am so happy for learning his lessons in the very comfortable school."
(© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

At the same time, the village has becomes stronger in its collaborative relationship with government ministries. As a result, now the government has upgraded the village education system from primary to post primary school. At the moment, not only the students from village, but also the 10 students from nearby villages are studying there. The number of teachers increased from 4 to 9 and right now they are teaching 150 students. Now the village has improved not only in educational sector but also in economic and social sectors because of the support and help of LWF Myanmar to mobilize and empower the community to begin managing their own development process.

STRENGTHENING LIFE-SKILLS THROUGH ADULT LITERACY

In 2016, LWF Myanmar initiated an Adult Literacy program for improving education for elderly persons in Chin in collaboration with the Myanmar Literacy Resource Center. The organization organized a five-day ToT training in Mindat and a four-day refresher training for eight teachers. The program activities reached eight villages and 85 (F-83, M-2) people benefited. LWF Myanmar also provided stationary, excises books, and blackboards to the teachers.

Daw Har Tee (42) is one of the participants of the Adult Literacy program in Chin State. Although, she was eager to be a literate person once, she had to give up all her dreams since she was a child to support her siblings as the eldest sister among them. But right now, she has a son and six daughters.

"I feel so dissatisfied with myself, because I see a lot of opportunities but I couldn't do anything as an illiterate person. If I had a proper education, I would become more productive.

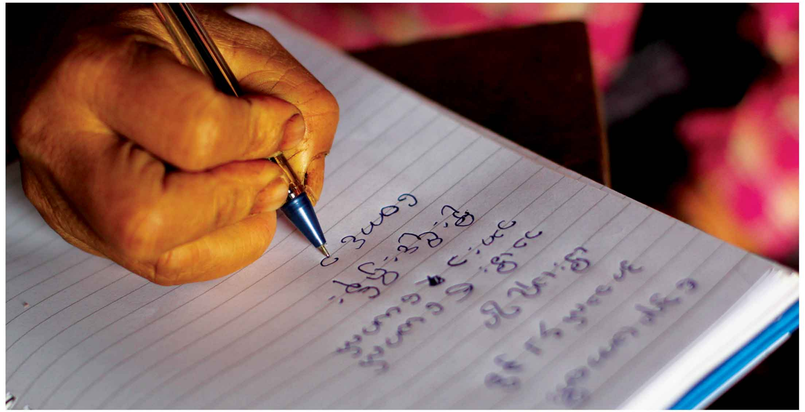
Whenever she visited to the town in the past, she faced different challenges. She shared her experiences as, "Whenever I go to the town I see so many Advertising Billboards, but I don't know what they are about? I really want to understand those. And sometimes, I face lot difficulties in finding my way as I could not read directions."

One day, Daw Har Tee was very pleased to hear about the Literacy Class of LWF Myanmar through one of the Staff and she quickly decided to to join. Despite she here excitement, she has a lot to consider about her family and household tasks, she tried to attend the school with the courage and understanding of her husband.

