

The Lutheran World Federation - Myanmar Department for World Service



Welcome to MYANMAR



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

<https://myanmar.lutheranworld.org/>

Yangon, 3 October 2013

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to Myanmar!

We're happy that you have decided to visit the LWF Myanmar Program. We trust that your travel here will be/was safe and uneventful.

Visits to our programs help those outside Myanmar better understand why our work is important. Our staffs will/have prepare/d for your visit, and will show you different activities and aspects of our work. We also welcome the constructive feedback that is often is only available from those with a slightly more distant perspective.

Many of the people we work with have been through traumatic situations. They are fragile and in vulnerable situations. Therefore we ask that you take this into consideration and act with sensitivity. Your assistance in helping us fulfill our moral obligation to uphold the right to life with dignity is much appreciated.

We would like to emphasize four important aspects for all visits, and we thank you for understanding, respecting and accepting these;

1. **Security is a concern in all areas where we work.** As a visitor you must at all time strictly follow the security advice provided by LWF staff or staff of other agencies hosting you.
2. **You are advised not to provide any payments of any kind to officials, police officers or security personnel** unless it is officially condoned and then, only according at agreed rates.
3. **If you want to provide material support** (gift, tip, donation) you are advised to follow the procedures of the "*Visitors guide to giving*" that is also attached.
4. **Things can change quickly.** This is the nature of our work and the context in which we operate. Our staffs are always happy to help visitors and show them our projects. However, operational concerns may sometimes interfere with planned visits. This can often happen at very short notice. ***Our priority is always the IDPs and communities we serve.*** Therefore, planned visits may be changed, adjusted, delayed or even cancelled if the visit will have a significant negative impact on our work for the persons of concern.

Your key contact point before and during you visit will be Lwin Aung Zaw, Administration and Logistics Coordinator, who can be called on +95 95165456 or emailed at alo.mmr@lwfdds.org

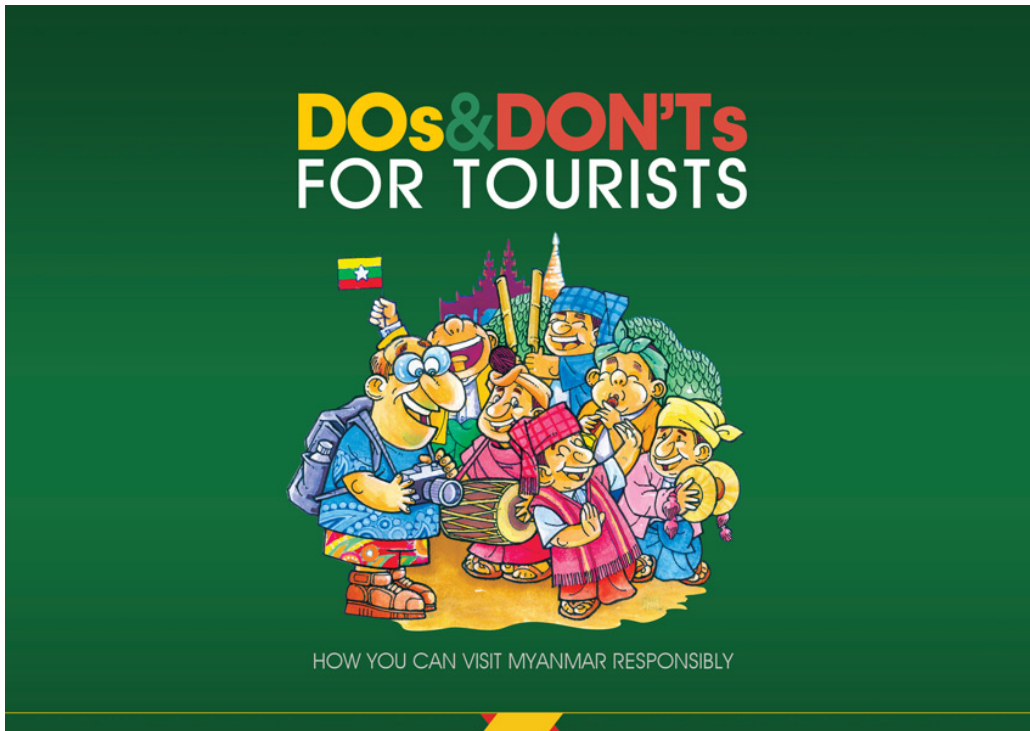
Thank you and, again, we welcome you warmly!