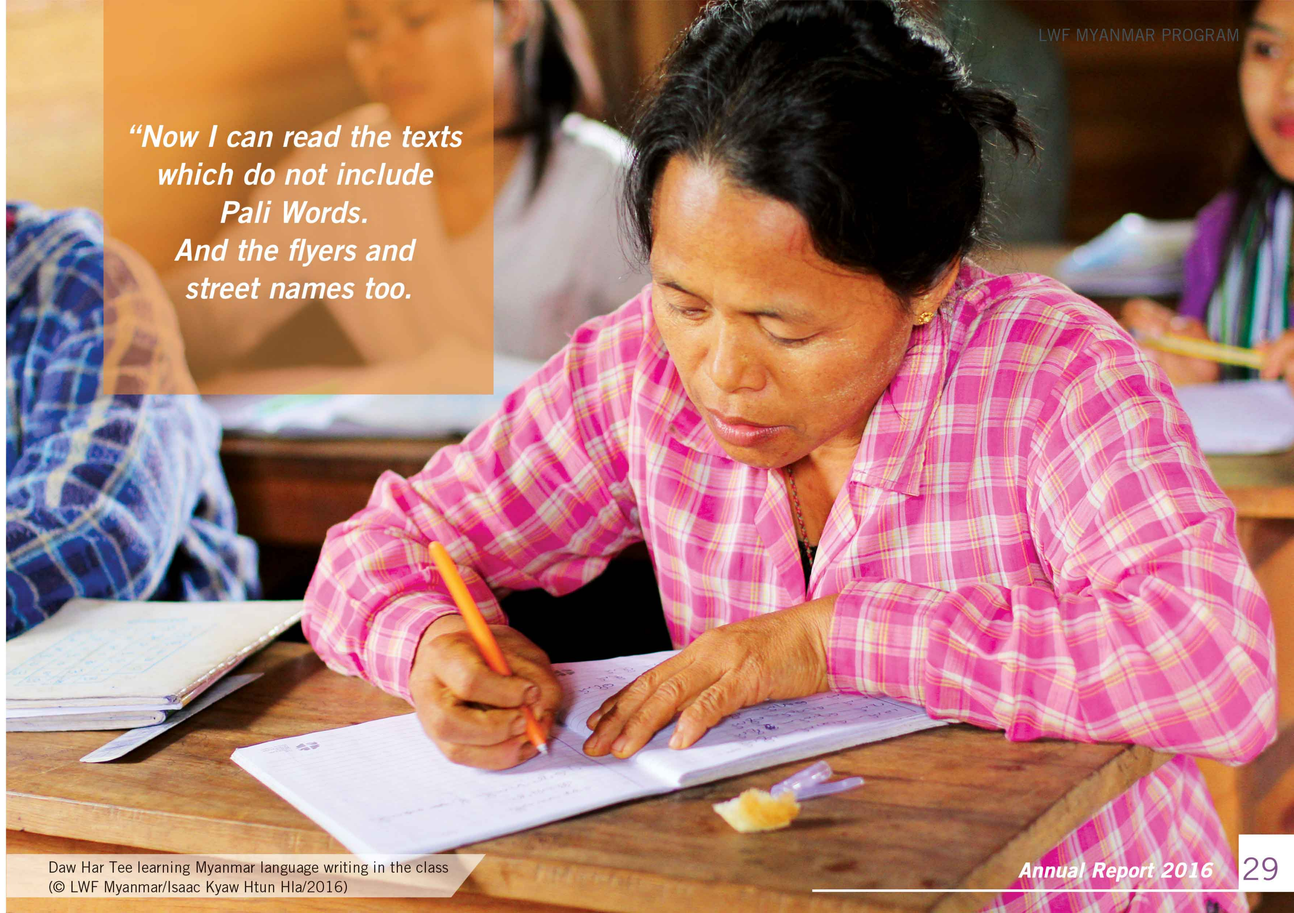
"I really want to learn even if in addition I have to take care of my children and do my house work. But, I could leave all those things behind. At first day of the training, it is really hard for me to memorize all the vocabularies. So when they ask me to write, I cannot write well. And new words are my biggest challenge. Meanwhile, I have no time to practice at home so I finished my studies within my class. Sometimes, I had to leave my training as I was busy with seasonal work as planting and harvesting" she said.

Among the LWF's Literacy implementing activities supported villages, people who attend the basic education from Pee Huu Village are so enthusiastic in their studies and eager to be literate. Normally, they attend two hours a day, but in some days when there is no work to do, they attend the whole day.

Daw Har Tee continued her story, "Now I can read the texts which do not include Pali Words. And the flyers and street names too. Moreover, I can even spell my name by myself now. I am so proud of my progress and would like to thank all the teachers who teach us although they are busy and most importantly Lutheran World Federation which offered this valuable training."



Daw Har Tee says, " I can read and write about myself now." (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)



"Now I can read the texts which do not include Pali Words. And the flyers and street names too.

Daw Har Tee learning Myanmar language writing in the class (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE LUTHERAN CHURCHES IN MYANMAR

There are four LWF Member Churches in Myanmar: Myanmar Lutheran Church (MLC), Lutheran Church of Myanmar (LCM), Mara Evangelical Church (MEC) and Evangelical Lutheran Church of Myanmar (ELCM). LWF Myanmar supports the growth of their Diaconal Programs though small grants provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). To access the grants the churches submit professional proposals with the assistance of LWF Myanmar.

In July 2015, Paletwa Township in Chin State was hit badly by the heavy rains from Cyclone Komen. As a result, about 880 houses were damaged badly and 3513 people were in the need of relief. Under the partnership with the Myanmar Lutheran Church, LWF Myanmar granted funds for responding in the early 2016. Through the project activities of Myanmar Lutheran Church, 200 households received 32,000 MMK in cash distribution to replace the loss of basic household needs and food.

LWF Myanmar also provided funds to Myanmar Lutheran Church for rice distribution to flood affected victims of 480 households from Paletwa Township in September 2016. In total, 2,314 people (49% female) from 33 villages were assisted through the project title of Myanmar Lutheran Church, "Love in Actions Emergency Relief (LAER)". Additionally, Myanmar Lutheran Church distributed tarpaulins for 40 armed conflict affected households.

The village representatives from Myaung Chaung village receiving (30) bags of rice from Myanmar Lutheran Church under partnership with LWF- Myanmar (© LWF Myanmar/Moses Mang (MLC)/2016)

LWF Myanmar also funded the Mara Evangelical Church's (MEC) cash for food project for Cyclone Komen Victims in the Mara community in Paletwa Township. The project reached 180 households with 1,082 people (50% female).

Mr. Zake (43) from Heimapi Village, Paletwa Township, said, "This 35,000 MMK (26 USD) support is very great support while we are struggling a lot for one dinner. It sustains our body, our faith and our hope. With this money, I will buy rice. I will use 30,000 MMK for rice and 5000 MMK for Ngapi (fish paste). I strongly believe who support us are God's people otherwise they can never help since they have never seen us and are not our blood relation. I pray that God will bless to all those who helped us."

LWF Myanmar supported 33.9 million to The Lutheran Church of Myanmar (LCM) for building a community hall that also served as an emergency shelter for families in Ta Han, Kalay Township, Sagaing Region.

CZECH AMBASSADOR TO MYANMAR VISITED LWF MYANMAR PROGRAM IN RAKHINE

HE Mr. Jaroslaw Doleck, Czech Ambassador to Myanmar and U Nyi Pu, Chief Minister of the Rakhine State, along with other Cabinet Ministers had bilateral discussion about cooperation between two countries and Dicaonia Czech support to Rakhine State through LWF Myanmar Program during the visit in 2016. (© LWF Myanmar/Nay Myo Oo/2016)

His Excellency Mr. Jaroslaw Doleck, Czech Ambassador to Myanmar, Mrs. Magdalena Doleck (Spouse of the Ambassador), Mrs. Renata Brandstatterova (Second Secretary of the Czech Embassy in Myanmar) and two members from Diaconia ECCB visited LWF Rakhine project areas in Sittwe and Mrauk U Township during 7th-9th November 2016. Further, two members of Diaconia ECCB continued visiting remaining project areas in Ann and Pauktaw Township during 10th November to 14th November 2016.

HE Ambassador and the delegates interacted with IDPs, CMCs, Fire Safety Volunteers, students, teachers and social groups (Women Development Group and Youth Development Group) in Ohn Taw Gyi South, Khaung Doke Khar 1, Basara, Set Yone Su 1 and 3 camps in Sittwe Township and Ah Nauk Ywe and Ba Wan Chaung Wa Su camps of Pauktaw Township. The team also interacted with students, teachers and PTA members of 4 formal schools in Mrauk U and Ann Townships funded by Diaconia ECCB in 2016.