David H. Mueller
Regional Representative

The Dos and Don'ts for tourists project was proposed by Dr. Andrea Valentin, Founder and Director of [Tourism Transparency](http://www.tourismtransparency.org), an NGO campaigning for an open and accountable tourism industry in Myanmar. The [Hanns Seidel Foundation of Germany](http://www.hanns-seidel-foundation.org) passed the proposal to the [Myanmar Ministry of Hotels and Tourism](http://www.mmt.gov.mm) and the [Myanmar Tourism Federation](http://www.mmtf.org) to implement action immediately following the drafting of the Myanmar Responsible Tourism Policy. The proposal was accepted, and research began in June 2012.

<http://www.dosanddonsfortourists.com/index.html>



**Pick up your own copy upon landing in Yangon International Airport at the
TOURIST INFORMATION DESK for 2USD**

Practical Information for Visitors

About Myanmar: Geography

The country covers an area of 677,000 square kilometers (261,228 square miles) with the dimensions of 936 kilometers (581 miles) from east to west and 2,051 kilometers (1,275 miles) from north to south. It is a land of hills and valleys and is rimmed in the north, east and west by mountain ranges forming a giant horseshoe. Enclosed within the mountain barriers are the flat lands of Ayeyarwaddy, Chindwin and Sittaung River valleys where most of the country's agricultural land and population are concentrated.

The City of Yangon

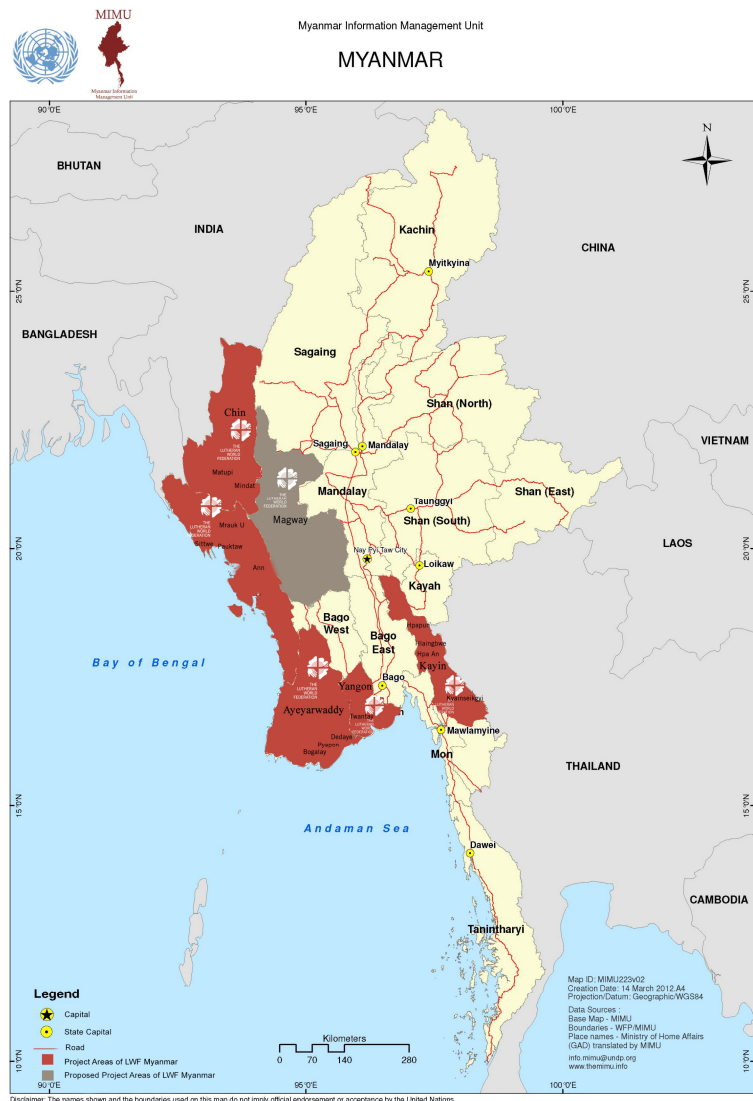
Yangon, the gateway to Myanmar, was founded in 1755 by King Alaung-Paya on the site of the small settlement called Dagon. Yangon has a unique charm, with its old colonial buildings, tree-lined streets, bustling local markets and tranquil lakes.

There are famous golden pagodas that glisten amongst the trees and buildings like Shwedagon Pagoda, Sule Pagoda, Botataung Pagoda and Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda to name a few. The Shwedagon Pagoda, situated on a small hill with its spire rising to a height of 99.4 meters (326 ft.) is visible from all parts of the city and is considered one of the most magnificent monuments on earth. Its stupa is covered with 8,000 solid gold plates and its tips set with diamonds, rubies, sapphires and topaz. A huge emerald in the middle of the stupa catches the first and last rays of the sun. Eight hairs of Lord Buddha and other relics are said to be enshrined in this pagoda.

Airport

Mingalardon International Airport is located in Mingalardon Township, Yangon; depending on the traffic, it is one hour drive from the city centre.

Please look for an LWF sign and an LWF driver will transport you to the hotel or an LWF staff member will assist you with getting a taxi. If for some reason the connection with the LWF vehicle or our staff stationed at the airport is missed please see the taxi guidance below.



Taxi service from the airport

After claiming your bags and passing through the green channel (nothing to declare), proceed to the arrival hall. Here, you can change some money through currency exchange counter for the taxi fare and other expenses while in Myanmar.

The public taxi service is outside the arrival floor – look either to the right or left for the overhead sign saying “Public Taxi”. There will be a desk underneath the overhead sign. Please tell the attendant the name of your hotel.

Depending on the distance, the estimated public taxi charge from the airport to the city centre is about 5,000 to 10,000 Kyats.

Visa

Tourist Visa can be applied for at the Myanmar Embassy or consulate in your country of origin. This is the recommendation for visits of one week or less that do not require field visits to areas of the country that require official Travel Authorization. If visitors need to visit LWF Projects in areas that require Travel Authorizations or for purposes that appear more like NGO work and not just visits (i.e. meetings with government officials, surveys or studies, training events, etc.), an official Entry/Business Visa will be required.

The following information is needed by the LWF Myanmar Program 3-4 weeks in advance of the travel date: copy of your passport, location of embassy where you will apply for the Official Visa, date when you will apply for the visa. As soon as the visa is received a scan copy of the visa will be needed by LWF Myanmar for the Travel Authorization application. It takes 4 weeks to get a Travel Authorizations. So we ask all travelers to plan their official trips well in advance.

Insurance

All visitors should have own accident and personal insurance.

Medical Emergencies

Please contact us immediately with any medical emergencies. We will assist you to the

Myanmar International SOS Limited

Dusit Inya Lake Resort
37 Kaba Aye Pagoda Road
Yangon, Union of Myanmar Myanmar

Opening hours

Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm

Saturday 8:30am to 12.30pm

(They can be contacted 24 hours a day in case of emergency)

Tel +95 1 667 879

Fax+95 1 667 866

[Http://www.internationalsos/en/about-our-clinics_myanmar_3333.htm](http://www.internationalsos/en/about-our-clinics_myanmar_3333.htm)

Electricity

Myanmar uses 220 volts, and the electrical outlets are 2 or 3 flat pin sockets.

Internet Access, Telecommunications

Internet Access is not universally available. However major hotel and bigger restaurants have (mostly) free wi-fi access. All LWF Myanmar offices have internet access (with varying levels of reliability – as is the case throughout the country).

Language

Myanmar is the official language. English is also widely understood.

Weather

The weather in January is warm and dry, and average temperature ranges from 30°C to 33 °C in day time and 20 °C to 23 °C in night time.

Currency

The local currency is Myanmar Kyat which is equivalent about 1,200 Kyats to a US dollar. Currency exchanged at the airport or private banks or currency exchange counters. LWF Myanmar will pay the hotel accommodation and lunches and all costs for the field visit. LWF will provide Kyat for official dinners in Yangon as well (you will sign for that on the first day). Therefore you only need to exchange what you will need for your personal use. For your convenience it is advised that you exchange your money at the airport upon your arrival to avoid the inconvenience of arranging currency exchanges during the meeting time.

Units of currency: Myanmar Kyat (Ks). Bank notes 10,000 Ks, 5,000Ks, 1,000Ks, 500Ks, 200Ks, 100Ks, 50Ks, 20Ks, 10Ks, 5ks, 1Ks.

Departure

Take a regular "Taxi" to the Mingalardon International airport. The estimated public taxi charge from the hotel to airport is about 8,000 Kyats. There are no departure taxes to be paid.

Information

For further information and assistance, please contact

- 1) David H. Mueller, Regional Representative, LWF Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar & Lao, rep.sea@lwfdws.org mobile: 09 506 9417 landline: +95 1 122 1184 (ext 110)
- 2) Krishna Rawal, Program Manager, LWF Myanmar, pro.mmr@lwfdws.org; mobile: 09 732 2119
- 3) Lwin Aung Zaw, Admin and Logistics Coordinator, LWF Myanmar, alo.mmr@lwfdws.org ; mobile: 09 516 5456
- 4) LWF Myanmar Office (Yangon)
2nd Floor, Bishop's Home, No. 44, Pyay Road
Dagon Township, P.O. Box 329
Yangon, Republic of the Union of Myanmar 11191
For international calls: +95 1 378 078; +95 1 122 1184
For Local calls: 01 378 078; 01 122 1184

Kidnapping and Hostage Survival

The risk that you will be kidnapped or taken hostage is very small. You should also remember that if it does happen, your chance of survival is very high.