HE Ambassador and the delegates have meetings with LWF staff, government counterparts, the Chief Minister of the Rakhine State and other government officials during their visit. The delegates also observed the community libraries supported by the LWF in the IDP camps and interacted IDPs regarding challenges of post-NFI distribution monitoring issues and other problems in general.

STAFF SECTION

Building trusting and reliable relationships with community members is a key foundation of the empowerment process. To this end, Community Empowerment Facilitators live within project villages and share in the day-to-day joys and struggles of their neighbors. This close connection is important, especially in the initial phase. The staff are supported by nearby Field Offices that provide the administrative and technical support which CEFs require, and help build vital linkages with government units at the local level.

San Thein Maung

Deputy Program Manager

I joined LWF Myanmar as Community Empowerment Facilitator in 2009. Building on that foundational grassroots experience I became a Project Officer in 2013 and Project Coordinator in 2015. Since mid-2016, I have served as Deputy Program Manager and member of the Executive Management Team of LWF Myanmar. Among the reasons for staying with LWF for the past 8 years are, the organization's Vision, Mission, values, approaches and practices. They put the people first and include them in processes that are rights based and empowering. I find that unique, longer term and sustainable approach is exciting and motivating.

Post Cyclone Nargis, in 2009, LWF Myanmar implemented project activities for the Rehabilitation and Recovery Processes in Delta and Yangon Region. I stayed full time with the community for 3 years and learned their difficulties and challenges in livelihoods, job opportunities, education, business opportunities and income generations.

During those years, I received a lot of training on sustainable Development Concepts, Facilitation, Mobilization, Project Cycle Management, Leadership, Organizational Development and Management, DRR, Climate Change Adaptation and other capacity building trainings to be integrated into my development work and shared with the community.

In 2012, I was promoted as Project Officer for Chin State and assigned to set up the office and its necessities in Mindat Township Chin State. I gained valuable experiences from setting up the office, and coordinating with the different government departments and INGOs/NGOs.My time as a Community Empowerment Facilitator enabled me to take a leading role with a team of my peers while developing a training curriculum and then facilitating one month training Community Empowerment Facilitator recruits in Mindat.

I became a Project Coordinator for Mindat Office in Jan 2015. While serving as a Project Coordinator, I strengthened a big team to have proper understanding on the organization's vision, mission, goal, objectives and approaches. Together our team managed to achieve our plans, by applying the right process and concept while facilitating activities for community empowerment. Good coordination and networking were built up and maintained with State, District and Township Government Officials for various advocacy and activities. It was my desire to improve the knowledge, skills and attitudes of all our Chin State staff, LWF Myanmar team and all stakeholders alike on Human Rights Concepts, Advocacy, Coordination and Networking, Reporting, Leadership and Management during these years.

In July 2016, I was promoted as Deputy Program Manager based in Yangon. In this current position, I am getting great opportunities to both learn from others while I use my experience to contribute to the strategic planning and implementation of LWF Myanmar's program in its four project areas. I am happy to help fill conceptual gaps for all staff and to contribute to improving our Program to be as relevant, effective and efficient as possible.

The Lutheran World Federation Myanmar is the only INGO applying Rights Based Empowerment Approaches for sustainable development in the rural communities. The program also strengthens the community to realize their rights and improve their self-confidence to claim their rights from duty bearers. I believe it is the best approach because it promises the empowerment of people in sustainable development.

San Thein Maung at his work place in LWF Myanmar office (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2017)

Ma Akari Htun

Community Empowerment Facilitator

Ma Akari Htun is ambitiously serving for the process of community empowerment as an LWF Myanmar Community Empowerment Facilitator for three villages in the Ayeyarwady Delta.