To be kidnapped is terrifying, but most people have more personal resources than they think, and will be able to cope. As a hostage, you are valuable to the kidnapper/hostage taker only as long as you are alive. They will want to keep you that way. Your best defense is what we may call "passive cooperation". The more time that passes the better your chances of being released alive.

A hostage taking or kidnapping can happen anywhere. You can be taken off the street, from a vehicle, from your office, home or hotel room. If you are forced into a vehicle, you might be blindfolded, beaten, drugged, or forced to lay with your face down on the floor.

Cooperate with the kidnapper(s). The first 15 – 45 minutes of a kidnapping/hostage taking situation are the most dangerous. Even if some drugs are administered, do not resist. Their purpose will be to sedate you and make you more manageable. It is probably better to be drugged than to, e.g. be beaten unconscious. If you are conscious, follow your captors' instructions.

Don't struggle, try to be calm and try to calm yourself mentally. You should try to focus on surviving – that is your only goal during a kidnapping or when taken hostage.

Later you may be handed over from one person or group to another, and this may happen several times.

If you are interrogated:

- Retain a sense of dignity but cooperate with you captors
- Provide information that cannot be used against you, but don't lie
- Don't antagonize your interrogator, don't display obstinate behavior
- Concentrate on survival

Try to establish some sort of rapport with your captors. Family is a universal subject, or sports and hobbies

Try to speak normally and don't complain, plead or beg. You should comply with all reasonable orders and instructions. Once a level of rapport or communication is achieved, try asking for items that will increase your personal comfort, do it as a polite request not as an order or begging. Don't be afraid to ask for anything you need or want such as medicines, books, or papers.

Prepare yourself mentally for a lengthy stay and try to keep track of time.

Try to establish a daily routine of mental as well as physical exercise. To maintain your strength, you must eat and drink what you are given even if you don't feel hungry. Use relaxation techniques to reduce stress, such as visualizing, breathing and etcetera.

Try to break down time into manageable pieces and goals; today I will ... this afternoon I will... to-night I shall... etcetera. This will make time pass more quickly and help you focus on survival.

During interrogation, do not be uncooperative, antagonistic, or hostile towards your captors. Captives who display this type of behavior are often held longer or become the object of various types of punishment. Remember, one captor may play "Good Guy" and one "Bad Guy." This is the most common interrogation technique.

Watch out for signs of the "Stockholm Syndrome" which occurs when the captive, due to the close proximity and the constant pressures involved, begins to relate to, and empathize with, the captors. In some cases, this relationship has resulted in the hostage becoming sympathetic to the point that he/she actively participates in the activities of the group. Establish a friendly rapport with your captors, but maintain your personal dignity and do not compromise your integrity.

If forced to present your captors demands, either in writing or on tape, state clearly that the demands are from your captors. Avoid making a plea on your own behalf. Just convey the message with no interpretation or using own words.

Hostage negotiations are often difficult and time consuming. So it may take time to get you released. However, your chances of survival increase with time. It is clear that most episodes of kidnapping or hostage-taking actually end with no loss of life or serious physical injury to the captive. Eventually you will probably be released or rescued. Do not try to escape unless you are absolutely certain of success.

If an attempt is made to rescue you by force, keep a low profile and drop to the floor with your hands over your head. If you can't drop to the floor, stand still with your hands across your chest or on your head. DO NOT RUN! Immediately follow all instructions from the rescue team. They will probably scream orders out loud (risk of "verbal stunning").

LWF MYANMAR PROGRAM

In order to help facilitate visits the following guidelines apply:

- The Program Coordinator and Project Coordinator/Officer shall be copied on **all** information regarding visitors and they in turn, will work together with staff to facilitate the visit. All communication regarding visitors to LWF Projects will be shared with the Representative, the Program Coordinator and the Finance Manager in Yangon.
- Specific requests by the visitor that can be accommodated in their visit should be incorporated into the program. If the request cannot be accommodated, this must be discussed with the visitors and they be informed early.
- Visitors are expected to cover all their own expenses when they go to LWF Project areas. If the visitors are going to incur expenses, LWF staff should ask the visitors how they would like to handle payments. Payments can be made by LWF then charged to visitor, or they can pay directly. If there is a question about who should pay, please contact either the LWF Finance Manager/Coordinator or the LWF Representative.
- Whenever possible, visits should commence with (1) a security briefing about the geographical area, (2) a briefing of the LWF activities and (3) a briefing of the Code of Conduct.
- The schedule of sites/visits to beneficiaries must be confirmed in advance and reviewed at the beginning of the visit.
- All visitors should direct issues and/or questions to their host. If project staff have issues and/or questions addressed to them that are of a personal nature or are inappropriate (e.g. asking a field worker whether or not they think their supervisor does a good job), this should be reported to the Representative and the Program Coordinator. Both the LWF staff and the visitors are expected to act professionally.

- Visitors must communicate with LWF prior to the intended date of visit. The communication should clearly indicate the dates of the visit, the type of accommodation and meals expected, and LWF shall clearly communicate what is possible and available.
- Whenever possible LWF shall quote all the anticipated expenses with visitors prior to their arrival.
- Visitors may be requested to pay a mileage fee for use of LWF vehicles.
- Visitors must be informed about the general security situation **prior** to any visits, and will be expected to adhere to security advice given by LWF staff, the UNHCR or host Government. Failure to comply with the advice may result in the visit concluding immediately and the visitor leaving the project site.
- We consider visitors as friends, but it is the policy of LWF that staff will **not** solicit any funds or other support from visitors during their time in the program unless the solicitation is part of official business. "Personal" solicitations by staff are **strictly prohibited**.
- Find more information of LWF Myanmar program at <https://myanmar.lutheranworld.org/>

The Lutheran World Federation World Service Myanmar Program welcomes and encourages visits to our projects.

25.5 DUTY TRAVEL FUNDED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS (LWF Finance Manual)

If staff members travel at the request of related agencies or other organizations, travel costs incurred must be recovered from the sponsoring organization.

LWF will consider paying expenses only when the sponsoring organization states in writing that it is not able to do so. Any payment will be at the discretion of the Representative. When the Representative consents that LWF will pay certain expenses, it must be expressed in writing, together with the estimated amounts, prior to the travel taking place.

A Visitors' Guide to Giving

The LWF Myanmar Program enjoys welcoming visitors to the program and arranging visits to the projects. Witnessing the situation and the work done first hand is the best way to understand how LWF works and the challenges IDPs and host communities we work with face. Often visitors want to personally support the work of LWF in Myanmar at the conclusion of visits.

Donations to LWF

Should you decide to support the LWF Myanmar Program financially please inform the LWF Project Coordinators (Kayin, Delta Chin and Rakhine) in the area you're visiting, the Program Coordinator (Krishna Rawal) or the LWF Representative (David Mueller). This will ensure that your money is spent where need is greatest.

Personal donations should be given **only** to the Regional Representative or Program Coordinator. They will then take the money to the Finance Office and provide you with an acknowledgement receipt.

Gifts to the IDPs & Community

LWF asks that you do **not** give gifts directly to IDPs or community members. We work hard to build good relationships with the people we work with. If gifts are handed out to individuals, it can damage

the relationship we have with the community as a whole and the work LWF is doing. This is why LWF requests gifts are given to LWF staff to distribute to IDPs and communities.

You may follow up via email on the continuing work in the communities or camps, but LWF cannot give specific details about how individual donations are spent.

If you wish to support a specific area of operation or purpose, you can note that in writing when the donation is made and LWF Myanmar will ensure your donation is used in accordance with this. However LWF Myanmar cannot forward personal gifts or donations.

Gifts to LWF Staff

If you wish to give a token of appreciation (be this gift or tip) to LWF staffs please give it to the Sub Project Officer, Program Coordinator or Country Representative only. They will distribute it equally among the LWF team. Many, many staff members do a commendable job and the LWF works hard to achieve fairness and equality in the working environment. This is why tokens of appreciation should be shared among all staff, whether they interact directly with our visitors or not.

All of us at LWF Myanmar look forward to welcoming you on your visit to our Program

**CONSENT LETTER for
THE LWF Myanmar's PUBLICATION MATERIALS**

I give The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and its representatives, permission to use my personal information, my statements, interview, my image, and any voice recording or video.

I acknowledge that the information I provide may be used in printed materials, internet and other electronic media, video and audio recordings and other media that may including editing, by LWF.

I am also aware that, with LWF permission, the information may be used by OTHER AGENCIES, PERSONS OR GROUPS that partner with LWF to promote LWF's mission.

I have read or have been read this consent statement before signing it and I understand its content.

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