She worked as a volunteer for LWF Myanmar since the project started in 2009 at her village. In 2010, she was recruited as LWF staff and now successfully handles the community empowerment processes for over a combined population of over one thousand people in her assigned villages of Shwe Taung Su, Shan Kwin and Tan Ka Wa. in concerning with. As she could do well with her own, she said "I am proud of myself as I am successfully monitoring to the people from these three villages to be improved in everything concerning with the community empowerment and development processes. "I would not have achieved such personal and professional growth if I had stayed at my village. Moreover, as an LWF staff, I have more chances to learn and I become more confident, and make better decisions because I now know more about the other towns' conditions and so can manage situations better."

When asked what short term goals are in her work, she said: " One of my personal commitments and professional goals is to try to improve the capacities of the women in the village women's groups to be able to manage in the area of financial issues and accountancy on their own with confidence. I also want to improve and maintain the village's roads". She is ambitiously trying to accomplish all of her objectives because as a native from the area she knows how important they are for her people.

Akari Htun monitoring around her managed village for observing the progresses. (© LWF Myanmar/Isaac Kyaw Htun Hla/2016)

Khin Thida Lwin
Training Officer

In October 2015, I joined the LWF Myanmar Program in Rakhine State. My first assignment started in Ann Township as an Assistant Education Officer, even though I have no extensive experience in the field of Education. In 1st July, 2016, I was promoted as a Training Officer of LWF Rakhine.

This position assists me in improving of my knowledge, skills, and attitude. I have developed various aspects of skills such as preparing Training Curriculum, Modules, Manual Book and skills on leadership and management etc. Those are very valuable for me. I am keep learning and trying to become quality humanitarian worker in order to support to poor and oppressed people.

Now, I am organizing training to Temporary Learning Space (TLS) Teachers, Child Friendly Space Animators (CFS), Non-Formal Education (NFE) Facilitators and PTA members of TLSs, CFSs and SMC members of Formal Schools and also conducting the KG Training, School Based DRR Training, PTA and SMC orientation training, TLS/CFS Center Management Aspect Training, Psychological First Aid Training, NFE Facilitator Training, CFS Animator Training and co-trainer in Personal Hygiene and Garbage Management Training, Teaching Methodologies and Lesson Planning Training.

Women's active participation in teaching and learning activities gives me more motivation. It is challenging to make the people and government authorities to understand the importance of improving quality education in IDP camps and formal schools. Therefore, there are still huge gaps and challenges to address lack of meaningful intervention to improve the quality education for children of IDP camps and the Rakhine State.

Khin Thida Lwin, LWF Training Officer is facilitating training session demonstrating to make paper sailing boat under "Use of small fingers, muscle and creation domain" during Child Friendly Space Animators' Training in Ohn Taw Gyi South IDP Camp (© LWF Myanmar/Khin San Win/2016)

As LWF Myanmar is one of the organizations which working for relief assistance and advocacy irrespective of race, gender, religion or political conviction, I am so proud for being part of LWF's contribution to reducing the suffering of human beings in Rakhine State. I know that being a humanitarian worker requires adapting challenging context, managing emotions and be compliance with the minimum national and international standards, I feel always motivated in my work with the confidence got from the LWF's strategies and programs. Engaging with LWF, I am ready to face the challenges and would like to contribute in developing capacity of education actors/institutions in the State.

LWF MYANMAR'S OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

LWF Myanmar was able to meet all of it's 2016 implementation goals and objectives but faced a number of operational challenges along the way:

- Limited accessing internet results to delay communicating between Head Office and Field Offices
- Some of project operated villages are very remote with poor road access which cause higher risk for staff riding motorbikes and transportation costs.
- Language barriers between staff and host community remain as a challenge in some project areas
- Well-trained staff resigned from the organization effecting work performance
- High rate of staff turn-over to private sectors or other organizations
- Some project areas are still non-government controlled and require liaison with the ethnic minority armed groups to take approval for project implementation
- Emotion related stress among the staff impacts quality service delivery in conflict affected project areas
- Remote project villages make it difficult to collect data or get information when needed by the Project Management Teams.

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